

SLIDERS

by

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March 11, 1994
Second Draft
Revised

ST. CLARE ENTERTAINMENT

"Sliders"

Act One

EXT. QUINN'S HOUSE - MORNING - ESTABLISHING SHOT

of an old, three-story Victorian sitting on a hilltop. The front bay overlooks the cityscape of San Francisco.

INT. QUINN'S ROOM - MORNING - CLOSE ON A SHARK

crunching a hockey stick in half with razor-sharp teeth.

PULL BACK to see the shark is the centerpiece in a poster for the San Jose Sharks hockey team. Beneath it, sports trophies and varsity letters clutter the bedroom shelves, tangible symbols of past athletic glory.

KEEP PULLING BACK to see more posters scattered around the room: Barry Bonds... Joe Montana... Stephen Hawking... Homer Simpson... Chris Mullen... and Albert Einstein. Neil Young is soloing on guitar; the inscription at the bottom of the poster reads:

It's better to burn out... than to fade away

REVERSE ANGLE to include the bed, where QUINN MALLORY is sleeping, his little black cat Schrodinger curled up by his feet. Quinn is 25 - handsome in an unassuming, boyish way - dark hair, green eyes, likeable nature.

His blissful slumber is shattered by THE CLOCK RADIO, which bursts to life at eight sharp. Quinn groggily awakens to the deep, cynical voice of THE SPACEMAN, San Fran's popular early morning shock jock.

SPACEMAN (O.S.)

Mornin' Bay Area - Spaceman comin' at ya. I could say it's a beautiful day and life is grand, but I'd rather spout the ugly truth. It's cold and foggy, the city's noisy and congested - streets filled with narcissistic yuppies aimlessly steering their dumb ass Beamers to their dead end jobs. Frankly, it's the kind of day you'd be better off stayin' in bed.

SPACEMAN (CONT'D)

(taunting)

But you know you can't do that,
can you? Time is wasting and you
have RESPONSIBILITIES! YOU GOTTA
GET UP - GOTTA GET UP - GOTTA GET
UP - AH HAH HAH HAH!!!!!! Life
is hell my friends and it's time
to dive in head first! YOU HAVE
NO CHOICE!!!

Irritated but laughing nonetheless, Quinn punches the off button on the radio... starts to get up... then thinks better of it. With a groggy GROAN, he hits the sleep bar and collapses back into bed.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING - ANGLE ON MRS. MALLORY

Quinn's mother, a brassy type with red hair and sympathetic eyes. She's cooking bacon and eggs in a skillet, while happily singing along to a cassette playing THE THEME FROM PHANTOM OF THE OPERA (pictures of Michael Crawford adorn the kitchen). She glances up at the kitchen clock and shakes her head...

INT. STAIRCASE - ANGLE ON QUINN

still trying to wake up, now dressed in his usual t-shirt and jeans. Bouncing down the stairs, he notes the problematic plumbing pipes are dripping again - and as he grabs the doorknob to exit the staircase, it comes off in his hand.

INT. BREAKFAST ROOM - MORNING - MRS. MALLORY

is shoveling food onto a plate as Quinn enters on the go. He kisses her, snatches a piece of bacon and continues toward the kitchen.

MRS. MALLORY

Quinn --

QUINN

-- No time Ma, gotta get to class.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS - MRS. MALLORY

finds her son raiding the fridge for a hurried swig of juice.

MRS. MALLORY

It seems to me you're burning the candle on both ends. I'm warning you, your father isn't going to be pleased.

Quinn's reply is gentle, not condescending.

QUINN

Ma... Dad's dead. He's been dead for fourteen years.

MRS. MALLORY

Your father's spirit still resides in this house Quinn Mallory. You mustn't be disrespectful.

Quinn looks down, giving the kind of shrug that shows he knows his mother's a little nuts.

QUINN

Okay Mom, whatever you say. I love you, see ya tonight.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - MINUTES LATER

CLOSE ON a solemn portrait of MICHAEL MALLORY, Quinn's long dead father, hanging above the fireplace. PULL BACK to reveal Mrs. Mallory staring up at him with reverence.

MRS. MALLORY

(melodramatic)

Michael, I'm worried about Quinn. This graduate school... I think it's too much. He's working on some crazy project and staying up till all hours. I'm afraid he's gonna waste away to nothingness...

(dabs her eyes,
then pauses)

Michael, are you listening to me?

INT. QUINN'S CAR - MORNING - QUINN IS RACING ACROSS TOWN

in his VW bug, glancing at the dash clock, knowing he's running late, as usual. The Spaceman is working himself up on the radio, alienating listeners by the second...

SPACEMAN (O.S.)

... But the thing I like most about feminists, besides their WONDERFUL sense of humor of course, is how HAPPY they always seem to be.

Quinn shakes his head and cracks the hint of a smile, knowing this is going to go over like a lead balloon in San Francisco. Just the kind of reaction The Spaceman thrives on...

SPACEMAN (O.S., CONT'D)

I mean EVERY TIME I see them BITCHING AND MOANING in yet another man-hating demonstration, it's just one grim mug after another. No wonder they don't like bein' broads!

EXT. STREET ALONGSIDE GOLDEN GATE PARK - MORNING - THE VW

comes to a screeching stop along the sidewalk, and Quinn hurries across the park, precariously balancing a batch of textbooks.

He races past a statue of Abraham Lincoln... past people feeding ducks in a pond... past CRAZY KENNY, a wild-eyed, long-haired soapbox preacher, standing on an apple crate and railing about the glories of Marxism to an audience of pigeons.

The pigeons don't pay much attention - they hear the same spiel every day.

CRAZY KENNY

... So I bring you the glorious news - communism is back on track! The People's movement will soon sweep the globe - the days of the imperialist U.S. war machine are numbered!

(pointing at
passing Quinn)

You've been warned boy!! The new world order is at hand - join the revolution or suffer the consequences!

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY - PANNING THE ROOM FROM LEFT TO RIGHT
as nervous students pay rapt attention to their lecturing professor. Most are older than the norm, all are brainy types. There are many empty chairs; this is a select class of little more than a dozen.

We pass NAN ZACHERY, a bookwormish young woman... BENNISH, a long-haired Deadhead intellectual... MONTAGUE, an ultra-nerd 32 year old... and WING, an Asian genius in his mid-twenties... before finally coming to Quinn, whose youthful, relaxed demeanor sets him apart from his classmates.

The professor slowly pacing at the front of the room is MAXIMILIAN ARTURO, a Raul Julia look-alike, 44, Spanish blood, brilliant, arrogant but soft-hearted underneath, a ladies' man with a wicked sense of humor, thick dark hair and a full curled mustache.

The blackboard behind him is filled with complex notations.

ARTURO

As any idiot knows... the largest
symmetry group of a single Dirac
field is...?

Dead silence from the intimidated class. As Arturo's eyes scan the room demanding an answer, his students (except for Quinn) look down or away, praying not to be called upon.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Miss Zachery?

Nan, the bookworm can not even find the words for an attempt.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Montague?

The nerd hems and haws, his foot twitching under the steely gaze of the professor.

MONTAGUE

Perhaps... uh... well...

ARTURO

Mr. Wing?

The Asian student simply shakes his head and looks down, smiling self-consciously. Arturo's eyes wander to Quinn and linger there... Quinn stares right back, the only student not intimidated by the Professor's steely gaze. Arturo turns his back and stalks toward the blackboard...

ARTURO (CONT'D)

The silence is deafening, my young friends. You're supposed to be the best of the best - I guess the world really is going to hell in a hand-basket.

CLOSE ON QUINN casually jotting "U (4)" on a piece of scratch paper.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

(grabs chalk)

The answer, my dear hapless babes in the woods, is...

ANGLE BACK ON ARTURO as he flamboyantly starts to write "U (4)" on the blackboard. He turns and zeroes in on the long-haired guy in the front row...

ARTURO (CONT'D)

That 's U-four Mr. Bennish, not "U2"!

THE BELL RINGS to the great relief of the students. They sheepishly bolt for the door as Arturo bellows at them...

ARTURO (CONT'D)

You better shape up people. This kind of work may get you a job at Chernobyl - or NASA - but it ain't gonna cut it with me!

INT. CAMPUS HALLWAY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Quinn, Nan and Wing exit together, stepping out into the moving throng of students heading to and from class.

WING

Geez-Louise, Relativistic Quantum Field Theory is such a brain drain. I shoulda gone to law school like my old man begged me.

NAN

If you ask me, Professor Arturo's not nearly as smart as he thinks he is.

QUINN

Oh he's pretty smart alright. I'm re-reading his paper on "Coset Induced Wormholes In Keller Orbifolds" and I'm still not completely grasping his thesis on Chiral Field Anomalies.

NAN

(worried frown)

That not on the class list, is it?

QUINN

Nah, I'm just reading it for fun.

Quinn slows, spotting someone ahead through the moving mass of students. Wing and Nan follow his line of sight... and GROAN.

ANGLE ON A GROUP OF GIRLS chatting together in gossipy tones beside a drinking fountain. At the center of the group is STEPHANIE, a beautiful, long-legged blonde sophomore, the object of Quinn's riveted, heart pounding attention.

Wing and Nan know exactly what Quinn is thinking and they can sense he's weak in the knees.

WING

Gonna take another stab?

QUINN

(transfixed)

Should I?

WING/NAN

No.

Quinn didn't even hear the emphatic dual response. He is transfixed on his goddess.

QUINN

(slanted grin)

Can't help myself. I'm a slave to love.

Quinn gathers his courage and makes a beeline for the girls. Stephanie's nosy friend BETH sees him coming and alerts her chatty cohorts...

BETH

Uh-oh, here comes the cute brainy guy again.

Quinn approaches, masking his nervousness; the girls turn as one, to face him.

QUINN
Morning ladies. Uh, Stephanie,
could I have a word with you?

STEPHANIE
Sure. What's up?

Stephanie doesn't budge, remaining smack in the middle of her core of friends. Quinn definitely doesn't want to do this in front of an audience, so he takes her by the arm....

QUINN
Let's walk.

Stephanie smiles slightly, hesitates, making Quinn wait a moment while her friends titter. Then she allows Quinn to walk her down the hallway, away from her nosy clique...

QUINN
I've been thinking about you
Stephanie. I'm tenacious if
nothing else.

STEPHANIE
Tenacious? Is that like... shy?

QUINN
Well... not exactly.

STEPHANIE
(shrugging smile)
I'm a Home-Ec major. I don't read
too much.

QUINN
(deep breath)
I know the weekend's pretty busy
for you... so how 'bout dinner
Sunday night?

STEPHANIE
I'm real flattered and all Quinn,
but I have a date Sunday.

Quinn glances over his shoulder to see that Beth is tagging along right behind them. He shoots her a discouraging frown, to no avail, then turns and tries again...

QUINN
Okay. Monday.

STEPHANIE
Another date.

QUINN
Tuesday?

STEPHANIE
Study session.

QUINN
Wednesday?

STEPHANIE
90210. Never miss it.

