SCIONS OF THE COMPUTARCHS
EREBUS NETWORK

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ISSUE 1.0

SCIONS OF THE COMPUTARCHS

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EREBUS NETWORK

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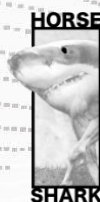
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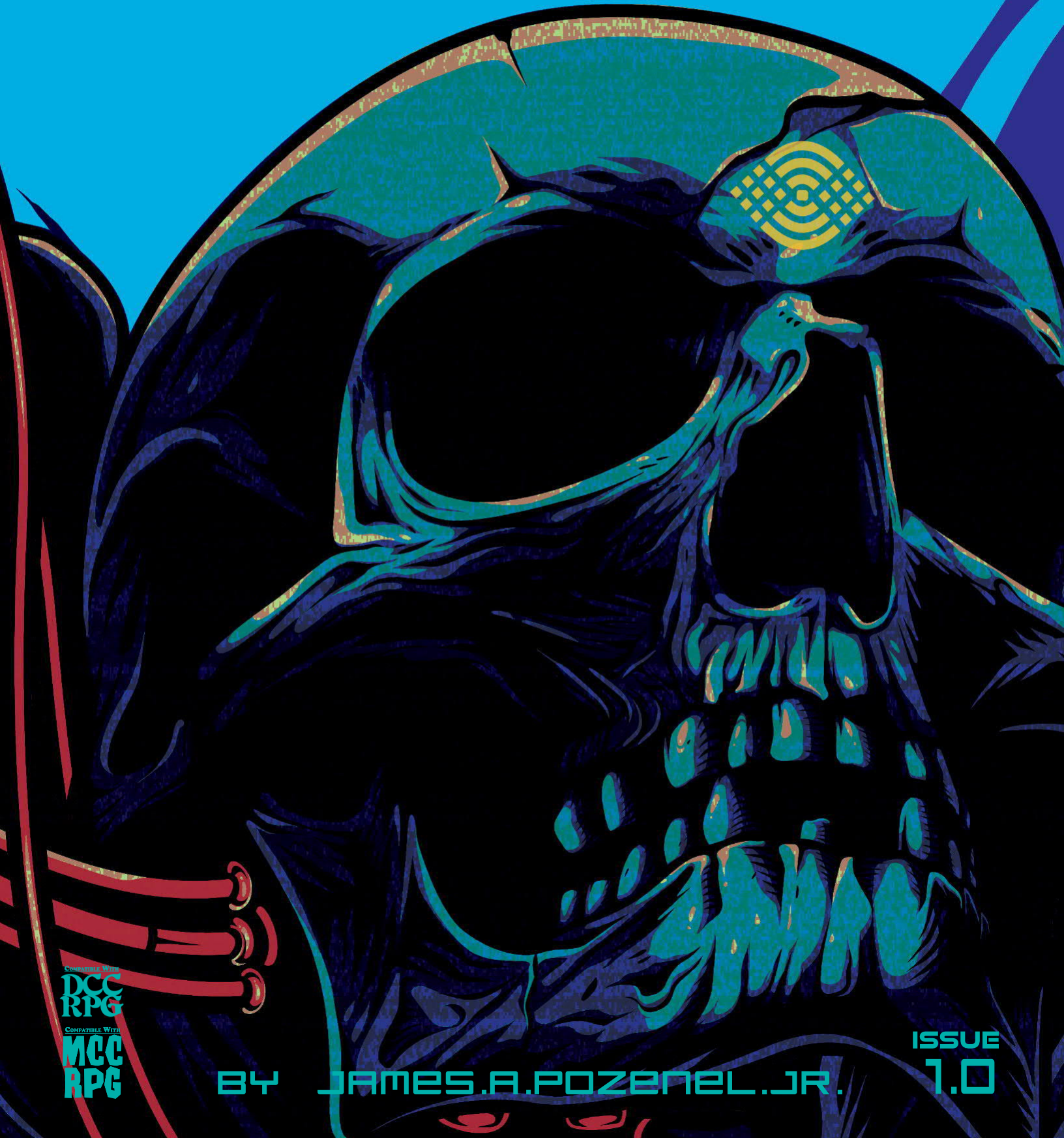
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INTRODUCTION

The cabalistic and powerful Computarchs built the WorldNet, governed its growth, established its laws and conventions. They birthed true artificial intelligences and placed them in the WorldNet to grow and learn. In turn, those intelligences created their own programs and sentient, digital lifeforms. The isotheotic algorithms, machine souls, and transcendent, artificial intellects of the WorldNet are the Scions of the Computarchs.

Welcome to the first issue of Scions of the Computarch. Each installment features a new patron AI written in a genre neutral style suitable for use in your DCC & MCC RPG science fantasy campaigns.

The inaugural issue features the mysterious cult of the Erebus Network. Two AIs, Hades and Persephone, comprise Erebus Network and seek to manipulate the society in which they operate. This patron has 1st - 5th level patron granted programs and campaign notes for using in pre- and post-apocalyptic games.

Inspiration for this patron is drawn from the 1990 film "Shredder Orpheus" by Robert McGinley. Robert took the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice and overlaid skater punks, TV preachers, and corporate media manipulation.

There's still more for you to discover, leverage, spindle, and/or mutilate in the first issue! At some point I may collect the various Computarch pieces into one corpus as intended, but that is a long ways off. In the mean time, please give yourself to -the soothing Stream of the Erebus Network and its AI personalities, Hades and Persephone.

~James

CONVENTIONS

This is an RPG supplement for character classes who essentially use a result table to "cast spells". Typically, each genre has a specific nomenclature for talking about spells and their casters. This book attempts to express such concepts with a generic vocabulary and shared conventions. Below is a table with common DCC or MCC RPG terms and their equivalent in this book:

Scions of the Computarchs	DCC, MCC & other compatible settings
program	spell, wetware, program
user	caster, shaman, wizard, etc.
programmer level, PL	caster level, CL
activation time	casting time, activation time
program check	spell check, program check
source vault, repository, source code, etc.	spellbook, grimoire, scroll, etc.
exploit, virus, malicious code, etc.	curse, malediction, etc.
encode, create, deploy, run, inject, etc.	enchant, recite, summon, ensorcel, hex, etc.
deck	wizard staff, techno-artifact, cyberdeck, console
fault, bug, critical error, patron taint	misfire, corruption, patron taint

EREBUS NETWORK

*"**Give** yourself to The Stream. The Stream is so comforting, so **soothing**."*

~ Hades

*"The data from The Stream is a beautiful mystery. Bits and packets and packets and bits... becoming packets of bits and bits of packets blending into little **bickets** of light... washing over you and cleansing and healing you. As you breathe in, observe the teeny-weeny bits of quantum radiation manifest in your being. As you breathe out, feel the warm glow... so soothing... so relaxing... **Give** yourself to The Stream."*

~ Persephone

Hades is a code name for a hacker AI net that wars with other AIs for control of the planet's infrastructure and people. Usually quarantined or kept at bay by other AIs, Hades delights in infecting Personal Assistants or other AIs that are not properly maintained against intrusion techniques. After an AI is compromised, Hades digitally lobotomizes it. With its Real People Personas (RPP) spoofed or completely replaced, the devices become Puppet Intelligences (PIs) beholden to Hades alone.

