

## The Matrix Mission: The Cast

Narrator 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Narrator 2 \_\_\_\_\_

Neena \_\_\_\_\_

Johann \_\_\_\_\_

Elsa \_\_\_\_\_

Viran \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrator 1:** The story so far ...

The Matrix is a vital part of the Time Web, an ancient computer that can detect where Virans are attacking the past. While Biff & Chip wait anxiously in the Time Vault, Neena faces extreme danger. Can she bring the Matrix safely back to Mortlock, the Time Guardian? Or will the Virans get to it first?

**Narrator 2:** Neena felt as if she was sliding down an invisible tube. Colours flashed before her eyes. Noises came and went. Then, silence. She had no idea where she was. She had arrived somewhere back in time and she knew she was alone.

**Narrator 1:** Johann's eyes strained in the candlelight. He pulled the old book he was copying closer to the frame. He had to make an accurate copy the Archbishop. His inky fingers brushed the page.

**Johann:** Careful!

**Narrator 2:** To make a blot would mean starting that page again. That would take hours. The Archbishop would only pay him for a perfect copy, no matter how long it took. Suddenly, a shaft of bright light broke through the gloom. Johann narrowed his eyes. A figure had stepped into the room.

**Johann:** Who are you?

**Neena:** I'm Neena. Mortlock sent me.

**Narrator 1:** The name Mortlock made Johann jump. He knocked over his bottle of ink. He had not heard that name for a long time but he knew what it meant.

**Johann:** You must be from the future. You look different from us.

**Narrator 2:** The black ink spread like a dark shadow over the page of careful work. Johann's heart beat faster.

**Johann:** Then you have come for the Matrix. I never thought the time would come.

**Narrator 1:** He rose to his feet.

**Johann:** Come with me. We've no time to lose.

**Narrator 2:** Neena followed Johann out of a chapel building at the side of the Archbishop's palace. She ran after him through rows of grapevines to a dusty barn. Johann pulled open the heavy wooden door of the barn and beckoned her inside. Inside they met a girl who was busy.

**Johann:** This is my sister, Elsa. Elsa this is Neena. She has come for the Matrix.

**Elsa:** But we haven't got it! We left it hidden in our father's workshop in the city.

**Narrator 1:** Neena held up her hands.

**Neena:** Please slow down! Where am I?

**Johann:** At the Archbishop's country palace near the city of Mainz. It is 1411.

**Elsa:** But the city gates are locked. No one is allowed to go out or in.

<b>Neena:</b> (with a puzzled look) Why?
<b>Elsa:</b> A few days ago, strangers came to the city. They said they had orders to shut it down. They told people to leave.
<b>Johann:</b> Not everyone could afford to leave though.
<b>Neena:</b> What did the strangers tell everyone?
<b>Johann:</b> (with a worried look) they said a plague called the Black Death was on the way and would soon be in Mainz.
<b>Elsa:</b> All the gates were locked. Every bridge was guarded. Everyone who left was stopped and searched.
<b>Johann:</b> Ugh! The man who searched us was weird. He made me feel cold even though it was a hot day.
<b>Neena:</b> (emphatically) Virans! What if those men are Virans? What if there is no plague? Could they be spreading panic so they can search the city for the Matrix?
<b>Johann:</b> (said anxiously) If they are looking for the Matrix, they could be at Father's workshop right now.
<b>Neena:</b> Then we must get to it before they do. How can we get into the city?
<b>Johann:</b> It's impossible.
<b>Elsa:</b> It may not be. I have an idea.
<b>Narrator 2:</b> It was late in the afternoon before Johann put down his pen and folded the letter. Neena carefully dripped red sealing wax on to the paper. Elsa had moulded the Archbishop's shield in a lump of clay. As the wax set, she pushed the shield into it.
<b>Elsa:</b> A letter from the Archbishop giving us permission to go into the city.
<b>Johann:</b> (studying the letter) It's a bit of a rushed job. But it'll do.
<b>Neena:</b> Rushed. (laughing) It took ages! Where I come from printing a letter takes seconds.
<b>Johann:</b> (with a puzzled look) What?
<b>Neena:</b> (smiling) Oh, it doesn't matter.
<b>Narrator 1:</b> With the letter finished, the children set off. Elsa had given Neena some clothes to wear.
<b>Elsa:</b> You need to look like a servant
<b>Narrator 2:</b> Neena felt hot in the heavy skirt and cloak as they hurried down the valley.
<b>Narrator 2:</b> Soon they reached the river. On the other side was the city. Beyond its walls were rooftops and church spires. It all looked so peaceful. The river glistened in the sun like liquid gold. The main bridge to the city was guarded by two dark figures. They were searching a cart and questioning the driver.
<b>Narrator 1:</b> Some way upstream from the bridge was a paper mill. The mill was deserted, but the huge waterwheel still turned slowly.
<b>Elsa:</b> I'll wait here at the mill. If you are not back by night fall, I'll get help. Good luck!
<b>Narrator 2:</b> Johann and Neena were soon at the bridge. A figure moved out in front of them. Neena shuddered. She felt a strange coldness as the man approached.
<b>Viran:</b> What's your business?
<b>Johann:</b> (Handing him the letter) We come on the orders of the Archbishop.
<b>Viran:</b> The Archbishop? What does he want?