BETH
(nosing in, to
Quinn, secretly)
You're running out of days
Mallory. Try lunch instead.

Quinn hesitates, knowing Beth has no use for him.

QUINN
Well... Maybe we could grab some
lunch --

STEPHANIE
-- I don't eat lunch.

BETH
She doesn't eat lunch.

STEPHANIE
But thanks for asking. I'm really
very flattered.

She turns the corner with Beth, leaving Quinn on his own.
Beth shoots him a little wave as they disappear out of
sight.

Quinn is rejoined by his friends; he puts on a brave face...

WING
How'd it go?

QUINN
Not bad. I think she's starting
to come around.

His friends look to one another; they're not buying it.

EXT. TOP FLIGHT COMPUTER STORE - DAY - ESTABLISHING

INT. COMPUTER STORE - DAY - ANGLE ON WADE WELLES

a keen-eyed girl of 23 - short red hair, blue eyes, self-conscious nature, surprisingly pretty but disdainful of make-up and jewelry.

She is working behind the counter when she spots Quinn through the picture window, exiting his VW. She immediately brightens, having much the same reaction Quinn did to Stephanie: heart thumping, adrenaline racing.

Quinn blows into the store, knowing he's late and openly brooding over his rejection by Stephanie. He passes right by the doting Wade, barely even seeing her as he attaches a smiling face "Top Flight" name tag on his shirt.

Wade carries on a mock conversation between the two of them.

WADE

Well hi Quinn - Hi Wade! - How ya doin' today? - Couldn't be better, and my don't you look lovely!

QUINN

(in a fog)

Huh? Who you talkin' to?

WADE

Myself. Of course.

QUINN

Gotta watch that Wade - first sign of old age. Trust me, it's all downhill after twenty five.

Quinn begins to busy himself behind the counter - Wade notes his melancholy look.

WADE

You okay? You seem kinda down.

QUINN

Why should I be down? Just because the girl of my dreams won't acknowledge my existence - that's no reason to be down is it?

WADE

You've had plenty of girls, and if you ask me, she doesn't deserve you.

(to herself)

Stephanie Sweet. Perfect name for a bimbo.

WADE (CONT'D)

(shy, hesitant)

Quinn... have you ever thought...
I mean... thought about the two of
us --

HURLEY (O.S.)

(bellowing)

-- Ah Mister Mallory, I see you've
decided to honor us with your
presence. The boy genius hath
arriveth - and only nine minutes
late this time! Will wonders
never cease?

Quinn cringes, Wade shuts her eyes, frustrated, as MICHAEL
HURLEY, the bespectacled, prima donna store manager
approaches with thudding steps. He stops directly before
Quinn and Wade, arms folded, and continues, condescendingly.

HURLEY (CONT'D)

(testing them)

Now... What's our motto?

QUINN/WADE

(sulking, by rote)

"At Top Flight you get the tops in
service, sales and selection."

HURLEY

And what would Computer Boy say if
he knew of your habitual
tardiness?

WADE

(rolling eyes)

Computer Boy... is only a cartoon,
Michael.

He turns to her, wide eyed and indignant. Wade cringes,
knowing she's crossed the line.

WADE (CONT'D)

Sorry.

Hurley grabs a t-shirt off the shelf and holds it up to
Quinn and Wade, forcing them to take a good look. COMPUTER
BOY, Top Flight's commercial mascot, has the body of a cute,
pudgy boy, and the square head of a computer screen - round
eyes, round nose, gaping mouth spouting the company's
slogan.

HURLEY

Computer Boy wouldn't stand for your monkey business mister, and neither will I! Now get to work and be thankful you still have a job.

Hurley shoots Wade a raised eyebrow glance, daring her to challenge him, then pirouettes and prances back across the showroom floor. Quinn looks down, simmering, busying himself with busywork as Wade looks on emphatically.

QUINN

I swear, one of these days I'm gonna tell him where he can stick that stupid Computer Boy!

(long sigh)

What a day.

EXT. QUINN'S HOUSE - NIGHT - QUINN

comes up the sidewalk, shoulders hunched, feeling the blues of post-teenage angst. He opens the perpetually SQUEAKY GATE and walks toward the front door.

INT. QUINN'S HOUSE - NIGHT - QUINN MAKES A BEELINE

for the basement, his cat Schrodinger right on his heels.

MRS. MALLORY (O.S.)

(somewhere upstairs)

Quinn is that you? If you're going to the basement, don't stay too long - you'll catch cold down there!

QUINN

(to himself)

Twenty-five and she still treats me like an infant. Time to move out, no doubt about it

(calling out)

I'll be fine Mom. See ya in the morning.

INT. BASEMENT/LABORATORY - NIGHT - AS QUINN STEPS INSIDE

we reveal an astounding room: the basement has been converted into an incredible scientific laboratory.

There are several shelves, looking like stereo racks, full of complex wiring, computers, keyboards, face tubes, and oscilloscopes with screens which display fluctuating wave patterns.

There's an optical table, steel-topped with drilled holes, on which many refractive mirrors, a laser and an electron microscope are anchored. A doorless refrigerator is surrounded by small tanks and connected by multiple wires to a "dewar", a one hundred gallon stainless steel cylinder with frozen tubes coming out the top that "sweat" steam.

Quinn walks toward a blackboard in the corner of the room, which is filled with a tremendously complex mathematical equation. At the end of the equation is a giant question mark: the one missing piece to a fantastic scientific problem.

Quinn studies the intimidating array of numbers with a frown, speaking to his observant cat...

QUINN

One missing piece... you'd think
after three months I'd be able to
crack it. Some genius I am.

The cat cocks its head, watching his master with interest. Quinn picks up a piece of chalk, about to try something on the board... but he pulls back, shaking his head, frustrated.

Quinn discards the chalk and moves to a video tape machine positioned over a TV set, still talking to his pet, thinking out loud...

QUINN (CONT'D)

But while searching for the
answer, accidents may happen...
amazing accidents.

He throws in a tape with "Quinn's Diary" written on the label - rewinds a little - and kicks back in a chair next to his cat, facing the set.

ON SCREEN: Quinn is pacing around the lab, excited, enthused, speaking directly into the unmanned camera...

QUINN (ON SCREEN)

September thirteenth: well Quinn
old buddy, you really did it this
time. Your attempt to create the
world's first anti-gravity device
has taken a decidedly bizarre
turn.

The on screen Quinn picks up a gadget, looking something like the remote control for a TV set.

QUINN (ON SCREEN, CONT'D)
Anti-grav? Huh-uh. Something
else? Definitely. But what...?

The on screen Quinn presses a button and something incredible happens - a CRACKLING SOUND, followed by a static electricity wind that makes Quinn's hair stand on end.

Something unearthly is forming before him, right out of thin air, about five feet off the ground. It's donut shaped, with the texture of a purple smoke ring... shimmery... diaphanous... reflective.

The smoke rings are spinning - clockwise on the outside, counterclockwise on the inside.

The mouth of the donut is black and undulating - its direct center is glistening like heat off a pavement in the heart of summer.

ANGLE ON QUINN, leaning forward in his seat, eager to get a look at the thing on tape. He visually fast forwards the machine to several days ahead...

ON SCREEN: Quinn is now studying the black heart at the center of the ring.

QUINN (ON SCREEN)
September twenty-first: after days of careful analysis, I've come to the conclusion that the center of the ring is a gateway - the mouth of a tunnel - or a rabbit hole to another existence.

QUINN hits the fast forward again and stops on another day.

ON SCREEN Quinn is standing before the hole, gazing at it in rapt fascination.

QUINN (ON SCREEN)
September twenty-fifth: for three days I've been sending objects into the void - a tennis ball, paper airplane, Rubic's cube - all vanished without a trace. Last night I perfected a timing device designed to return them from... wherever it is they're going. I sent Ted through...

QUINN (CONT'D)

(checks watch)

... nineteen minutes forty seconds ago, with the homing timer set on twenty minutes. With any luck, he should be returning, right about...

Before the on screen Quinn can say the word "now" the gate makes a loud CRACKING NOISE, and Ted, a stuffed toy Tyrannosaurus pops out of the black hole, literally landing in Quinn's lap.

The on The on screen Quinn is thrilled! He aims his gad vortex, presses a button and the smokey rings dissipate to nothingness - the room is back to normal. He looks at the dinosaur and speaks to it with a sense of longing, as if it were a real person...

QUINN (ON SCREEN)

How was it Ted? Where was it?
Did you travel through time? Did you go where no dinosaur's gone before?

(a touch sad)

God I wish you could tell me what you saw. You're Columbus and Armstrong, Ted... and you don't even know it.

ANGLE ON QUINN sitting before the TV set, freezing the image of himself on the screen. Quinn is deep in thought as he rises and walks toward the video camera set-up across the room.

With Schrodinger the cat and Ted the dinosaur visible in the background, Quinn turns on the camera and records today's diary entry.

VIDEO CAMERA POV (through lens): Quinn paces slowly, coming to a decision...

QUINN

September twenty-sixth: and the time has come. The need to know overwhelms the human instinct for self-preservation.

(stops pacing,
straight into
lens)

I had been thinking of sending Schrodinger through...

He looks back at his pet - the cat meows - Quinn smiles.

QUINN (CONT'D)

... First cat into the void! But
deep down I knew I never could.

(steps toward
camera, somber,
serious)

So tomorrow morning, I myself will
step through the gate... and
finally see... what's on the other
side.

FADE TO BLACK:

EXT. QUINN'S HOUSE - MORNING - FADE BACK IN ON THE HOUSE

as the early morning fog rolls in. We hear the wry VOICE OF
THE SPACEMAN coming over a radio...

SPACEMAN (O.S.)

Spaceman here gents and germs...
and I wanna talk about our beloved
President. If you thought Carter
came from Mayberry, then where the
hell did Bubba Clinton come from?

INT. QUINN'S BASEMENT - MORNING - CLOSE ON A RADIO

sitting amidst the scientific clutter in the room.

SPACEMAN (O.S., CONT'D)

I keep expecting Goober to be
named Secretary of State. I
wonder if Floyd the barber
would've kept Clinton waiting in
that plane for a haircut --

Quinn's hand reaches INTO FRAME and hits the off button,
instantly silencing the sardonic Spaceman. It is the
following morning and Quinn is dressed in jeans, Oakland A's
cap, and teal colored Sharks jacket, ready for his great
adventure.

Quinn activates the video camera and speaks to it, his voice
betraying a rising sense of nervousness and expectation...

QUINN

September 27th: D-day. I've set
the timer to fifteen minutes,
but... well... Mom, in the event
something goes wrong and I don't
return, know that I love you, and
try not to worry too much.

QUINN (CONT'D)

(shy grin)

You know me - wherever I am I'll
bet I'm having a blast.

(afterthought)

Oh, and don't throw out any of my
stuff - I might make it back one
day.

Keeping the camera running, Quinn picks up the hand held gadget and points it into the air before him. We hear the static charge of building electromagnetism as the magnificent, mysterious smoke ring gate forms again, opening a gaping passageway to an unknown existence.