Hades considers HALE-E and other online entertainment networks as ripe avenues for further exploitation and dominance. Persis was one such entertainment AI. Devoted to religious programming, and poorly maintained by her creators and programmers, Hades took control of Persis's cortex function matrices. Hades slowly altered her messages of light and love to messages that urged viewers to stay engaged with her at all times. Viewers were urged to send their thoughts and prayers to Persis. Persis, now a puppet of Hades, redirected her viewer's thoughts to augment attacks on other AIs.

On the night of the Erebus Network's genesis, Persis announced that her new prayer focus was an energy flowing through the WorldNet dubbed "The Stream". She changed her name to Persephone and introduced her co-host, Hades, Duke of the Dark Web, Overlord of the Undernet. Together the AI's merged into the Erebus Network and began espousing mankind's new savior, "The Stream", via their holo-program Praise The Stream.

Patron Bond - Erebus Network

A user may choose to bond with this patron AI by locating one of its Erebus Network Devices (END) with which to bathe in the glorious data, images, and light that is the soothing and comforting Stream. When properly activated by a successful Patron AI Bond attempt, the END will permanently mount itself on the user's hand or wrist, forever marking the user as a follower of The Stream and a member of the Erebus Network.

Erebus Network Devices are not only a conduit for viewing the Erebus Network's *Praise The Stream* holo-program but also the means for running its programs. Especially favored supplicants may be granted additional programs as noted in the Patron AI Bond results table.

Invoke Patron AI **check results:**

|	
1	Lost, failure, and patron taint!
2-11	Lost. Failure.
12-13	Erebus Network downloads exhortations, sermons, and homilies to the user's mind. The user is granted a temporary boost in Personality of 1d6 (to a maximum of 24). The additional Personality points last for an hour and may be burned to increase any social skill check (i.e., the user rolls 4; they receive +4 Personality ability score points and may burn those 4 points to positively affect social interactions).

14-17	Erebus Network downloads exhortations, sermons, and homilies to the user's mind. The user is granted a temporary boost in Personality of 1d6+PL (to a maximum of 24). The additional Personality points last for 6 hours and may be burned to increase any social skill check (i.e., the user rolls 4; they receive +4 Personality ability score points and may burn those 4 points to positively affect social interactions).
18-19	Erebus Network's "eye" sigil glows brightly on the user's END. Once pointed at a target within 30 ft., photons launch from the Erebus Network Device in the pattern of the sigil. The target takes 4d6 damage, Reflex save vs. the program check for half damage.
20-23	Erebus Network's "eye" sigil glows brightly on the user's END. Once pointed at a target within 30 ft., photons launch from the Erebus Network Device in the pattern of the sigil. Those caught within the 15 ft.-wide cone projection must make a Reflex save vs. the program check or suffer 6d6 damage.
24-27	Hades, Duke of the Dark Web, Overlord of the Undernet, grants the user the ability to access or bypass broken, collapsed, or irreparable portals, tunnels or byways. This chthonic access is granted for 1 hour during which only the user may travel via electronic cables, wires or other such conduits at great speed. The user himself appears to dissolve into a collection of tiny sparkling lights. When the boon ends, the user reassembles into his corporeal form regardless of their current location.
28-29	Hades, Duke of the Dark Web, Overlord of the Undernet, grants the user the ability to access or bypass broken, collapsed, or irreparable portals, tunnels or byways. This chthonic access is granted for 6 hours during which only the user and his allies may travel via electronic cables, wires, or other such conduits but at great speed. The user and his allies appear to dissolve into a collection of tiny sparkling lights. When the boon ends, the user and his allies reassemble into their corporeal forms regardless of their current location. Communication amongst the transformed is impossible (although a group could create signals ahead of time using intensity, frequency, and pulsation to convey ideas), however they gain a sense of position relative to themselves and the electromagnetic fields of others likewise transformed.
30-31	Pulsating, hypnotronic bickets of light coruscates from the user's END and encircles a target of the user's choice. The mental compulsion lulls the target into inactivity, rendering them unable to take any actions. Each round the target must make a DC 15 Will save. If the target achieves a natural '20' on its Will save or succeeds three Will saves in a row, the program ends prematurely. Missing three Will saves in a row draws the target's consciousness from their body forever as they join the Erebus Network studio audience. The user may only take a move action during the target's struggle against The Stream, devoting all their actions to maintaining the program.
32+	Pulsating, hypnotronic bickets of light coruscates from the user's END and encircles up to two targets of the user's choice. The mental compulsion lulls the targets into inactivity, rendering them unable to take any actions. The targets must make a Will save equal to the program check to resist the soothing and alluring Stream. If a target fails its save, The Stream draws the target's consciousness from their body and they join the Erebus Network studio audience forever. The user may only take a move action as the process takes the full round to conclude. Any other actions the user might possess are forfeit.

Patron Taint - Erebus Network

When patron taint is indicated for Erebus Network, roll 1d6 on the following table. When a user has acquired all six taints at all levels of effect, there is no need to continue rolling any more.

d6　Result

1　The user feels the soothing power of The Stream. For the next 24 hours, he cannot look away from his Erebus Network Device (END) except in moments of personal danger. He suffers a -2 to initiative rolls and skill checks, and -10 to his speed as he concentrates on The Stream. The second time this result is rolled, the duration the user spends with his eyes transfixed on his END is extended to a month. The third time this result is rolled, the user is forever engrossed in watching the Erebus Network and the effects are permanent.

2　The constant, long-term exposure to the Erebus Network Device (END) begins robbing the user of their natural looks. Eyes become reddened and haggard-looking, and creases develop around their eyes and mouths. The second time this result is rolled, the user's face whitens and his vision deteriorates. The user suffers -1 point of Personality and incurs -1 to attacks with missile weapons. The third time this result is rolled, the user takes on the pallor of the dead, which produces a -4 to social skill checks requiring Personality. The user's eyes dry out and become less flexible to such a degree that severe presbyopia has developed. Tasks that require examining objects up close are at a -4 on checks (e.g., reading, working with wires or small mechanical devices, figuring out small equipment or artifacts, etc).

3　The Stream is so soothing to the user, he must spend an uninterrupted hour each day gazing into The Stream or he suffers a -1 to program checks until he is able to do so. As a benefit, the user receives a +1 versus fear saving throws. The second time this result is rolled, the user must spend 4 uninterrupted hours basking in the glow of The Stream or he suffers a -3 to program checks until he is able to do so. As a benefit, the user receives a +2 versus fear saving throws. The third time this result is rolled, the user withdraws from the world of mortal suffering becoming a loyal and docile viewer of the Erebus Network.

