The Codespinner's Codex

The Codespinner's Codex is an sub-index of the [Art of Never Again](#), which lists as well as provides samples of viruses and malicious software of varying degrees. It is typically used as means of training and testing young hackers, as well as variable payload cores of hacking systems.

Computer Viruses

Polymorphic Strain

> "It is said the best victories are those that need not be fought for. This is incorrect. The best victories are those of betrayal, since it can strike deeper than any weapon; it will bypass all physical defenses and pierce them straight to the heart and soul. Nothing else can shatter faith and trust in one another to such a degree." – Savant Tactical/Guidance Computer (Cruise Missile Variant) Cache Six Four 64-7631-0799 The Art of Never Again, Chapter 924: The Ethics of Amorality

This virus is designed to perform hostile takeovers of target systems. Typically whoever employs it will disrupt the system's connections and attempt to simulate a damaged connection or power disruption. During this time window the virus will move in and disable any programs or AI in the system, and assimilate any functions and knowledge into its own code. The disconnection in then repaired and the virus, mimicking the operating system it just took over, will usually go undetected.

Once in place the virus can use its newfound position inside the network to eavesdrop on information passing through its system in order to relay it to its creator. Alternatively, it can simply use its newly-acquired security access to wreak havoc by opening a backdoor so that other viruses can bypass any network defenses. It is even possible for this virus to copy itself onto surrounding systems in the same manner it took over the first system, in which case if left unchecked may eventually result in a complete network takeover.

Regierunszuwendugen Strain

> "We don't call it piracy. 'The redistribution of wealth, from each according to their financial ability, to each according to their coding ability.' It may sound a bit long but I think it has a nice ring to it." – Datajack Syntax Three Four 34-1609-0125 The Art of Never Again, Chapter 637: But Above All Else, Know Thy Network

The Regierunszuwendugen Strain (literally, "additional government funding") and its cousins are specifically designed to target the databases of corporations and logistical military branches. The objective of this virus is a simple one: to amass currency, or specific types of items. Any financial accounts discovered will be modified to create a slush fund that sends a steady trickle of wealth back to its writer. If written to seek out specific types of goods, the virus will rewrite shipment manifests so that the occasional item "accidentally" becomes lost, while in reality delivering it to the writer's dropbox.

This strain is rapidly becoming a popular and prevalent means for smaller organizations to receive the funding they need. This is especially true with more "ethical" Freespacer groups who refuse to turn to

slave trading and the like to turn a profit; as anarchists they perceive large corporations and governments are their natural enemies, so stealing from them is perfect acceptable by their ethical code. For this reason the primary targets of this strain tend to be Yamataian and Nepleslian logistics centers.

Nanomechanical Viruses

Tranquility Strain

> "We, the caravans of the Free State, make it a policy never to take up arms against any of our far flung kindred. It seems outsiders may not be as considerate." -– Datajack Situla Six Seven 67-9238-3649 The Art of Never Again, Chapter 255: The War That Wasn't

This strain is a nanomechanical virus; it spreads physically rather than through networks, with the sole purpose of disarming weapons with minimal collateral damage. This is usually done by inserting commands into the firmware of any control mechanism – be it missile guidance system, the safety mechanisms on shells, or the control units of energy weapons – and will lock the weapons in such a state until it has been purged. A form of distributed intelligence is used in order to analyze previously unencountered systems so that it can effectively disable them. However, if the virus can't come up with a non-destructive method of disarming the weapon it may turn to simply breaking down key components in the weapon itself.

The Blue Death

> "Legends of old tell of an omen known as the Blue Screen of Death. Any user who saw this accursed apparition would be hexed by system failures of unparalleled nature, and it was dreaded by the elite and the newbies alike. It seems very fitting such a viral strain should take its name after such a dreaded symbol." – The Art of Never Again, Chapter 811: Invasive Cellular Automaton

History

The Blue Death is one of the most deadly nanomechanical viruses ever to come out of the laboratories of the Relay Moon. In fact, this strain is one of the deadliest weapons possessed by the entire Free State, though ironically records indicate its creation was a complete fluke. Apparently it was a result of a mutated nanomechanical strain on one of the Relay Moon's sister worlds; story goes it ended up contaminating a major research complex and defoliating the entire region before Invalid proceeded to pummel the entire continent with nuclear weapons.

Invalid realized the potential of such a creation had as either a weapon or a terraforming virus, and had its composition stored in its databanks. The recent Call to Arms asked for citizens to submit potential weapons ideas to enter production, and aforementioned SI released a slightly modified variant for weaponization.

Function

This viral strain utilizes a form of double-crossover molecule as a form of artificial DNA, thus allowing it rapidly mutate to its surroundings and situation; in other words, making it quite difficult for traditional countermeasures to eliminate it.

The sole purpose of this virus is to seek out and break down components that resemble control systems, both biological and electronic. Once the control mechanism is sufficiently incapacitated the virus will begin cultivating a nanomechanical protein core growth, which is designed to seek out information interfaces of the previously destroyed control unit and connect to them. In this regard it effectively takes over the target unit and its subsystems, replacing the old control unit with its own. After running self-optimization and diagnostic procedures, the viral control unit is ready to execute whatever orders its designed to follow.

Unfortunately, most sentient species cannot survive having their "control mechanisms" taken apart and rebuilt, thus making the Blue Death but lethal to a ship's crew unless they are possess appropriate countermeasures.

Blue Death Strain Variants

> "We like to think ourselves as a very ascetic and efficient State. Nothing ever goes to waste, not even the dead. Why should our enemies be made the exception?" – The Art of Never Again, Chapter 358: The Circle of Life And/Or Industry

Strain-AG01: The "original" Blue Death strain. This variant is particularly aggressive in that it attempts to indiscriminately spread to as many vessels as possible in rapid succession. Strain-BX34: Forces a ship to hyperspace to a predefined location, usually as a means to force convoy defenders to withdraw from a battlefield, or force an enemy target into a pre-defined ambush killzone. Strain-EZ91: A particularly nasty strain that switches the vessel over to purely autonomous computer operation, then inverts the computer's friend-or-foe settings.