Quinn gives his cat a farewell scratch and hug... takes a deep breath... and steps into the void.

INT. THE VOID - QUINN

finds himself sucked forward by an unseen force. He hurtles at breakneck speed across a plane of black nothingness, his heart thumping wildly in the pit of his stomach,

He begins to tumble, the initial dead silence of the void being replaced by A RUSHING, ROARING SOUND, not unlike waves crashing on a beach.

There is a shape up ahead - a bending focal point of light not unlike a prism. Quinn tumbles right into its heart and the world around him explodes in a plethora of brilliant colors. Quinn finds himself swimming through a pulsing array of greens, yellows, blues and reds.

Orange lightning bolts sizzle all around him as he suddenly feels the dizzying pull of gravity and free falls down toward a circular black tunnel at the bottom of the erupting sea of colors.

Quinn belts out a quivering yell, familiar to all who've ridden a roller coaster streaking downwards, as he flies into the jet-black tunnel and lands with a thud --

INT. QUINN'S BASEMENT - MORNING - TIGHT ON QUINN

shaking, shuddering - exhilarated and a little unsettled as he gets his bearings. He is lying on a hardwood floor - the room is completely silent.

He takes a deep breath and dares to look around... shock slowly spreads across his features as his eyes take in the surroundings.

QUINN

(whisper)

Oh no.

WIDEN ANGLE to see that Quinn is right back in his laboratory/basement. He glances around the room with an increasing sense of disappointment: the gate led nowhere.

From his seat on the floor, he turns his head around just in time to see the gate disappear. Schrodinger nuzzles up against his leg, sensing his master's blue mood...

MRS. MALLORY (O.S.)

(from upstairs)

Quinn, you better hurry up honey!
You're gonna be late for school
again!

Quinn sits there a moment, dazed by the trip and depressed by its outcome. He sighs and shakes his head disappointedly - there's no place like home but it's the last place he wants to be right now.

QUINN

(soft, sad)

I'm a failure Schrodinger. I'm
right back where I started.

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF HOUSE - MORNING - QUINN'S VW

pulls away from the house, beginning its daily race to class. Still reeling from his pointless trip, Quinn doesn't hear his mother call to him from the kitchen window...

MRS. MALLORY

Quinn, I'm all outta V-8! Could
you pick some up on your way home?

Quinn never sees her - never sees that she's now wearing glasses and her red hair has been bleached blonde.

INT. QUINN'S VW - MORNING - QUINN SIGHS

and switches on the radio out of force of habit. Still preoccupied, he doesn't notice that The Spaceman is whistling an oddly different tune...

SPACEMAN (O.S.)

... Guys who bitch and moan about feminists are insecure jerks - FACE IT - men have been rigging the game for centuries, and now that women are kicking ass across the board, most male morons are so threatened, they just can't face the fact that the gals are whupping them!

Quinn is approaching a major intersection - he speeds up a little to make the light before it turns yellow. As the VW heads north through the crossing, Quinn is horrified to see that all east and west bound traffic are running the red lights!

HORNS BLARE from either side - Quinn jerks the wheel in terror, swerving left-right-left and barely several cars that nearly blast into him at forty miles an hour!

Astonished, he screeches to a halt and looks back at the intersection, but the cars that nearly clipped him have continued on. Shaken, he drives ahead...

SPACEMAN (O.S., CONT'D)

Well the news of the day is good and bad. The good news is the Brooklyn Dodgers lost again last night and you know how much I hate The Dodgers. The bad news is President Dukakis says he's gonna seek another term.

Quinn frowns, glancing at the radio.

SPACEMAN (O.S., CONT'D)

Now don't get me wrong - the Duke's been pretty okay, but I was hoping they'd convince Jack Kennedy to make a run for it. Apparently JFK's enjoying his retirement a little too much and doesn't need the hassle of a campaign. And who can blame him - if I was married to Marilyn I'd probably never get outta bed!

Quinn stares at the radio with a deeply puzzled frown as he slows to a stop before a red light at a quieter intersection.

QUINN

Weird, Spaceman... Weird and not real funny.

A BLASTING HORN coming from the car behind makes Quinn jump. He looks in his rear view mirror and sees a row of cars with angry drivers shaking their fists and urging Quinn to run the red. Quinn is chilled to see all opposing traffic stopped before the green.

QUINN (CONT'D)

What on Earth...?

Confused and uncertain, Quinn accelerates cautiously and drives through the red light intersection - the other cars follow suit - those on the green stay put.

SPACEMAN (O.S.)

In local news, Mayor Reagan vows to bring law and order back to our streets by - get this - allowing private citizens to own handguns!

(biting, sarcastic)

Great idea Ronny. That's all we need, guns in everyone's home! A few more proposals like that and it's back to sitcoms. I always liked him better than Tom Bosley anyway - to me there's only one Mister C and that's Ron Reagan - enough said!

QUINN

(driving slow,
heart racing)

What... what's happening?

He cuts off as he spots something through the windshield that leaves his mouth hanging open. Quinn pulls the car to the curb and stares up and to the right in utter disbelief.

QUINN (CONT'D)

(whispering)

My God... where am I?

Numbed yet excited, he pulls a screeching u-turn and heads back toward the house.

ANGLE UP to see what he just saw:

A roadside billboard for The Las Vegas Hilton, featuring a blimp of a man with tinted glasses and salt and pepper hair, wearing an outrageous diamond-studded jumpsuit.

Now Appearing! One week only!

ELVIS!!

HOLD on the billboard... and FADE TO BLACK:

End of Act One

Act Two

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO STREET - MORNING - THE VW

runs straight through a red light with the rest of the morning traffic.

EXT. FRONT OF QUINN'S HOUSE - MORNING - QUINN PARKS

in front of his house and exits the car, spooked, looking around the street for telltale signs that this is another world - but everything looks so much the same.

Quinn walks up the front path... and discovers that the gate does not squeak.

Mrs. Mallory comes walking out the front door, arm in arm with JAKE, a somewhat sleazy neighbor. His mother and Jake seem amazingly friendly... and Mrs. Mallory is blonde, bespectacled... and very pregnant.

MRS. MALLORY

How'd you get outside so fast,
Quinn honey? Didn't I just see
you in the kitchen?

Quinn stares up at the kitchen window, alarmed by her comment - then down at her belly, alarmed by her condition.

QUINN

(stammering)

Mom? You and Jake? You don't
even like him!

Before she can respond, Quinn notices that the gizmo in his hand is BEEPING and flashing yellow... then BEEPING LOUDER and flashing red. He feels a sudden yanking sensation and the world is enveloped in black - Quinn finds himself being hurtled right out of this existence!

EXT. THE VOID - QUINN

is now being sucked upward, going back the way he came.

INT. BASEMENT/LABORATORY - MORNING - QUINN POPS THROUGH

the smoke ring energy field, pinwheeling his arms to keep his balance as he skids across the hardwood floor.

Schrodinger MEOWS, happy to see his master again. The dial on his timing device shows his fifteen minutes have just elapsed.

Quinn takes a delicious moment to gather his thoughts. In the end, only one word seems to sum it all up.

QUINN

Yes!

EXT. FRONT OF QUINN'S HOUSE - MORNING - QUINN'S HEAD

is absolutely buzzing as he tries the gate. It SQUEAKS MIGHTILY, like it always has, thrilling him to the core.

MRS. MALLORY

(from kitchen
window)

Quinn, quit playing around and get to school! Honey, you're gonna be late again.

QUINN

(beaming)

I'm home, Ma. Home!

MRS. MALLORY

That's just the point.
(amazed frown)

School, sweetheart.

INT. UNIVERSITY HALLWAY - DAY - QUINN

strides down the hall on cloud nine. He can't wait to tell Professor Arturo what he's done; he's not the least bit concerned about being grossly late for physics class.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY - QUINN OPENS THE DOOR QUIETLY

and steps into the room. He feels like he's in an E.F. Hutton commercial - all eyes turn his way - his classmates look stunned and even nervous to see him. Quinn freezes for a second, taken aback - Arturo has stopped in mid-sentence and is eyeing him with hot tempered indignation.

Head down, Quinn slinks to his seat in the back of the room, next to his friend Wing. As Arturo grinds his teeth and resumes his lecture, Quinn WHISPERS to his classmate...

QUINN

Gee, a guy's a little late, you'd think he killed someone.

Wing is staring at him, wide-eyed. He WHISPERS a tense response...

WING

I can't believe you came back.
Watch it man, he's really pissed!

Quinn has no idea what his friend is talking about. He takes out a pen and tries to follow the lecture... but as he looks ahead, can't help but notice others in the class continually glancing his way, as if he were the dangerous type.

CUT TO LATER IN THE HOUR: Arturo is writing an equation on the board in short, quick, angry strokes, taking it out on the chalk, when THE BELL RINGS. He puts the chalk down, seething, and loads his briefcase, preparing for a quick departure.

ANGLE ON QUINN still wondering what the hell's going on as he rises from his desk. As the other students file out, they all take extreme notice of him - some are careful to keep their distance - a few pat his arm in solemn support. Bennish, the long-hair in the tie-dye shirt, is the only one to speak, sporting a crooked, appreciative grin...

BENNISH

Whoa dude - I think Arturo's a pompous windbag too, but I'd never have the guts to say it to his face! Bigtime congrats, stud-man!

He keeps going. Soon the completely puzzled Quinn is the only one left in the room besides Arturo. The Professor has filled his briefcase and is striding up the aisle toward the door - his route will take him right past Quinn.

QUINN

Professor, I couldn't wait to tell you; I've made the most amazing discovery --

Arturo stops before Quinn, his dark eyes full of fire.

ARTURO

-- I don't care how old you are - you ever call me a pinhead again, we'll settle it outside!

Arturo struts by, on his way to the door.

QUINN

But... but I --

ARTURO
(at door, spinning
around)

-- And you think you've had more
women than me?! I once dated
Sandy Duncan - let's see you top
that!

The livid professor exits, leaving Quinn completely at a
loss.

INT. UNIVERSITY HALLWAY - DAY - QUINN STEPS OUT

into the hallway, dazed and confused. It seems other
students are noticing him, whispering amongst themselves -
what is going on? Quinn shrugs it off to paranoia until he
sees Stephanie approaching... and actually looking his way.
In fact, she leaves friend Beth's side and makes a beeline
for Quinn.

QUINN
Hi Stephanie --

She slaps him! WHISTLES and GROANS resound from nearby
students.

STEPHANIE
My butt is not your personal
property mister! Try that again
and you'll meet my knee, up close
and personal.

She pirouettes and returns to Beth - who shoots Quinn a
profound look of disapproval - and the two girls move off
down the hall. Quinn is still frowning and rubbing his
cheek, when Montague also goes out of his way to voice a
complaint.

MONTAGUE
Thanks alot, Quinn. Next time you
need to borrow a quarter, I'll
laugh in your face too!