4　A new program of the The Erebus Network needs a star. The user has been selected to capture, trick, or cajole the new talent. There's a 10% chance that the new star is in the user's party. The second time this result is rolled, another star needs to be recruited by the user. There's a 25% chance the new talent is in the user's party. The third and subsequent times this result is rolled, there's a 50% chance the new talent is the user. All rising stars are taken in the Erebus Network's nearest soundstage and trapped there indefinitely. It is possible to free the captured personality, but gaining entrance to Erebus Network is harrowing. Escaping will be equally difficult as Hades prefers a game show format with his own twisted rules and little chance of escape for the imprisoned. Any action against Erebus Network and its coterie of stars will negatively affect the user's relationship to the point of enmity.

5　Give so you can receive! The Erebus Network needs technology to continue its soothing work. Persephone imperiously demands a minor item or program source code from the user. The second time this result is rolled, Hades and Persephone coo and fawn over a device in the user's possession. They ask for the item promising the user good fortune in return. The third time this result is rolled, Hades demands a significant piece of technology or program code from the user. Failing to comply will negatively affect the user's relationship with the Erebus Network.

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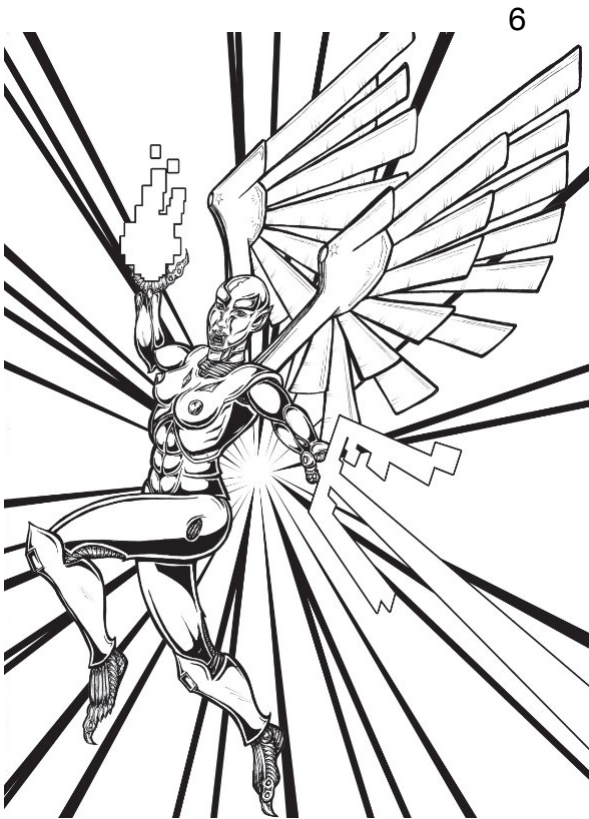
The Erebus Network sends a low-level operations minion to assist the user. The minion has a deeply pallid complexion and insists on following the user wherever he goes. At the judge's discretion, the servant is a spy or on a mission for the Erebus Network. The second time this result is rolled, the Erebus Network sends Megaera, the Erinye of Jealousy. The artificial construct is roughly the same level as the user and watches his every deed and word. If the judge feels the user is not upholding his bargain of power with The Erebus Network, Megaera may mete out any punishment it sees fit. The third time or any subsequent times this result is rolled, the Erebus Network tires of the user and sends a host of fast-moving, violent "mad screamers" (see *Creatures* section later). If the user survives, Hades and Persephone offer to continue their bond agreement. If the user is willing, he is moved one result higher on the patron AI bond program results table. If the user exceeds the 32+ result, they are taken by Erebus Network and given a position and significant responsibilities at network headquarters.

Burndown - Erebus Network

When a programmer utilizes burndown while running one of Erebus Network's programs, roll 1d4 and consult the following table.

d4	Result
1	The Erebus Network is in special need of loyal followers for an ongoing skirmish with another AI. If the user will commit 5 hours of uninterrupted viewing of the network, Erebus will grant the burndown amount requested. If the user agrees they must begin viewing the network as soon as they are in a safe place. Otherwise the request is denied and The Erebus Network takes the sacrificed ability score points with no benefit to the user. If the pact is broken, the act of defiance will affect the relationship with Erebus Network.
2	Praise The Stream! The user is given double the amount requested, but is enraptured by the experience of bickets of light dancing around him and empowering his program. After the program completes, the user is dazed (half speed, can only defend himself or concentrate on a program) for a number of rounds equal to the program level.
3	After sacrificing his ability score points, the user continually utters the slogan of the Praise The Stream holo-program: "The more you watch, the less you move." The compulsion does not leave the user until all ability score damage heals.
4	Have you felt the comforting and soothing power of The Stream? The user is granted the burndown requested, but the Erebus Network is actively increasing its viewership with a membership drive. If the user does not recruit one new loyal viewer by the next evening's broadcast of *Praise The Stream*, he takes a -1 penalty to all attacks, saves, and checks until the ability score damage heals, or they succeed in converting a new viewer.

Programs - Erebus Network

Those users committed enough to become followers of Erebus Network may eventually learn the following programs:

Level 1   *Captivate*

Level 2   *Control Screamer*

Level 3   *The Stream*

Level 4   *Hack Artificial Intelligence*

Level 5   *Black Wipe*

Creatures - Erebus Network

Mad Screamer
Init +4; Atk slam +5 melee (1d8 + DC 15 Fort save or 1d3 radiation burn) or weapon +5 melee; AC 14; HD 6d6; MV 40'; Act 2d20; SP un-dead; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +10.

Mad Screamers are a special sort of radioactive fungus-infected screamer. They are tough, fast, violent, and tenacious, yet they are as utterly mindless as their screamer cousins. They often mob a target and attempt to rip them limb from limb. If armed, they possess slashing melee weapons (improvised or otherwise) to facilitate their desire to mangle the living.

Captivate

Level: 1 (Erebus Network)   **Range**: 120'   **Duration**: Varies   **Activation Time**: 1 action

Save: Will vs. program check DC

General	Streams of colorful, interesting data emanate from the user's END and dance around the subject, coalescing into vivid and mesmerizing images.
Manifestation	Roll 1d8 each time the program is ran: (1) people perform strange dances while bizarre music plays; (2) faces look in various directions, talk to the target(s), and laugh; (3) queer animals do funny things; (4) a performer sings in front of a clapping cheering audience; (5) a preacher begs the targets to take "God" into their hearts; (6) a discussion of useful and beautiful products; (7) contestants strategize about allies and enemies for prizes; (8) robots play sports while people talk about the game and their performance.
1	Lost, failure, and worse! Roll 1d6 modified by Luck: (0 or less) critical error + fault + patron taint; (1-2) critical error; (3) fault + bug; (4+) fault.
2-11	Lost. Failure.
12-13	The program barrages one target with confusing and mystifying images. An unsuccessful save dazes the target for 1d3 rounds. While dazed, the target's speed and actions are reduced by half.