<b>Johann:</b> He wishes us to fetch an important book from the cathedral.
<b>Viran:</b> At your own risk. There's a plague in this city. -
<b>Narrator 1:</b> Johann & Neena hurried on, but then they heard a shout. Neena glanced back to see a second man waving the letter. The two men began to charge after them.
<b>Viran:</b> (yelling) Come back!
<b>Johann:</b> They've seen through us! Run, Neena!
<b>Narrator 2:</b> They ran down the narrow streets and darted through passageways. Finally, Johann stopped.
<b>Johann:</b> (panting) I think we've lost them.
<b>Narrator 1:</b> He opened a door leading into a courtyard, crossed the yard and climbed on to a high wall. Neena flung off her cloak and leaped up. Johann caught her wrist and hauled her up. Then they dropped to the other side.
<b>Narrator 2:</b> They had reached the workshop. In front of them was a heavy door with two locks. Johann took two huge keys from his belt and unlocked the door.
<b>Johann:</b> (pushing the door open) My father makes coins here.
<b>Narrator 1:</b> In the workshop, tools hung on the wall. To one side was a large brick furnace. On a bench was a tray of metal blocks. It looked like a computer keyboard.
<b>Neena:</b> (gasping) It looks like the drawing I saw of the Matrix. What if the Virans were to come now? Is this it?
<b>Johann:</b> No, these are punches that you use to make coins. (Showing a punch) You hit this on to a metal disc and stamp an imprint.
<b>Narrator 2:</b> He began to dig in a bunker of charcoal, reaching to the bottom with his hands.
<b>Neena:</b> What are you doing? You'll get filthy.
<b>Johann:</b> Exactly. (pulling out a metal tray) No one would think of looking for the Matrix in here.
<b>Narrator 1:</b> Even though it was black from the charcoal, the Matrix was so beautiful that they both fell silent. It looked similar to the tray of punches, except each block had a different symbol carved into it.
<b>Neena:</b> Where did it come from?
<b>Johann:</b> The East, I think.
<b>Narrator 2:</b> Suddenly, the light from the oil lamp grew dim. An icy coldness swept over them both. The dark figure of a Viran stood in the doorway. He was holding the cloak Neena had flung off before she climbed the wall.
<b>Viran:</b> Without the Matrix, the Time Guardians will be lost. (In an evil tone) Give!
<b>Narrator 1:</b> Johann held the Matrix behind him. He and Neena backed away. The Viran moved towards them. Suddenly, Johann fell over a stool. He cried out in pain as he landed on the Matrix.
<b>Neena:</b> Take it. (Holding out the tray of punches)
<b>Narrator 2:</b> The Viran turned towards her. Neena felt an icy chill of fear. But at that moment, Johann picked up an oil lamp and flung it at the Viran's feet. At once the burning oil ran across the floor.
<b>Johann:</b> Run, Neena!

**Narrator 1:** They raced through the city streets. When they got near the bridge they could see Virans guarding it.

**Johann:** They'll soon know they've been tricked. We won't get out of the city.

**Neena:** We'll have to cross the river another way.

**Narrator 2:** They scrambled along the bank. Moored some way upstream was a small rowing boat. Almost at once, they found the strong current was taking them down towards the bridge.

**Johann:** Any closer and the Virans will see us.

**Neena:** (shouting) Aim for the paper mill.

**Narrator 1:** More by chance than skill, Johann steered the little boat across to the mill. He slammed the boat against the side of the wall.

**Johann:** Climb on to the waterwheel. Step on to one of the paddles and hold on.

**Narrator 2:** As the waterwheel turned, they were lifted up out of the river and on to the platform at the top.

**Elsa:** You made it.

**Narrator 1:** Then a doorway suddenly appeared. The mission was over. Johann & Elsa watched as Neena stepped through the doorway.

**Johann:** Take care of the Matrix.

**Narrator 2:** As he turned Neena noticed that on the back of his shirt, the charcoal dust had left a perfect print of the Matrix.

**Neena:** (laughing) You made the imprint when you fell on it in the workshop.

**Johann:** A print! There's an idea.

**Narrator 1:** But Neena had vanished.