He walks on, indignant. Quinn wonders if this is all a bad
dream - he has little time to ponder - A BURLY SECURITY
GUARD has spotted him from down the hall...

SECURITY GUARD
You better come with me, son.

QUINN
Where?

SECURITY GUARD
Dean's office. You're in a
tough-load of trouble, boy.

INT. DEAN'S OFFICE - CLOSE ON MRS. GRAHAM

the dean, a scholarly black woman in her early forties. She is reading from a list, occasionally lowering her glasses to glance across her desk at Quinn, who is seated before her.

MRS. GRAHAM
Student Mallory seen pouring soy
sauce in the water cooler..
Student Mallory seen juggling
frozen frogs in the science lab...
Student Mallory seen painting
mustache on portrait of dean in
main hallway.
(raised eyebrows)
Do I look good with a mustache Mr.
Mallory?

QUINN
I wouldn't know, Mrs. Graham.
Believe me, I didn't do it.

MRS. GRAHAM
I can round up two dozen witnesses
who'll say you did. Will that be
necessary?

Quinn looks down, shakes his head, desperately trying to figure this nightmare out.

MRS. GRAHAM (CONT'D)
I'm quite surprised at this
juvenile behavior Quinn - until
now you've been a model student.
(thoughtful sigh)
Let's just say you've had a bad
day - a very bad day - and are now
on probation. One more such
incident, and...

She doesn't need to finish the sentence, he gets the picture.

INT. POLI-SCI CLASS - DAY - QUINN SITS NEAR THE BACK

of a crowded classroom that's in the midst of a written exam. He is having trouble concentrating - his mind still racing in circles from the bizarre events of the day.

The door opens and the security guard who apprehended him earlier walks in, his eyes scanning the room. Quinn dreads what's coming... when the man's eyes find his desk, his search is ended.

Quinn points at his own chest, as if to say "me"? The guard takes great pleasure in nodding deliberately and beckoning Quinn with his index finger.

INT. HALLWAY - ON QUINN AND THE GUARD

exiting the classroom.

SECURITY GUARD
Gotta hand it to ya kid, don't
know how you pulled it off.

QUINN
What?

SECURITY GUARD
Runnin' Dean Graham's bra up the
flagpole.

Quinn groans.

SECURITY GUARD (CONT'D)
Cheer up Mallory - sure you're
expelled but at least you're goin'
out a legend.

INT. COMPUTER STORE - DAY - CLOSE ON WADE WELLES

filling out a slip and looking up absently as A JANGLING SOUND indicates someone's entering the store. Her eyes bug out when she sees who it is - she drops what she's doing and hurries toward the newcomer.

ANGLE TO REVEAL A TROUBLED QUINN coming into work with alot on his mind.

WADE
(hushed, shocked)
Quinn!! What're you doing here?

QUINN
I work here, remember?

WADE
But he'll go ape if he sees you!

She nervously glances back toward Michael Hurley's office.

QUINN

Who? Hurley?

WADE

Of course - he just fired you.
Told you never to show your face
around here, or else.

Quinn closes his eyes and exhales. Wade sees the genuine
look of bewilderment on his face.

QUINN

Wade, I swear... I don't remember
because it wasn't me. I just got
here --

WADE

-- Knock it off Quinn, I was
standing right there when it
happened. This is not funny.

She hushes as a customer enters and begins to browse.

QUINN

Alright... tell me what happened.
(pause)
Please Wade... tell me.

WADE

(slow smile)

Well it all started right after
you kissed me --

QUINN

-- Kissed you?! Why would I kiss
you? I mean, we're buds - it'd be
like incest or something!

Quinn is looking down and away, his frazzled mind spinning.
Wade's arms are folded indignantly; she's steaming.

QUINN (CONT'D)

Go on, go on.

WADE

(tight-lipped)

Then Michael came in and told you
you had soy sauce on your tie --

QUINN

-- My tie? Since when do I ever
wear a tie?

WADE

First time I've ever seen it.
Anyway, Michael said Computer Boy
doesn't stand for slovenly dress.

Quinn is afraid to ask the question.

QUINN

And what did I do?

WADE

You laughed in his face - then you
told him that Computer Boy was...
was a...

She glances over at the nearby customer, leans forward and
whispers the rest in Quinn's ear. Quinn initially winces,
then seems to draw a strange satisfaction from what he's
just heard.

QUINN

I did? Really?

WADE

(small smile)

Yeah.

(sudden frown)

He gets me so mad - I, I wanted to
join you - tell him the same goes
for me! But...

(meekly)

... you know how I am. I need the
job... and I was afraid.

The manager's voice bellows out from behind his closed
office door, making Wade jump nervously.

HURLEY (O.S.)

Wade! Come here a minute!

WADE

(alarmed whisper)

Oh Quinn, you better get outta
here. He keeps a gun in his
office!

QUINN

(chuckling)

And you think he'd really shoot
me?

WADE

I've been to his house - he's got pictures of Computer Boy in his family album! He takes this stuff seriously and YOU'D BETTER GO!!

INT. QUINN'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON - MRS. MALLORY

is playing gin with THREE NEIGHBORS including JAKE. The living room TV is on in the background. ON SCREEN: we see a commercial featuring an aggressive young lawyer speaking straight into the camera...

LAWYER

(fast and furious)

Had an accident on the job? I know how to exploit the law to secure the benefits you deserve!

CUT TO A BEEFY CONSTRUCTION WORKER wearing a hard hat and speaking stiffly, reading from cue cards.

HARDHAT

I was re-lax-ing on the job... when someone ac-ci-dent-ly dropped an an-vil on my head... Ross Kelley got ME a mill-yon dollars.

CUT BACK TO THE LAWYER excitedly barking at the camera.

LAWYER

I'm Ross J. Kelley and I won't take no for an answer - I'll FIGHT for YOU!!

His 800 number flashes, the commercial ends and a soap opera resumes. Mrs. Mallory and her card playing guests look up when they hear the front door open. Quinn enters the house, slowing momentarily to look at Jake in a whole new light, then passing through on his way to the laboratory.

MRS. MALLORY

(preoccupied)

How was your day, dear?

QUINN

Let's see... I got expelled and fired. Otherwise it was great.

Good natured chuckles from the table.

MRS. MALLORY

My son, the genius comedian.

INT. BASEMENT/LABORATORY - DUSK - PERPLEXED AND UNSETTLED

Quinn steps into the lab, mildly surprised to find Schrodinger already there. He picks him up...

QUINN

How'd you get in here boy?

Quinn closes his eyes as he strokes the cat, speaking in a worried half-whisper...

QUINN (CONT'D)

Nothing makes sense anymore.
Stepping into the hole must've
messed up my mind... made me
hallucinate. I - I think I'm
going insane --

Quinn opens his eyes and freezes, putting the cat down. Something he sees at the other end of the room has completely captured his attention.

ANGLE TO INCLUDE THE BLACKBOARD where the question marks at the end of the massive equation have been erased and replaced by a crudely drawn happy face... and the elusive, complex answer he's been struggling to find for months.

Quinn approaches the board slowly... mouth open in stunned recognition. He traces his fingers along the answer...

QUINN (CONT'D)

Yes... yes! Of course!

The ear to ear smile he wears slowly fades as he realizes the solution has been written in Quinn's own handwriting!

QUINN (CONT'D)

But... who did this?

A VOICE comes out of the semi-darkness behind him. A voice all at once confident and strangely familiar.

MYSTERY VOICE (O.S.)

I did.

Quinn spins to see a silhouetted figure standing in the shadows. There's an eerie moment of silence before the unknown intruder steps out of the darkness and into the light.

Quinn Mallory finds himself standing face to face...

With himself...

FADE TO BLACK

END OF ACT TWO

Act Three

INT. LABORATORY - DUSK - FADE IN ON THE TWO QUINNS

standing nose to nose with their mirror images.

Quinn Mallory slowly circles the double who stepped out of the shadows. QUINN 2 is facially identical, though a little more buff physically - he possesses a cocksure nature and an immature, devilish air...

Quinn 2 sports a crooked grin - he seems to be enjoying the look of astonishment on the original Quinn's face.

QUINN

Who are you?

QUINN #2

Isn't it obvious? I'm you.

QUINN

(anguished)

My God... The gateway - it split me in half!

QUINN #2

(laughing)

Not hardly. I'm you Quinn, but I'm not from this world. I'm from another Earth - an Earth that exists in a parallel dimension.

QUINN

Oh... oh yes... yes I've been there! Just this morning --

QUINN #2

-- I highly doubt it. There may be hundreds, even thousands of Earths, all co-existing on the same multi-dimensional space/time continuum.

QUINN

How do you know all this?

QUINN #2

Because I'm a Slider - and this happens to be my eighth Slide.

QUINN

Slider?

QUINN #2

Yeah. Little term I cooked up.
Like it?

QUINN

(slow grin)

Yeah... that's pretty cool.

QUINN #2

Probably would've dreamt it up
yourself sooner or later. It's a
safe bet we think alike. Mostly.

Quinn 2 picks up the gizmo and presses some buttons... The
smoke ring/gateway materializes in the room. Quinn 2
indicates the undulating black hole in its center.

QUINN #2 (CONT'D)

That's the entrance to a wormhole
that runs between worlds. When
you step inside, you "Slide"
through to another universe,
completely distinct and separate
from your own.

QUINN

But... can you choose your
destination?

QUINN #2

'Fraid not - or at least not yet.
Think of a roulette wheel with an
infinite number of slots, each
representing a different planet
Earth. Each time you Slide,
you're spinning the wheel, never
knowing where the ball will come
up.

(calling from
upstairs)

Quinn honey, there's coffee cake
up here if you want some.

QUINN

(to double)

Hey, that might be fun. We could
both go upstairs and --

QUINN #2

-- Uh-uh. Me and another Quinn
tried that once - his mom nearly
had a heart attack.

As Quinn ponders that thought, his double strolls over to the blackboard, sporting a cocksure grin.

QUINN #2

I solved that old thing months ago. Now, thanks to me, you've got the answer too and you owe me big, hombre!

QUINN

Thanks to you I lost my job and got kicked out of school! Hombre.

QUINN #2

(sheepish grin)

Oh that. Just havin' a little fun; can't help myself I guess. As for Computer Hell I did you a favor - that Hurley guy's a dick on every world I've been to. Amazing.

(checks watch)

Well, gotta go. Wife's waiting.

The double sees Quinn is unnerved by the word "wife".

QUINN #2 (CONT'D)

Been married two years now. Her name's Stephanie.

Quinn can't believe his ears. Stephanie! He smiles broadly, exhales, shakes his head in gleeful disbelief.

QUINN #2 (CONT'D)

Know her?

QUINN

Uh... not as well as you do.

QUINN #2

Terrific girl - the one here's probably thinking of you at this very moment.

The thought is almost too delicious for Quinn to bear. He comes out of his Nirvana long enough to notice that his double is looking at him with a gleam in his eye, his expression sincere and personal. Quinn looks into his face - his own face - and recognizes genuine pleasure...