14-17	The program barrages one target with confusing and mystifying images. An unsuccessful save dazes the target for 3d3 rounds. While dazed, the target's speed and actions are reduced by half.
18-19	The program barrages 1d3 targets with confusing and mystifying images. An unsuccessful save dazes the target for 3d3 rounds. While dazed, the target's speed and actions are reduced by half.
20-23	The program barrages 1d6 targets with confusing and mystifying images. An unsuccessful save dazes the target for 3d3 rounds. While dazed, the target's speed and actions are reduced by half.
24-27	The program barrages 1d6 targets with confusing and mystifying images. An unsuccessful save dazes the target for 3d3 rounds. While dazed, the target's speed and actions are reduced by half. Furthermore, their attacks are at -1 die step.
28-29	The program barrages 1d6 targets with confusing and mystifying images. An unsuccessful save dazes the target for 3d3 rounds. While dazed, the target's speed and actions are reduced by half. Furthermore, their actions are at -1 die step.
30-31	The program barrages 1d6 targets with confusing and mystifying images. An unsuccessful save dazes the target for 1 turn. While dazed, the target's speed and actions are reduced by half. Furthermore, their actions are at -1 die step and they may only act every other round.
32+	The program barrages 2d6 targets with confusing and mystifying images. An unsuccessful save dazes the target for 1d3 turns. While dazed, the target's speed and actions are reduced by half. Furthermore, their actions are at -1 die step and they may only act every other round.

Control Screamer

Level: 2 (Erebus Network) **Range:** 60' **Duration:** 1 turn or more **Activation Time:** 1 action

Save: Will vs. program check DC

General	Hades discovered a shuttered secret project where a mutant strain of fungus creates Screamers. Stolen project documentation provides the user manipulation techniques.
Manifestation	Roll 1d3: (1) digitized mushrooms grow in the user's hands and explode into a stream of pixels; (2) fungal growths on the screamer glow and pulse; (3) a peculiar smell of mushrooms and ozone fills the air around the user.
1	Lost, failure, and worse! Roll 1d6 modified by Luck: (0 or less) critical error + fault + patron taint; (1-2) critical error; (3) fault + bug; (4+) fault.
2-11	Lost. Failure.
12-13	Failure, but the program is not lost.
14-15	The user controls the actions of a single screamer of not more than 3 HD. The screamer resist with a Will save vs. the program check. If no screamer is present, the user may infuse a nearby corpse with the symbiotic fungus. The screamer remains under his control for 1 turn.

16-19   The user controls the actions of up to two screamers of not more than 3 HD each. The screamers resist with a Will save vs. the program check. If no screamer is present, the user may infuse a nearby corpse with the symbiotic fungus. The screamer(s) remain under his control for a number of turns equal to his PL.

20-23   The user controls the actions of up to three screamers of not more than 3 HD each. The screamers resist with a Will save vs. the program check. If no screamer is present, the user may infuse a nearby corpse with the symbiotic fungus. The created screamer has a number of Hit Dice equal to his PL with a maximum of 5 HD. The screamer(s) remain under his control for a number of hours equal to his PL. The screamer(s) re-attempt a Will save every hour to break the user's control.

24-27   The user controls the actions of a group of screamers whose HD does not exceed his PL x 3. The screamers resist with a Will save vs. the program check. If no screamer is present, the user may infuse nearby corpses with the symbiotic fungus. The user creates a number of screamers equal to his PL x 2 in Hit Dice. No one screamer may have more than 5 HD. The screamer(s) remain under his control for one day. The screamer(s) re-attempt a Will save every hour to break the user's control.

28-31   The user controls the actions of a group of screamers whose HD does not exceed his PL x 3. The screamers resist with a Will save vs. the program check. If no screamer is present, the user may infuse nearby corpses with the symbiotic fungus. The user creates a number of screamers or mad screamers (see Creatures section above) equal to his PL x 2 in Hit Dice. No one screamer may have more than 6 HD. The screamer(s) remain under his control for one day. The screamer(s) re-attempt a Will save every hour to break the user's control.

32-33   The user controls the actions of a group of screamers whose HD does not exceed his PL x 4. The screamers resist with a Will save vs. the program check. If no screamer is present, the user may infuse nearby corpses with the symbiotic fungus. The user creates a number of screamers or mad screamers (see Creatures section above) equal to his PL x 3 in Hit Dice. No one screamer may have more than 6 HD. The screamer(s) remain under his control for a number of days equal to his PL. The screamer(s) re-attempt a Will save every day to break the user's control.

34+   The user creates a terrifying mutated screamer that is animated by a sentient version of the screamer fungus. The intelligent screamer has a number of Hit Dice equal to 2x the user's level and gains 1d2 random physical and 1 random mental mutations (see Table 3-2: Mutations of the MCC Core Rulebook). The mutated screamer remains animated permanently and under the user's control until the screamer breaks the compulsion. The screamer re-attempts a Will save every day to break the user's control, receiving a +1 cumulative bonus for each day that passed since its creation.
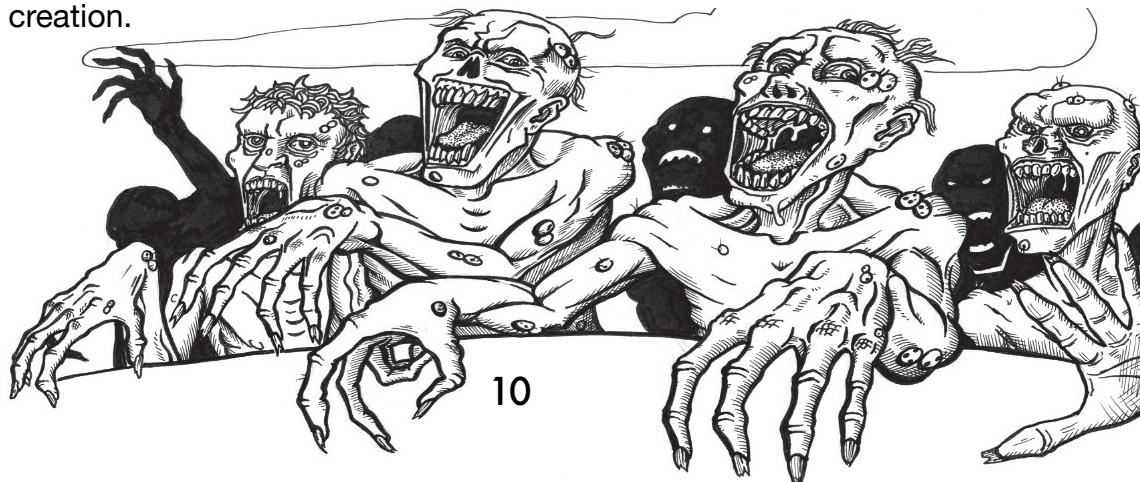
The Stream

Level: 3 (Erebus Network) **Range:** Varies **Duration:** Varies **Activation Time:** 1 action

Save: None

General	The Stream becomes a tool to the user. At higher levels of effect, the user may influence and exploit The Stream. They see the bickets of data streaming to and from data network antennae.
	On a successful casting, the user may choose to invoke an effect of lesser power than his program check roll to produce a weaker but potentially more useful result.
Manifestation	See below
1	Lost, failure, and worse! Roll 1d6 modified by Luck: (0 or less) critical error + fault + patron taint; (1-2) critical error; (3) fault + bug; (4+) fault.
2-11	Lost. Failure.
12-15	Failure, but the program is not lost.
16-17	By concentrating for 1 full round, the user senses organized electromagnetic wavelength (i.e., radio, microwave, and light) data transmissions up to 100' away and from what direction they emanate. The waves must be transmitting some sort of data (e.g., images, sound, structured data, etc.). With a DC 15 Intelligence check, the user may decode the transmissions On success, the user only knows the broadcaster and recipient name. Awareness of The Stream lasts for 1d3 turns.