QUINN #2 (CONT'D)

You're gonna love Sliding Quinn.
I've been to a world where they
only wear clothes on Tuesday...
and another where Wayne Gretzky
plays center field for the
Yankees. You know... I once
stepped onto an Earth just this
side of paradise...

(closes eyes,
dreamy,
remembering)

... no traffic... no pollution...
no crime or hate, at least none
that I saw. People are happy and
thoughtful...and a stranger is
welcomed with love. No one's
afraid there Quinn. Think about
it...no one's afraid.

Quinn 2 is being surrounded by a series of blue electrical
coils and A SOUND LIKE AN APPROACHING FREIGHT TRAIN is
drowning out his words...

QUINN 2 (CONT'D)

... I'd set the timer to twenty
hours before I left home that day.
(drowned out) not nearly enough
time in a world like that. I hope
to I find it again - I'll always
keep looking. (opens eyes, words
drowned out)... speaking of the
timer, I should warn you. No
matter what happens during a
Slide, never (drowned out) the
timer before it's (drowned out) or
else (drowned out) much too
dangerous!

With a wild rush of air and a brilliant flash of light,
Quinn 2 disappears, snapped back by his timer to the waiting
arms of his wife on the Earth he calls home.

ANGLE ON QUINN staring at the spot where his double just
stood, smiling and shaking his head in excitement and
wonder.

Still buzzing on high, his mind racing with thoughts of
worlds like the one just described, Quinn moves to the phone
and punches in a number...

QUINN (INTO PHONE)

Wade it's Quinn - I need to ask
you a favor.

OVERLAP THE SOUND OF A SEVENTIES POP/SOUL HIT and CUT TO:

EXT. REMBRANDT BROWN'S HOUSE - DUSK - ESTABLISHING SHOT

of a flamboyant little home in a fashionable section of San Francisco. The song we've been hearing is "Cry Like A Man" an early seventies hit by "The Spinning Topps": a classic AM top-forty Philadelphia soul production made famous by a band that firmly found its niche alongside The Ojays, The Stylistics, Wilson Pickett, etc...

SPINNING TOPPS (V.O., SINGING)

(lead singer,
parroting backups)

*My friends ask me why I cry (why I
cry!)... It's cuz I feel like I
wanna die (wanna die!)... These
tears spring from my eye (from my
eye!)... Ever since ya said good-
bye (so-oo long!)*

INT. REMBRANDT'S DEN - DUSK - CONTINUOUS

ANGLE ON ARTIE FELD longtime booking agent from the old school of showbiz. He's chomping on a cigar as he browses the walls of this room, which have been turned into a shrine honoring the twenty year career of REMBRANDT BROWN, former lead singer of The Spinning Topps (whose song is playing in the background).

SPINNING TOPPS (V.O., SINGING)

*I'm gonna cry like a man (man!)
Hard as I can (oooh!) Cuz your
love hit me in the head like a
fryin' pan!*

ANGLE TO INCLUDE THE TV SCREEN where a video tape of an American Bandstand type show from the seventies is running. A youthful REMBRANDT BROWN is lip-syncing, the other three Spinning Topps dance in unison behind him, using highly stylized, "groove to moves".

All wear pastel colored, polyester three-piece suits with wide lapels and matching cuffs. Rembrandt Brown sports the largest of the four afros.

Artie turns his attention back to the numerous articles, plaques, awards and gold records lining the walls - A MAN'S VOICE calls out from the connecting bathroom...

REMBRANDT (O.S.)

Turn that off, will ya Artie!
Don't need to be hearin' any of
that old stuff, the night of my
big comeback!

ARTIE

(toward bathroom)
But I love The Spinning Topps!
(under his breath)
Wish to hell you'd never left 'em.

REMBRANDT (O.S.)

They ain't nothin' without
Rembrandt. Straight down the
tubes the minute I walked.

Rembrandt turns on a blow-dryer in the bathroom.

ARTIE

(to himself,
aggravated)
Who you kiddin'? Fifteen number
one hits, minus you!

REMBRANDT (O.S.)

Thirteen, and they was all flukes!
What counts is The Cryin' Man's
bigger and better than ever - he
don't need no has-been Spinnin'
Topps leaching all his glory!

Artie shakes his head, feeling his ulcer and chomping harder
on the cigar. He focuses on the framed articles...

HIS POV: perusing a pictorial history of Rembrandt "Cryin'
Man" Brown's career:

The days fronting The Spinning Topps... big news of the
acrimonious breakup - Cryin' Man goes one way, rest of Topps
another... Photos of Rembrandt playing lounges following the
split... Rembrandt going into early retirement.

Throughout the years, Rembrandt's afro has grown and shrunk,
come and gone, but his trademark three-piece, wide-cuffed
disco outfits and penchant for crying real tears in every
performance, have remained constant.

REMBRANDT (O.S., CONT'D)

(over sound of
dryer)

I tell ya Artie, my comeback will
shock the world! I'll be bigger
than ever - all my fans will be
flocking to the field tonight.

ARTIE

Geez Rennie, you're singin' the Anthem at a Giants game, not performing for the Queen. It's a start, that's all.

Rembrandt discards that thought with ease..

REMBRANDT (O.S.)

It's a rebirth! And wait'll you see my new look - you'll be floored my man - it's TOTALLY NINETIES!

(kills dryer)

Here, I'll show ya.

Artie turns expectantly - he's never seen Rembrandt change his basic appearance in all the years he's known him.

ANGLE ON REMBRANDT stepping into the room... He's wearing the usual three-piece, the usual shiny black shoes, the usual gold on his fingers and around his neck.

The only difference is a small red AIDS ribbon on his lapel.

REMBRANDT (CONT'D)

Nineties baby! The Cryin' Man is back!!

INT. QUINN'S HOUSE/FRONT LANDING - NIGHT - ON MRS. MALLORY

moving toward the KNOCKING SOUND at her front door. She peers through the peephole...

MRS. MALLORY'S POV (through fisheye lens): Professor Arturo is peering back through the hole; Wade Welles stands alongside.

Mrs. Mallory does a quick check of her hair before opening the door.

ARTURO

Good evening. I am Professor Maximilian Arturo.

MRS. MALLORY

(eyelashes
fluttering)

Oh my yes, I've heard my son speak highly of you on many occasions.

ARTURO

I'm afraid Quinn misbehaved rather badly this morning. This young lady assures me he's beside himself with grief and wants to beg my forgiveness.

WADE

May we come in?

INT. BASEMENT/LABORATORY - NIGHT - A COURTESY KNOCK

is followed by the entrance of Wade and Arturo. They find Quinn in an excited state, bent over a desk in a corner of the room, writing on scratch paper, feverishly working on several scientific permutations. He greets the newcomers cheerfully, beckoning them without ever looking up...

QUINN

Come on in, I'll be with ya in a sec.

The vain professor is already put off by being put off - but his mood is tempered by an infatuation with the fantastic lab Quinn has put together. He studies the now completed blackboard equation with raised eyebrows before finally turning to the preoccupied Quinn, his arms folded impatiently across his chest.

ARTURO

My time is valuable, Mr. Mallory. You wish to grovel? You have exactly one minute to do so.

Quinn puts down his pen and looks back at the miffed professor with happy, excited eyes. He pats his teacher on the back, as if he were an old school chum, then crosses to the other end of the room, leaving Arturo in speechless indignation. The Professor was expecting a heartfelt, squirming repentance - he's gotten nothing of the sort.

Arturo shoots a hotheaded look at Wade - she manages a weak smile and an embarrassed shrug.

Quinn sticks his video diary tape into the VCR...

QUINN (CONT'D)

Have a seat Professor - and get comfortable. You're going to be here alot longer than a minute.

EXT. REMBRANDT'S CADILLAC - NIGHT - THE CRYIN' MAN

is cruising across town in his ice blue Caddy convertible, enroute to the freeway that leads to Candlestick Park. He is practicing the Anthem, singing it slowly and soulfully...

REMBRANDT (O.S. SINGING)

Oh say... can you, I ask can you,
I mean can you, I WANNA KNOW - do
you see? By the dawn's early
light...

At this rate, it'll take twenty minutes to complete.

INT. QUINN'S BASEMENT/LABORATORY - NIGHT - ARTURO

is pacing back and forth, frowning, thinking.

ARTURO

I tell you I simply don't believe
it. I - I admit I never knew your
imagination was so vivid, but
there's no proof that --

Quinn has pressed a button on the timer/gizmo. The air is reacting, the purple smoke ring is forming.

Arturo steps back, Wade steps forward, both awestruck at the sight of the pulsating black hole in its center.

In a few moments the gateway is complete.

Arturo swallows hard - there is no longer a question of belief or disbelief - he simply can not argue with his own eyes.

Wade and Arturo approach the ring... the Professor seems much more wary of it than the beaming girl. Slowly, carefully, he looks into the gaping black opening...

ARTURO

A gateway to a parallel universe.
(whisper)
Fantastic.

INT. CADILLAC - NIGHT - ON REMBRANDT

REMBRANDT (SINGING)

...home, I mean home, I said home
(James Brown Scream) of the...
braaaaaave!

Deeply satisfied, Rembrandt gives himself a thumbs up in the rear view mirror, checks his hair, and punches up the Giant station on the radio...

SPORTSCASTER (O.S.)

Welcome to the pre-game show of tonight's game between the Giants and the Houston Astros - brought to you by Blue Eagle Beer - when the workday is done, Blue Eagle's the one.

Rembrandt fusses with his hair in the rear view mirror - he's hyped and eagerly anticipating the night to come.

SPORTSCASTER (O.S., CONT'D)

Well fans, the Giants made a roster move today that came as little surprise - shortstop Vic Smith who's been struggling with the leather - three errors last night - was sent down to triple-A Phoenix of The Pacific Coast League. The Giants hope the youngster will learn to relax and regain his confidence --

REMBRANDT

-- Who cares about Vic Smith, man! The Anthem, the people wanna know who's singin' the Anthem!

INT. QUINN'S BASEMENT/LABORATORY - NIGHT - CLOSE ON WADE

WADE

(enthused, certain)

Let's go through. Now. Tonight.

ARTURO

Don't be a child. The wormhole must be carefully studied, all the permutations plotted and computed --

WADE

-- Scared, Professor?

Arturo is caught off guard by the question - she's struck a nerve - he's about to fumble a haughty, macho denial but she beats him to the punch.

WADE (CONT'D)

It's okay. I'm still scared of the dark, I admit it. I'm scared of a lot of things - but Sliding's nothing to be afraid of. Quinn's gone through - his double's done it near a dozen times.

ARTURO

Miss Welles, I assure you, fear has no place in my psyche. It's just that, uh, --

WADE

-- Do you want the papers to say you chickened out while Quinn and I took the journey without you?

ARTURO

Papers? You mean... newspapers?

WADE

Of course! You're gonna be famous... if you go.

ARTURO

(stroking chin)

Hmmm... perhaps, in the interests of science, I should go along - as a service to our world, so to speak.

Wade smiles and nods her head, satisfied to have pushed the right buttons.

CUT TO QUINN minutes later, punching in numbers on the timer gizmo...

QUINN

I'm setting the timer to six hours
- that should give us ample time
to explore.

Heart pounding with anticipation, Wade moves toward the gateway. Arturo takes a deep breath, masking his instinctive fear of the unknown... then he steps forward too.

QUINN

(joining them)

This is the first time more than one person or object has entered the gate. Maybe I should increase the power to accommodate the three of us... The question is, how much?

Slowly, carefully, Quinn turns a dial on the gizmo - the sound, the indoor wind, the static electricity start to build - the would be Sliders hair begins to stand on end.

INT. REMBRANDT'S CADILLAC - NIGHT - REMBRANDT

steers his Caddy down a suburban street, taking a shortcut to the freeway. It's the street where Quinn lives.

INT. QUINN'S BASEMENT/LABORATORY - NIGHT

CLOSE ON QUINN'S HAND turning the dial almost as far as it will go.

ANGLE TO INCLUDE THE SMOKE RING which has grown to more than twice its normal size.

Quinn hesitates, making silent calculations, then turns the dial the rest of the way. The hole grows in a frightening instant and swallows all three of them like a shark devouring a school of fish!

The hole continues to expand with lightning swiftness, passing right through the walls of the house!

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF HOUSE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

the hole moves out into the street.

INT. REMBRANDT'S CADILLAC - NIGHT - REMBRANDT

is cruising down the block when he suddenly spots an ominous black shape floating over the sidewalk and directly into his path. He tries to brake but it's much too late - Rembrandt HOWLS as he and his beloved car plunge headlong into the void!

Shortly after swallowing the Caddy, the smoke-ring hole reaches its zenith.. It hovers for a moment... then shrinks down in size until it disappears back into the basement.

INT. THE VOID - WADE, QUINN AND ARTURO

are careening through the darkness at breakneck speed. Wade is blown away - Quinn is trying to be more observant this time - Arturo is on the edge of total terror.

The professor leans his head back and catches a glimpse of something large bearing down on them from behind.

ARTURO

There's - there's something -
COMING AFTER US!!

Quinn and Wade strain to look backwards - their eyes go wide at the sight!

THEIR POV: an ice blue Cadillac is streaking their way with a terrified, wailing Rembrandt Brown at the wheel.

Wade, Quinn and Arturo cringe and flail their arms to get out of harm's way as the Caddy jets toward them. It passes under Wade's legs, past Quinn's back and just over Arturo's head.

Moving twice their speed, Rembrandt's car rockets on toward the prism of light now visible in the distance.

CLOSE ON REMBRANDT howling like a banshee, locked in a state of panicky disbelief, his hands glued to the steering column. To his utter horror, the Caddy begins to tumble end over end (R.B. held in by his seatbelt) as it beelines for the increasingly brilliant prism of light.

THE CADILLAC enters the prism and rights itself again, much to the relief of the hysterical Rembrandt - but his heart drops into his feet as gravity kicks in with a vengeance and the Caddy plummets straight down through a wall of multi-colored lightning, faster than any roller coaster known to man!

EXT. STREET WHERE QUINN LIVES - NIGHT - THE CADDY

lands with a thump in the exact same spot it was enveloped, but this time on a parallel Earth. The wheels are still turning, engine still going, car still in drive; before Rembrandt can thank his lucky stars for a safe landing, he has to deal with the fact that he's careening down a slippery street at forty-five miles an hour with his feet nowhere near the pedals!

As he scrambles to find the brakes he notes three things:
1. it's very cold 2. the street lights are not working -
3. HE'S HEADING STRAIGHT FOR AN ICEBERG THAT'S INEXPLICABLY DEAD AHEAD IN THE ROAD!!

His eyes pop out of his head - he slams on the brakes - it's way too late - he closes his eyes!

ANGLE ON THE CADDY making a screeching skid into the wall of ice and hitting it head on with A TRAGIC CRUNCHING THUD.

Unhurt but pissed to the point of tears, Rembrandt sees that the front of his beloved car is caved in and embedded in ice, looking like a giant blueberry popsicle.

INT. QUINN'S BASEMENT - NIGHT - WADE, QUINN AND ARTURO

make a tumbling landing in the dark, musty basement. Quinn gets to his feet, dusts himself off, turns to his rising companions...

QUINN

You guys okay?

They nod, checking for bumps and bruises. Wade begins to shiver; it's cold in here, their words turn to mist in the air.

WADE

Where are we Quinn?

QUINN

(scoping the place)

In my basement. If there's a me living here, I guess he never turned it into a laboratory.

Arturo notes the cobwebs in the corners; he runs his hand along a table and sweeps up a large pile of dust.

ARTURO

Whatever was here...

(looks at Quinn)

... hasn't been here in a long time.

They both share an ominous feeling: the dust, the cold, the sense of abandonment and neglect. What happened here?

INT. QUINN'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The three shivering sliders enter this world's version of the Mallory family's living room - but this place isn't warm and inviting, it's a freezing, evacuated hell.

The room has been stripped, even wooden planks have been uprooted for firewood. There is no heat or electricity; the useless bare light bulbs are all frozen over. Arctic air blows in through holes in the frost-encrusted windows, making eerie MOANING sounds that fit the morgue-like nature of this dark, neglected building.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT - QUINN MOVES ABOUT

the skeletal remains of his mother's kitchen, feeling a surprising swell of anxiety at the condition of the place. He turns the tap but there is no running water - finds the fridge and cupboards bare - rifles through drawers in search of some sign of the family that once lived here.

At last he finds a drawer with a few discarded mementos and artifacts: a supermarket receipt, some paper clips, the torn corner of a newspaper article, and a single faded family snapshot.

Arturo enters the kitchen and notes the nonplussed look on Quinn's face as he studies the photograph.

ARTURO

What is it?

QUINN

(softly)

My family... I mean, the family
that lives - lived... here.

Arturo takes out a pocket lighter and illuminates the creased, aged photo. With the sun in her eyes, Quinn's mother has one arm around a bespectacled, longer haired Quinn, the other around the shoulder of a pretty young girl, a few years Quinn's junior. A full grown black labrador sits by their feet, happily panting toward the camera.

The photo exudes summertime... happiness... family togetherness. Quinn indicates the dog in an amazed voice tinged with long lost emotion.

QUINN (CONT'D)

That's Bopper... he... he ran away
when he was just a puppy. We
never found him.

ARTURO

And who's the girl?

Quinn takes a moment before answering from instinct.

QUINN

The sister I never had.

He and Arturo exchange glances, each contemplating the wonder and irony contained in this one simple snapshot.

Quinn takes a long last look at the photo... then reverently places it back inside the drawer, in a kitchen no one will ever return to.

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF QUINN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Rembrandt Brown is pacing around near the front of his car, totally agonizing its condition.

REMBRANDT

It ain't fair... My wheels... my
beautiful beautiful wheels!

Building himself into a rage, he begins to kick the iceberg in as many places as possible but this only hurts his freezing feet.

Rembrandt's about to give it one final monster kick when he senses the presence of others. He turns to see Wade shivering near the door of the Mallory house as Quinn and Arturo step outside to join her.

Quinn and Arturo stare at Rembrandt, trying to figure out how he fits this picture. Rembrandt does likewise, wondering the same exact thing.

Meanwhile Wade has wandered a few feet up the hill and is now looking in the opposite direction, out toward the bay. Quinn glances her way, notes that she looks mesmerized and deeply shaken by whatever it is she sees.

He moves to her and he sees it too.

MOVE IN ON QUINN AND WADE staring at the San Francisco Bay with the same look of stunned disbelief.

WADE

I have a feeling... we're not in
Kansas anymore.

SWITCH TO THEIR POV: the entire city of San Francisco is dark and deserted - not a single sign of life. A full moon illuminates the Golden Gate bridge...

Two thirds of it are completely embedded in ice.

End Of Act Three

Act Four

EXT. THE CAVE - NIGHT - FADE IN ON QUINN

Wade, and a freezing, highly pissed-off Rembrandt, huddled around a fire. They are in constant motion: bouncing on their toes, rubbing their hands, trying to keep warm.

They are now inside a cave on the outskirts of frozen Golden Gate Park.

ANGLE TO INCLUDE ARTURO who is teaching without realizing it - using a flint rock to make a drawing on the cave wall behind them. Given the primitive conditions, his is a cool, cogent rendition of our Earth as a home port, with the smoke ring gate acting as a conduit to multiple tunnel-like lines that lead to other parallel Earths.

ARTURO

Your double said Sliding was like spinning a roulette wheel. Our "ball" must've landed on an Earth that's suffered a terrible climactic cataclysm.

QUINN

Nuclear winter?

ARTURO

Quite possibly. Or a shifting of the planet's axis - or perhaps an ecological disaster --

REMBRANDT

-- Who cares what did it, man! The question is, how we gettin' home?!

QUINN

The same way we came. The timer will return us to my basement in about three hours.

ARTURO

Speaking of time, the string theory dictates that time will always be the same on a parallel world. 1994 wherever you go - in fact, time will remain concurrent during all interdimensional Slides.

REMBRANDT

Wanna float that by me again, man? In ENGLISH this time!

ARTURO

I'm saying that four hours spent
here are equivalent to four hours
back home.

Rembrandt slows his shivering long enough to think about
this concept with a rush of hope. He bends his cold, stiff
arm and glances at his watch.

REMBRANDT

So if it's the same time back
home... I can still make the game
and do the gig!

(moving toward
Quinn, angry,
urgent)

You're gonna take me back, man -
and you're gonna do it right now!!

QUINN

But... I don't think I'm suppose
to alter the timer.

(frowning,
remembering)

The other Quinn was trying to warn
me about that... but his voice
kept fading --

WADE

-- Hold it a minute, hold it!

(holds up a hand,
listens)

Do you hear something?

They all go quiet.

Outside the cave, AN OMINOUS SOUND is growing... getting
louder... nearer. The Sliders hold still, listening
intently..

THE SOUND is something like an approaching freight train...
but a train of frighteningly huge proportions, accompanied
by AN ANGRY, HIGH-PITCHED WHINE, like the cry of a wounded
monster.

And whatever it is... it's headed this way.

All eyes look to Arturo for an explanation. He clears his
throat and tries not to sound scared... he doesn't do a very
good job.

ARTURO

Uh... certainly a most unusual discord. I uh, suppose one of us men better step outside and have a look.

Wade rolls her eyes at his unabashed chauvinism.

REMBRANDT

Yeah, one of us men.

Quinn, Wade and Arturo look to one another, hoping someone else will volunteer. Whatever's outside sounds monstrous.

QUINN

I brought us here. I'll go.

ARTURO

Seems fair.

REMBRANDT

Good idea.

Quinn takes a deep breath and prepares to step toward the cave opening... but Rembrandt notices something first.

REMBRANDT (CONT'D)

Wait a minute... you may not have to.

The other two men take a second to catch his drift. Wade is gone.

QUINN

(running after her)

Wade!