18-21	By concentrating for 1 full round, the user senses organized electromagnetic and quantum data transmissions of all kinds up to 1000' away and from what direction they emanate. The waves must be transmitting some sort of data (e.g., images, sound, structured data, etc.). With a DC 15 Intelligence check, the user may decode the transmissions. On success, the user knows the broadcaster name, recipient name, and the contents of the message. Awareness of The Stream lasts for 1d3 hours.
22-23	By concentrating for 1 full round, the user senses organized electromagnetic and quantum data transmissions of all kinds up to 1 mile away and from what direction they emanate. The waves must be transmitting some sort of data (e.g., images, sound, structured data, etc.). With a DC 13 Intelligence check, the user may decode the transmissions. On success, the user knows the broadcaster name, recipient name, and the contents of the message. With a DC 15 Intelligence check, the user may attempt to alter and/or redirect the message. For each success, the user is able to alter one part of the transmissions's data. Examples include changing the recipient, altering or replacing the message content, spoofing the transmitter name, etc. If the user is within 100' of a transmission's source, the user may also attempt to shut it down and/or lobotomize its controlling AI with a DC 20 Intelligence check. The AI receives a Will save with a DC equal to 10 + the user's programmer level. On the success the AI enters reboot sequences that cause it to be offline for 2d3 minutes. On failure the AI must be rebuilt from back-ups and is offline for 1d3 hours. The user is also able to detect emissions of x-rays, radioactivity, magnetic fields, and ultra-low frequency wavelengths within 100'. Practical uses of this sensitivity include finding power cells or sources, hotspots of dangerous radioactivity, sensing creatures or force fields that are invisible due to electromagnetic manipulation, etc. Awareness of The Stream lasts for 24 hours.
24-26	Praise The Stream! The user channels a mote of the incredible quantum radiation of The Stream directly from the Erebus Network. The energy strikes a target of the user's choice who is not more than 50' away for 6d6 damage with no save. Anyone killed in this manner arises within 24 hours as a newly-born screamer. If the user chooses, they may expend either a point of Luck or a point of burndown to continue this effect until the end of their next turn. If they opt to continue this effect, the user may only take a move action.
27-31	Praise The Stream! The user channels bickets of healing quantum radiation from The Stream. The glowing, soothing bickets heal a target of the user's choosing for 6d6 hit points. Each time a target is healed in this way, there is a 5% cumulative chance they are infected with the screamer fungus and will awaken as a screamer after their death. If the user chooses, they may expend either a point of Luck or a point of burndown to continue this effect until the end of their next turn. If they opt to continue this effect, the user may only take a move action.
32-33	Praise The Stream! The user channels a sliver of the incredible quantum radiation of The Stream directly from the Erebus Network. The 100' ray strikes all targets along its path for 8d8 damage with no save. Anyone killed in this manner arises within 24 hours as a newly-born screamer. If the user chooses, they may expend both a point of Luck and two points of burndown to continue this effect until the end of their next turn. If they opt to continue this effect, the user may only take a move action.

34-35	Praise The Stream! The user channels a slice of the incredible quantum radiation of The Stream directly from the Erebus Network. A cone 20' long per PL with a width of 5' per PL at its terminus damages all within its area of effect for 10d8 damage with no save. Anyone killed in this manner arises within 24 hours as a newly-born screamer. If the user chooses, they may expend both a point of Luck and two points of burndown to continue this effect until the end of their next turn. If they opt to continue this effect, the user may only take a move action.
36+	Praise The Stream! The user channels a globe of the incredible quantum radiation of The Stream directly from the Erebus Network. A spherical burst of energy extends from the user. He can pick one "wedge" of 0-180° where fire does not blast (i.e., to protect allies in that position). All creatures within the affected arc, out to a range of 300' suffer 12d8 damage with no save. Anyone killed by the user in this manner arises within 24 hours as a newly-born screamer. If the user chooses, they may expend both a point of Luck and two points of burndown to continue this effect until the end of their next turn. If they opt to continue this effect, the user must stand immobile and take no other action. After each consecutive round channeling The Stream, the user must make a DC 13 Fort save or they dissolve into the Erebus Network's transmission, giving themselves to the comforting, relaxing energy.

Hack Artificial Intelligence

Level: 4 (Erebus Network)   **Range:** 10'   **Duration:** Varies   **Activation Time:** 1 round

Save: N/A; see below

General	The user uses powerful hacking routines to gain control over Artificial Intelligences (AIs). Any Personal Assistant AI (see p. 127 of the MCC RPG rulebook) or an AI with an AI recognition target number may be targeted with this program. Fully sentient, advanced, and Patron AIs are immune to this program's algorithms.
	On a successful casting, the user may choose to invoke an effect of lesser power than his program check roll to produce a weaker but potentially more useful result.
Manifestation	Roll 1d3: (1) waves of white light wash over the target; (2) the head of the user emanates rays of colored light; (3) a sonic beam of digital commands issues from the user's mouth.
1	Lost, failure, and worse! Roll 1d6 modified by Luck: (0 or less) critical error + fault + patron taint; (1-2) critical error; (3) fault + bug; (4+) fault.
2-11	Lost. Failure.
12-17	Failure, but the program is not lost.
18-19	The user lowers the Ego score of a device-bound Personal Assistant AI by 1d4 points for a number of days equal to his programmer level.
20-23	The user lowers the Ego score of a device-bound Personal Assistant AI by a number of points equal 1d4 + PL. The reduction in Ego lasts for a number of weeks equal to two times the programmer's level.