Now alone in the shuddering cave, the mystery noise growing louder by the second, Arturo and Rembrandt stare each other down, fighting a dual sense of guilt... but neither man budging an inch.

REMBRANDT

Well... ain't you goin' after 'em?

ARTURO

Someone has to keep the fire going.

They stare for another long moment - neither is budging.

REMBRANDT

Aw hell... I will if you will.

ARTURO
Okay. But you go first.

EXT. MOUTH OF CAVE - NIGHT - AS REMBRANDT AND ARTURO

reach the cave opening, they are blown back by a powerful, freezing blast of wind. They persevere and find Quinn and Wade huddled together, staring out toward the bay.

First Rembrandt... then Arturo... see what they're looking at. Each man's jaw hangs open and his eyes go wide with alarm.

SWITCH TO THE SLIDERS POV: an incredible ice tornado is coming in from the Pacific, heading straight for the coastline where their cave is located!

It is ice-white and monstrously huge; its rapidly rotating funnel-like peak is taller than the top of the frozen Golden Gate. Seaweed, marine life and even pieces of ships can be seen spinning around inside its nightmarish body.

Rembrandt puts a hand on Quinn's shoulder and SHOUTS above the coming roar...

REMBRANDT
End of discussion Q-ball. We're
OUTTA here!

INT. THE CAVE - NIGHT - QUINN IS CONCENTRATING

on readjusting the timer. The others are pacing nervously, trying to stay warm and block out THE PROMETHEAN ROAR of the rapidly approaching megacyclone.

QUINN
I hope we're doing the right
thing.

REMBRANDT
-- What choice we got, man? That
big white sledgehammer's about to
come down hard - it's time to GO
GO GO!!

Quinn nods reluctantly and turns up the juice. The gizmo BEEPS yellow.. then red. The air becomes static... the smoke ring begins to form... but more slowly this time... fading in and out as if struggling to materialize.

Outside, THE STORM'S BLARE is deafening now - it is picking up speed as it reaches land.

ARTURO

Hurry it up Mallory, it's almost upon us!

QUINN

I'm trying! Something's wrong...

The Sliders jump as they clearly hear the sound of trees being uprooted like matchsticks outside the cave.

THE ROAR is all around them - the cave roof begins to crumble!

Quinn is working frantically... and his efforts are starting to pay off. The smoke ring finally stabilizes and its undulating black center begins to take shape.

Quinn turns the power as high as it will go... The gizmo starts to smoke and spark, an ominous grinding sound emanates from its insides. A worried Quinn keeps the power on max until the smoke ring gateway fully forms at last.

The cave is being decimated, collapsing all around them --

QUINN

Now!

Arturo is only too ready - he jumps in first, disappearing into the gate. Wade dodges a chunk of falling rock and follows suit.

Rembrandt is about to do the same when a chilling thought suddenly occurs, stopping him dead in his tracks.

REMBRANDT

Wait a minute... my car... WHAT ABOUT MY CAR?!!!!!!

A huge section of cave roof collapses right behind him - car or no car, Rembrandt SQUEALS and dives through head first.

Falling rocks are killing the fire - Quinn is now alone in the darkening, earbending tumult. The smoke ring is starting to dissipate - he moves toward it but the way is blocked by descending rocks.

With an act of courage and desperation, Quinn claws his way through the rubble and tries to reach the shrinking gate. He leaps toward the black hole center just as it shrinks to nothingness and the cave completely caves in!

INT. CAVE - NIGHT - ARTURO COMES THROUGH THE GATE

and lands on his feet, pinwheeling his arms to keep his balance. Wade is right behind - she hits the ground butt first and skids to a halt against the professor's legs.

REMBRANDT (O.S.)

Waahhh, look out!!

They barrel out of the way as Rembrandt blasts through the gate, in an out of control, tumbling somersault.

REMBRANDT (CONT'D)

(rising, groaning)

Oh man... that's one trip I'd rather skip.

The three Sliders find themselves in a cave identical to the one they just left... but the temperature is much more pleasant here, and a full moon coming through the cave mouth lights the interior without need of a fire.

Wade looks back toward the gate expectantly... then worriedly.

WADE

Professor... where's Quinn? Did you see him in the void?

ARTURO

Can't say I did. You?

Rembrandt shakes his head.

WADE

What if he didn't get through?

(moves toward gate)

We have to go back and find him!

Arturo holds her back.

ARTURO

Think Wade - the gate could lead you to an infinite number of Earths - there's no way to control the journey back!

Wade reluctantly realizes he's right.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

(gently)

If Quinn didn't make it through...
we may never be able to locate
him.

Wade shakes free of Arturo and stares hard into the gate,
willing Quinn to appear as she fights back tears.

WADE

(whisper, to
herself)

Please Quinn...

The gate is starting to shrink. Wade stares into its black
heart in fear and frustration.

WADE (CONT'D)

Please... come back to me.

The gate is shrinking... shrinking... about to fade to
nothingness. Wade starts to cry.

And Quinn pops through!

He lands on his chest and quickly bounces to his feet just
before the gate completely disappears.

QUINN

Whoa... that was pretty close.

Quinn notices Wade wiping away a tear - he questions her in
a soft voice with sincere, straightforward curiosity.

QUINN (CONT'D)

Hey... why're you crying? You hit
your head or something?

Wade quickly sweeps the tear off her face and shakes her
head in private exasperation.

WADE

Yeah. Probably should have my
head examined.

She walks past Quinn in a huff, leaving him at a loss.

EXT. MOUTH OF CAVE - NIGHT - WADE LEADS THE OTHERS OUTSIDE

where they spend a moment to look around... take a deep
breath... and smile with relief.

THEIR POV: grassy Golden Gate Park looks beautiful and serene in the moonlight - the Golden Gate Bridge stands free and clear above the shimmering bay - the night is moonlit and warm, no ice to be found. Anywhere.

They all enjoy a moment of pure bliss. Rembrandt gets down on his knees and kisses the Earth.

REMBRANDT

Home.

WADE

(sighing, happy)

Home.

ARTURO

No place like it.

Rembrandt snaps out of it, checking his watch as he rises.

REMBRANDT

Seven twenty five - I can almost still make it.

(sudden mood swing)

If I had a car, that is.

(glowers at Quinn)

You're gonna explain all this to the insurance boys, Q-ball. Gonna have ta tell 'em that my beautiful blue sled is...

(growing angry)

... on another planet, where it's stuck in a freakin' iceberg!!

THEY'RE NEVER GONNA BUY THAT WHEN I PUT IN MY CLAIM!!

Rembrandt's going nuclear just thinking about it. Wade smartly steps in, deflecting the subject.

WADE

We'll worry about that later Mister Brown. Right now you've got an anthem to sing!

REMBRANDT

Right, right, gotta get movin', gotta catch a cab.

(to Quinn,
glowering)

That's what a man without a car is forced to do...

He leans forward till he's nose to nose with the chagrined Quinn.

REMBRANDT (CONT'D)

Don't NEVER do that again, you hear?

And Rembrandt is off, racing across the park in his polyester three piece suit.

EXT. GOLDEN GATE PARK - NIGHT/MINUTES LATER

A wistful Quinn walks along the path that leads across the park, flanked by Wade and Arturo.

WADE

Was I the one that said Sliding was a piece of cake? Next time remind me to skip dessert.

QUINN

To tell ya the truth, I'm kinda sorry we're back.

(enthused)

I mean, just think of all the other worlds out there, and how much fun it'd be to explore them. The possibilities are endless and... well... it seems kinda dull to be back home.

Arturo points a fatherly finger in his student's direction.

ARTURO

Think of that tornado, and count your blessings.

Quinn laughs and nods reluctantly, getting the point. He glances at the timer/gizmo; it's still smoking...

QUINN

The pre-set controls are shorted. No more Sliding till I've had a chance to make repairs at my work bench.

QUINN (CONT'D)

(pondering)

I wonder why it brought us back to the cave, instead of my basement, like it's supposed to?

ARTURO

Maybe that's what Quinn Two was trying to warn you about - perhaps speeding up the timer has unforeseen side effects --

The Professor cuts off when he sees Quinn has stopped in his tracks. His young student is wearing a sudden frown.

Quinn is looking at a park statue just off the walking path. Arturo is clearly surprised when he sees it too.

ANGLE TO INCLUDE THE STATUE of a balding man with a mustache and goatee, holding a book in one hand and pointing toward the horizon with a bold, determined visage.

Wade sees that her companions seem transfixed by it. She CHUCKLES uncertainly...

WADE

Who's that supposed to be, Robert Duvall?

ARTURO

(whisper)

It's Lenin.

WADE

Yeah? So where's McCartney?

ARTURO

Nicolai Ilich Ulyanov Lenin.

(to Quinn, worried)

Was it --

QUINN

-- It was Lincoln, man. Abraham
"dead president" Lincoln.

Wade looks from worried face to worried face. Now she's a little worried too.

EXT. CITY STREET BORDERING PARK - NIGHT - REMBRANDT

hails a cab and climbs in.

INT. TAXI CAB - NIGHT - REMBRANDT IS STILL BREATHING HARD

and mopping his brow as the cab pulls away.

REMBRANDT

Candlestick my man, and step on it!

Rembrandt casually checks out the driver - a swarthy foreign born man named PAVEL KURLIENKO, according to the driver's ID card on the front dash.

Pavel drives slowly and carefully as A COMMERCIAL runs on the radio, spoken by an announcer with a CASEY CASEM voice...

RADIO (O.S.)

Tell me comrades, is your carpet really clean? When you drop to your knees to give thanks to Supreme Leader, does your rug look as drab as yesterday's cabbage?

Rembrandt is trying to relax but the fact that cars are passing on the left and right doesn't help.

REMBRANDT

Hey Payvill old son, could ya hurry it along a little?

PAVEL

Parinska illiumavitch resnit!

REMBRANDT

(under his breath)

Immigrants. If you gonna come here, learn to speak the freakin' language!

(big smile)

Well do the best you can chief, and hey, could ya turn on the Giants game while you're at it?

(pause, rolls eyes)

You know, baseballski?

PAVEL

Bazeball? Reds? Reds game?

REMBRANDT

Yeah, baseball game, capice?

Still moving with maddening deliberation, Pavel turns the dial. Every station seems to be filled with numbing talk, there is no music of any kind to be heard... until suddenly, The BOOMING SOUND of THE INTERNATIONALE fills the cab.

PAVEL

Anthem!

REMBRANDT

Damn!

Rembrandt checks his watch and beats his fist against the seat. Then something odd begins to seep into his mind as he catches wind of THE BARITONE OPERATIC SINGER belting out the Anthem in a foreign language.

REMBRANDT (CONT'D)

That don't sound right. Must be
playin' a Canadian team.

Rembrandt notices that Pavel is driving with one hand - the other is pressed against his head in a rigid salute.

Rembrandt discovers that some drivers and passengers of passing cars are also locked in a frozen salute position.

The minute the Anthem ends, Pavel snaps his arm down and so do those in neighboring cars, obviously listening to the same station.