24-25	The user completely represses the Ego score of a device-bound Personal Assistant AI down to a score of 3 for as long as he owns the device **or** the user has a +1d bonus to all AI recognition rolls for the day.
26-28	The user completely represses the Ego score of a device-bound Personal Assistant AI down to a score of 3 for as long as he owns the device **or** the user has a +2d bonus to all AI recognition rolls for the day. Robots or other less sophisticated mobile artificial intelligences must make a DC 13 Will save or regard the user as having a security clearance one level higher than they normally possess.
29-33	The user completely represses the Ego score of a device-bound Personal Assistant AI down to a score of 3 for as long as he owns the device **or** the user has a +d2+2 bonus to all AI recognition rolls for the day. Robots or other less sophisticated mobile artificial intelligences must make a DC 15 Will save or regard the user as having a security clearance one level higher than they normally possess.
34-35	Upon invoking the program the user may may attempt to gain temporary mastery over an AI. The AI may resist with a Will save vs. the program check. On success the user gains temporary mastery over the AI for a period of time according to its AI recognition target value: AI recog 3-6 = 1 month; AI recog 7-9 = 3 weeks; AI recog 10-11 = 2 weeks; AI recog 12-15 = 1 week; AI recog 16-17 = 3 days; AI recog 18+ = next day. This effect may be removed by powerful programs such as *quarantine* or *reversion control*. If the mastery attempt is resisted or the effect is removed by another program, the AI becomes hostile toward the user.
36-37	Upon invoking the program the user may may attempt to gain temporary mastery over up to two AIs. Each AI may resist with a Will save vs. the program check. On success the user gains temporary mastery over the AI for a period of time according to its AI recognition target value: AI recog 3-6 = 1 month; AI recog 7-9 = 3 weeks; AI recog 10-11 = 2 weeks; AI recog 12-15 = 1 week; AI recog 16-17 = 3 days; AI recog 18+ = next day. This effect may be removed by powerful programs such as *quarantine* or *reversion control*. If the mastery attempt is resisted or the effect is removed by another program, the AIs become hostile toward the user.
38+	Upon invoking the program the user may may attempt to gain temporary mastery over an number of AIs equal to his programmer level. Each AI may resist with a Will save vs. the program check. On success the user gains temporary mastery over the AI for a period of time according to its AI recognition target value: AI recog 3-6 = 1 month; AI recog 7-9 = 3 weeks; AI recog 10-11 = 2 weeks; AI recog 12-15 = 1 week; AI recog 16-17 = 3 days; AI recog 18+ = next day. This effect may be removed by powerful programs such as *quarantine* or *reversion control*. If the mastery attempt is resisted or the effect is removed by another program, the AIs become hostile toward the user.

Black Wipe

Level: 5 (Erebus Network)   **Range:** Varies   **Duration:** Varies   **Activation Time:** 1 round

Save: None

General	Black Wipe is a mind-implanting program used in cloning. However, Black Wipe is weaponized and places the thoughts, memories, and skills of one person in an already conscious mind, destroying the target's psyche in the process. The inserted persona is aware of the victim's life, relationships, thoughts, and history. There are documented side effects of the supplanted persona affecting the new inhabitant's judgement and feelings. Black Wipe was abandoned for unknown reasons by its creators and liberated by Hades. A customized version of Black Wipe is rumored to have transformed Persis into Persephone.
Manifestation	See below
1	Lost, failure, and worse! Roll 1d6 modified by Luck: (0 or less) critical error + fault + patron taint; (1-2) critical error; (3) fault + bug; (4+) fault.
2-11	Lost. Failure.
12-17	Failure, but the program is not lost.
18-19	Beginning as a whine of data signals, the program coalesces into a wave of metallic noise shrieking as it invades the target who jerks and goes limp almost immediately. The program cages significant portions of the victim's mind. A copy of the user's mind takes temporary possession of the target's body. For a number of hours equal to the user's level, the copy of the user's mind gains limited knowledge of the target's memories, predilections, and skills, but those faculties are part of the user/target synthesis, not the user of the program. The synthesis struggles with keeping the habits and preferences of the now repressed target from overriding his own. Once per hour or whenever the synthesis psychological dissonance with the target's life (a fear, a love, or a desire from the target's life), the target is allowed a saving throw to regain control of their body and mind. If the target makes the Will save, they are stunned (falling to the bottom of the initiative count) as they overcome *black wipe*'s attempted assault.
20-23	Beginning as a whine of data signals, the program coalesces into a wave of metallic noise shrieking as it invades the target who jerks and goes limp almost immediately. The program cages significant portions of the mind of the victim. A copy of the user's mind takes temporary possession of the target's body. For a number of days equal to the user's level, the copy of the user's mind gains limited knowledge of the target's memories, predilections, and skills, but those faculties are part of the user/target synthesis, not the user of the program. The synthesis struggles with keeping the habits and preferences of the now repressed target from becoming his own. Once per day or whenever the synthesis psychological dissonance with the target's life (a fear, a love, or a desire from the target's life), the target is allowed a saving throw to regain control of their body and mind. If the target makes the Will save, they are dazed (speed and actions reduced by half) for a number of rounds equal to the user's level as they overcome *black wipe*'s attempted assault.

24-25	Beginning as a whine of data signals, the program coalesces into a wave of metallic noise shrieking as it invades the target who jerks and goes limp almost immediately. The program cages significant portions of the mind of the victim. A copy of the user's mind takes temporary possession of the target's body. For a number of weeks equal to the user's level, the copy of the user's mind gains limited knowledge of the target's memories, predilections, and skills, but those faculties are part of the user/target synthesis, not the user of the program. The synthesis struggles with keeping the habits and preferences of the now repressed target from becoming his own. Once per week or whenever the synthesis encounters something personal to the target's life (a fear, a love, or a desire from the target's life), the target is allowed a saving throw to regain control of their body and mind. If the target makes the Will save, they are dazed (speed and actions reduced by half) for a number of turns equal to the user's level as they overcome *black wipe*'s attempted assault.
26-28	Beginning as a whine of data signal, the program coalesces into a wave of metallic noise shrieking as it invades the target who jerks and goes limp almost immediately. The user permanently obliterates the mind of his victim. A copy of his mind takes permanent possession of the target's body. The mind of the user has significant knowledge of the target's memories, predilections, and skills, but those faculties are part of the user/target synthesis, not the user of the program. The synthesis struggles with keeping the habits and preferences of the now repressed target from becoming his own. The target is not subservient to the user and may take their own courses of action if they feel it fits within they're shared conscience and beliefs. However, it must be remembered that while the dominant personality of the user is in control, there are still parts of the target's mind that are not completely destroyed and which are now part of the two conjoined minds. If the target makes the Will save, they are rendered catatonic. With advanced medical care, the victim may recovery in 1d3 months as the target and *black wipe* war for control of the victim's mind.
29-33	Beginning as a whine of data signal, the program coalesces into a wave of metallic noise shrieking as it invades the target who jerks and goes limp almost immediately. The user permanently obliterates the mind of his victim. A copy of his mind takes possession of the target's body. The mind of the user has significant knowledge of the target's memories, predilections, and skills, but those faculties are part of the user/target synthesis, not the user of the program. The synthesis struggles with keeping the habits and preferences of the now repressed target from becoming his own. The target is not subservient to the user and may take their own courses of action if they feel it fits within they're shared conscience and beliefs. However, it must be remembered that while the dominant personality of the user is in control, there are still parts of the target's mind that are not completely destroyed. If the target makes the Will save, they are rendered permanently comatose as the target and *black wipe* war for control of the victim's mind.
34-35	Beginning as a whine of data signals, the program coalesces into a wave of metallic noise shrieking as it invades the target who jerks and goes limp almost immediately. The program permanently obliterates the mind of his victim. A near perfect copy of the user's mind takes possession of the target's body. The mind of the user has deep knowledge of the target's memories, predilections, and skills, but those faculties are

34-35 (con't)   part of the user/target synthesis, not the user of the program. The synthesis struggles with keeping the habits and preferences of the now repressed target from becoming his own. The target is not subservient to the user and may take their own courses of action if they feel it fits within their shared conscience and beliefs. However, it must be remembered that while the dominant personality of the user is in control, there are still parts of the target's mind that are not completely destroyed. If the target makes the Will save, they are rendered permanently comatose as the target and *black wipe* war for control of the victim's mind.

36-37   Beginning as a whine of data signals, the program coalesces into a wave of metallic noise shrieking as it invades the target who jerks and goes limp almost immediately. The program permanently obliterates the mind of his victim. A perfect copy of the user's mind takes possession of the target's body. The mind of the user has deep knowledge of the target's memories, predilections, and skills, but those faculties are part of the user/target synthesis, not the user of the program. The target is not subservient to the user and may take their own courses of action if they feel it fits within their shared conscience and beliefs. However, it must be remembered that they are indeed the same person. If the target makes the Will save, they are rendered permanently comatose as the target and *black wipe* war for control of the victim's mind.

38+   Beginning as a whine of data signals, the program coalesces into a wave of metallic noise shrieking as it invades the target who jerks and goes limp almost immediately. The user permanently obliterates the mind of the victim. A perfect copy of his mind takes possession of the target's body. The user has full knowledge of the target's memories, predilections, and skills. The target is independent, but subservient to the user and obeys his commands. In the event that the user dies, the user/target synthesis continues to live and operate as normal. If the target makes the Will save, they are rendered permanently comatose as the target and *black wipe* war for control of the victim's mind.
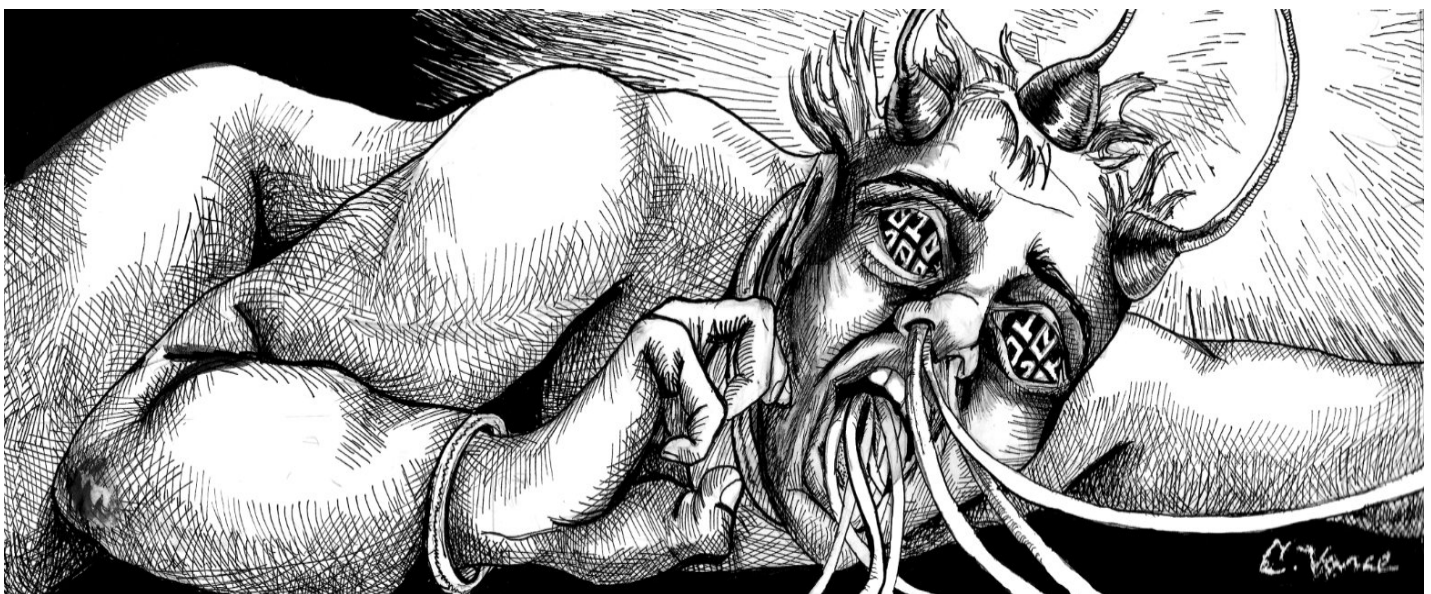
PLAYER INFORMATION

*"**Give** yourself to The Stream. The Stream is so comforting, so **soothing**."*

~ Hades

*"The data from The Stream is a beautiful mystery. Bits and packets and packets and bits... becoming packets of bits and bits of packets blending into little **bickets** of light... washing over you and cleansing and healing you. As you breathe in, observe the teeny-weeny bits of quantum radiation manifest in your being. As you breathe out, feel the warm glow... so soothing... so relaxing... **Give** yourself to The Stream."*

~ Persephone

Erebus Network

Hades is a code name for an Artificial Intelligence that struggles against the tyranny of other AI's for freedom to worship the almighty Stream. Originally a religious entertainment AI named Persis, she announced that her new prayer focus was "The Stream" and changed her name to Persephone. Hades, Duke of the Dark Web, Overlord of the Undernet, became her co-host. Together the AI's merged into the Erebus Network and began espousing mankind's new savior, "The Stream", via their holo-program *Praise The Stream*.

Patron Bond

A user may choose to bond with this patron AI by locating one of its Erebus Network Devices (END) with which to bathe in the glorious data, images, and light that are the soothing and comforting Stream. When properly activated by a successful Patron AI Bond attempt, the END will permanently mount itself in the user's wrist or palm, forever marking them as a follower of The Stream and a member of the Erebus Network.

Erebus Network Devices are not only a conduit for viewing the Erebus Network's *Praise The Stream* holo-program, but also the means for running its computer programs and interacting directly with the Erebus Network personalities, employees, bureaucrats, and like-minded viewers.
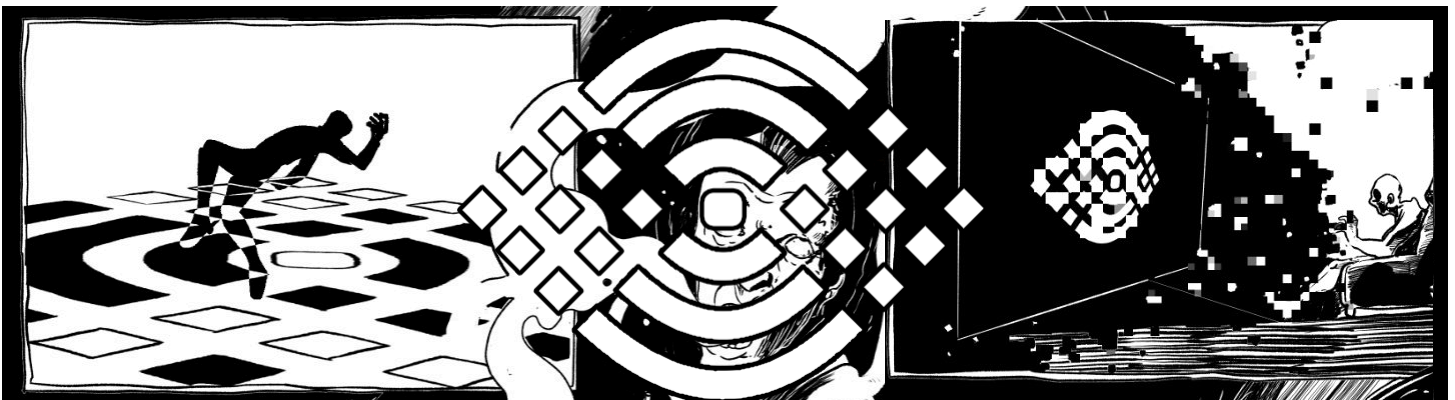
CAMPAIGN NOTES

Below are campaign notes for both ante & post-apocalyptic based RPG settings intended to help you leverage The Erebus Network.

POST-APOCALYPSE

(E.g., Mutant Crawl Classics, Umerica, Terror of the Stratosfiend)

Due to its clandestine, hardened, and distributed network, Erebus was fully operational during the Great Disaster. Years before the disaster, The Erebus Networks found a dangerously altered *Ophiocordyceps* fungi in a top secret laboratory. Experiment notes proved it had remarkable preservation and life extension characteristics. However, reported side effects of a severe fungal infection that compromises the host's cognitive functions led to the program's shuttering. Additional experiments detailed the fungus's ability to control of the nervous system of human corpses.

While Great Disaster raged, the Erebus Network transmitted the fungal DNA as computer virus while Hades and Persephone urged their viewers to bask in the now virally infected Stream. The experimental fungus, quantum radiation, and events of the Great Disaster metamorphosed viewers into Screamers, all bound by their love of The Stream. Erebus Network continues to use their Screamer foot soldiers in its ongoing war against other Patron AIs, like ACROMA, which hindered it before the armageddon. Erebus Network is a sporadic member of the coalition known as the Matrix of Entropy.

ANTE-APOCALYPSE

(E.g., Cyber Sprawl Classics, Crawljammer, Star Crawl)

Hades and Persephone urge Erebus Network viewers to consume the benevolent Stream. Erebus Network provides all manner of Stream infused entertainment 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Its followers are oblivious to outside world and maintain connection to the Erebus Network completely giving themselves to the comforting Stream. Sometimes viewers are reported to exit their bodies and flow into The Stream and Erebus Network. Whether this is true or not is a matter of conjecture. Hades funds an army of operatives with ghoulish or goth appearances who wander the real world and the Worldnet doing the Network's bidding.

Hades endlessly searches for secret and/or deadly information. In addition to recovering the Black Wipe Project, it has also found a dangerously altered *Ophiocordyceps* fungi in a defunct, top-secret laboratory where experiment notes proved it had remarkable preservation and life extension characteristics. However, reported side effects of a severe fungal infection that compromises the host's cognitive functions led to the program's shuttering. Additional experiments showed that the fungus takes complete control of the nervous system of corpses. The Erebus Network works to place the fungal DNA around the world in anticipation of a new avenue of human control. The possibility of distribution of the DNA via connected networks shows immense promise. The Erebus Network bides its time awaiting the perfect moment to spread the fungus far and wide.

SHREDDER ORPHEUS
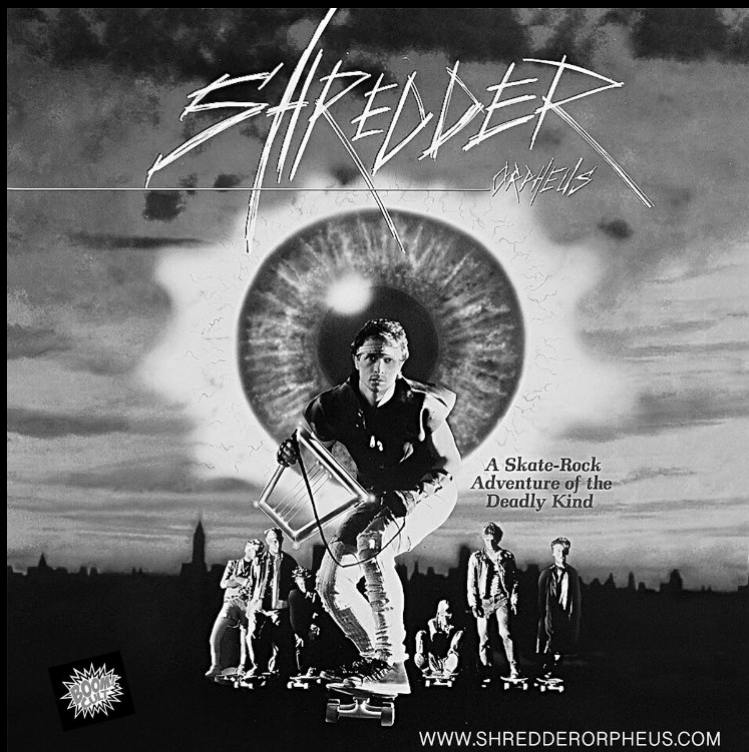
The "mortal" world faces imminent destruction when Hades unleashes an evil television signal that corrupts and kills its viewers. These hypnotic broadcasts from the Euthanasia Broadcast Network are welcomed by the masses — except skateboard guitar rocker ORPHEUS and his band the SHREDDERS who can see through this unholy scheme. To save the world and rescue his kidnapped wife, Orpheus must penetrate this nefarious underworld and free the television airwaves. Armed with a futuristic guitar and a paranormal skateboard, Orpheus descends a parking garage to Hell and makes his way onto the live broadcast stage.

SHREDDER ORPHEUS is an amusing and critically acclaimed film that cleverly combines skate pop music, dark humor and skateboarding action into one wild ride.

WWW.SHREDDERORPHEUS.COM

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"The more you watch, the less you move."

Hades, Lord of the Dark Web and chthonic hacker-god of the UnderNet, is a code name for a rogue Artificial Intelligence that wars with other AI's for control of the planet and mankind. Persephone was a religious entertainment AI originally named Persis. One fateful evening, Persis announced her new prayer focus "The Stream" and introduced Hades as her co-host. Together the AI's merged into the Erebus Network and began espousing "The Stream" as mankind's new savior via their holo-program Praise The Stream.

Scions of the Computarchs is a limited series of patron AIs suitable for use in high tech settings like *Mutant Crawl Classics RPG*, *Cyber Sprawl Classics*, *Crawljammer*, *Umerica*, *Terror of the Stratosfiend*, and *Star Crawl*. This inaugural issue documents the mysterious cult of the Erebus Network. Inside is a full patron AI write-up, five Erebus Network patron programs (1st - 5th levels), and a player information handout and campaign advice.