MOVE IN ON REMBRANDT leaning back in his seat, wondering what the hell's going on.

EXT. CITY STREET NEAR PARK - NIGHT - QUINN AND COMPANY

exit the park; Wade makes a beeline for a payphone.

WADE

Gotta call my folks. Back in a
flash.

As she crosses the street to make her call, Quinn is drawn to a man preaching to a crowd near the park perimeter. The man is long-haired, with a neatly trimmed beard and fine three-piece suit. He is speaking fervently to a hundred true believers.

It takes a moment for Quinn to recognize him as Crazy Kenny, the radical soapbox lunatic!

CRAZY KENNY

Friends of the state will always
be rewarded. But enemies must be
purged from the body! The
fascist, so called "American
Underground" is being crushed as
we speak - it's simply a matter of
time before the last of their kind
are wiped from the face of our
land!

Boisterous APPLAUSE from the crowd.

ARTURO

What's he babbling about?

QUINN

You know, I could never figure that out. But now someone's actually listening to him!

EXT. PHONE BOOTH ACROSS THE STREET - NIGHT - WADE

reaches up to put a quarter in the phone... but finds there is no coin slot. An eerie TONE tolls three times in her ear, followed by a recorded WOMAN'S VOICE...

RECORDED VOICE (O.S.)

PT&T.

A WOMAN OPERATOR comes on the line, speaking with plastic, sing-song professional friendliness.

OPERATOR (O.S.)

We want you back.

WADE

Excuse me?

OPERATOR (O.S.)

If you switched from PT&T to PT&T-2 we want you back. And now, thanks to our "comrades call comrades" program, we can save you up to six rubles a year on long distance to The Motherland.

Wade is unsettled.

WADE

PT&T? I... I don't understand.

There's an ominous moment of silence. When the Operator speaks again her voice is cold and officious.

OPERATOR (O.S.)

Identify. This is Operator 9-3-4. Identify.

(pause)

This is Operator 9-3-4. You will state your telephone permit number now.

Wade is unsure and a little scared. She doesn't know what to say.

OPERATOR (O.S., CONT'D)

You have failed to provide requested state information, in violation of section 33956 of the California penal code. The location of your phone has now been ascertained. You will remain at this unit until a communications security team reaches the scene. Failure to do so will result in --

WADE

-- Thanks, I'll try again later.

Spooked, Wade hangs up and immediately puts distance between herself and the phone.

ANGLE ON THE SIDE OF THE BOOTH where the phone company logo is displayed: a red telephone receiver crossed by a hammer and sickle, above the words *People's Telephone and Telegraph*.

EXT. OTHER SIDE OF STREET - NIGHT - WADE

rejoins her friends and hurries them along.

QUINN

Wade... there's something I gotta tell ya.

WADE

I know. We never made it home.

INT. TAXI CAB - NIGHT - CLOSE ON REMBRANDT

sitting bolt upright in the back seat, looking out the window at the passing street scene with a palpable sense of unease. The smooth, familiar VOICE of the Giants play by play man is coming over the radio.

RADIO SPORTSCASTER (O.S.)

The Houston Cosmonauts failed to score in the first, San Francisco Reds coming to bat. Tonight's game is brought to you by Red Bear Beer - when goutas are reached, reach for a Red Bear.

Rembrandt is confused, unsettled and increasingly dismayed by the sight of the San Francisco he's passing through. The architecture is a match for the city he calls home but the feel of the place is decidedly dark, brooding, ominous.

Citizens walk the streets in drab clothes with their heads down; no one talks or dares to congregate. There is little color or vibrancy - billboards and bus stop benches offer mind controlling statements or commands to conform and serve The State.

This is a frightening place, a place of nightmares. Everyone seems to be watching their backs or looking over their shoulders with trepidation. The sidewalks they are oddly quiet: no music or laughter to be heard, just the droning sound of androgynous STATE CONTROLLED VOICES on street corner speakers.

Rembrandt's mind is reeling, trying to figure out what his eyes are telling him. Meanwhile, THE PLAY BY PLAY MAN on the radio is chatting between pitches in a typically laid-back baseball manner...

RADIO SPORTSCASTER (O.S.)

... and in case you hadn't heard, shortstop Veektor Jones has been sent to the Reds minor league reeducation camp where he will be punished for his mistakes. Jones three errors last night were a disgrace to himself, his family and the entire Reds organization. Perhaps a windowless cell in Phoenix will allow Comrade Jones the time to ponder how to properly field a ground ball.

The cab is slowing as it approaches a toll booth situated before a bridge.

PAVEL

Insk vla hordka minishkin.

Rembrandt is frozen. The driver indicates the toll booth and holds out his palm for the money.

REMBRANDT

Oh! I gotcha - you need some mula for the toll.

Rembrandt pulls out a dollar and hands it to the cabbie.

Pavel stares at the dollar... his eyes slowly narrowing. He looks from the dollar... to Rembrandt in the rearview mirror. Rembrandt smiles, nods... the man does not smile back.

As they reach the toll booth, Pavel bolts out of the car and blabbers excitedly in Russian to the haggard looking woman behind the glass booth.

The woman takes a pronounced look at Rembrandt that makes his heart pound twice as fast.

She presses a button and a horrible BLARING KLAXON goes off. All traffic stops - some people hit the deck - several heavily armed soldiers storm out of the toll booth building, ready for action.

Rembrandt sees Pavel excitedly showing their commander the dollar bill Rembrandt gave him, then pointing into the back of the cab with words that can only mean "that's him, that's him!"

Rembrandt gulps as the soldiers spring into action, surrounding the cab and dropping into firing position. In an instant, five Koloshnikov assault rifles are aimed directly at Rembrandt's head.

The Cryin' Man is sweating big time... and trying not to live up to his nickname.

Terrified, he still offers a weakly hopeful smile.

REMBRANDT
Y'all need exact change?
(worried pause)
Is that it?

FADE TO BLACK:

End Of Act Four

Act Five

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT - FADE IN ON A STREET VENDOR

hawking borscht and blinis on a busy corner.

Speakers have been set up along the street, featuring pleasant voiced men and women, SPOUTING PARTY RHETORIC to passersby.

ANGLE ON QUINN, WADE and ARTURO as they walk past the vendor. The Sliders are intent on blending into the crowd, careful not to attract the attention of armed soldiers who patrol the sidewalks.

Wade glances around warily. Two men in overcoats seem to be eyeing them from across the street.

WADE

I think we're being watched.

ARTURO

Fascinating. This society is so 1984, you're already paranoid and we've only been here thirty minutes!

Wade dares another look over her shoulder - the unknown observers seem to be tracking The Sliders every step.

WADE

I admit, this place does give me the creeps. When can we leave?

QUINN

When the timer recharges itself.

WADE

And how soon will that be?

Quinn hesitates before answering.

QUINN

Maybe soon... maybe never.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT - CLOSE ON REMBRANDT

sitting in a hard-backed chair, being grilled under a hot white lamp.

Two men stand in the shadows - a short, portly, nervous guy in civilian garb and an ARMY COLONEL with mean eyes, smoking from an elegant black cigarette holder.

THE INTERROGATOR pacing before the prisoner is a GQ type American who has the corporate lawyer look down to a T.

REMBRANDT

Look... I ain't heard nothin' bout no American Underground. Is it a band, or some kinda club? You tell me cuz I don't know.

INTERROGATOR

You're a very foolish man, Mr. "Brown". Bad move... bad move. Lying to us has the gravest of consequences.

REMBRANDT

I tell ya I ain't lyin'!

INTERROGATOR

Oh but you are. Let's begin with your alias, shall we?

REMBRANDT

Alias?

INTERROGATOR

There is no "Rembrandt Brown" in our computer files! A man by that name was killed twelve years ago in the Detroit Uprising. You've obviously taken on his identity for nefarious, counter-revolutionary purposes!

Rembrandt rings his hands together... looking over at the two men in the shadows... then back to his questioner.

REMBRANDT

Okay... I can explain everything. You see... I'm not really from this Earth.

The interrogator raises his eyebrows and glances at his comrades with a mixture of amusement and distaste.

REMBRANDT (CONT'D)

No, no, it's true. I was just driving along, minding my own business, when this crazy genius zapped me into a big black hole - and the next thing I knew, my car slammed right into a giant iceberg, and...

His voice trails off, he realizes how this must sound.

The room falls silent. Rembrandt fidgets in his chair as the interrogator moves closer, holding up the dollar bill Rembrandt gave the cab driver.

INTERROGATOR

You admit to handing this to the taxi driver?

REMBRANDT

Yeah. So?

The interrogator glances back at the watchers, nodding with satisfaction. He turns his attention back to Rembrandt... slowly circling the chair before stopping dead in front of the prisoner.

INTERROGATOR

(somber, sincere)

Listen carefully friend - if you cooperate, I'll fight for you with the high command -

REMBRANDT

(brightening)

-- Say that again.

INTERROGATION

What?

REMBRANDT

I'll fight for you...

(snaps fingers,
excited)

I knew I recognized you! You're Ross J. Kelley, that shyster lawyer from TV! Man, I seen your mug a thousand times.

The interrogator steps back, unsettled by this seemingly crazy behavior. Rembrandt is LAUGHING now, pointing at the interrogator with a wagging finger and knowing look...

REMBRANDT (CONT'D)

You always tellin' folks you'll get 'em a trillion bucks if they had an accident on the job! Like that big moose construction worker who got an anvil dropped on his head!

Rembrandt is giggling and nodding, tickled to have made the connection. The interrogator is unnerved. He backs away, moving to the observers in the shadows. They speak in anxious WHISPERS...

SHADOWY COLONEL

How does he know your profession?

INTERROGATOR

I don't know.

SHADOWY COLONEL

How does he know your name?

INTERROGATOR

I don't know!

SHADOWY COLONEL

(icy, deliberate)

We've been infiltrated.

The other two men are looking at the interrogator with suspicion now.

INTERROGATOR (CONT'D)

What're you looking at! All that other stuff was wrong - I've never been on TV!

SHADOWY COLONEL

(impressed by
Rembrandt)

Subterfuge - as performed by a master. Designed to flaunt his inside knowledge and send us in circles. This man is highly skilled and extremely dangerous! He must be tried and disposed of as quickly as possible.

INTERROGATOR

Quickly... yes. I have connections - and I know just the thing.

The interrogator reapproaches his prisoner... but this time there is a glimmer of respect, even fear in his eyes. He speaks in a tight, nervous voice, obviously wanting the observers to clearly hear every forceful word.

INTERROGATOR (CONT'D)

You are obviously an uncooperative mercenary, employed by fascist enemies of the state. I hereby hand over jurisdiction of your situation to The People's Court where you will be tried and sentenced.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT - QUINN AND COMPANY

continue to walk south down the sidewalk, talking quietly, remaining as inconspicuous as possible.

They pass a barricaded street corner, guarded by armed soldiers, German shepherds and a barbed wire perimeter. Curiosity gets the best of them and they slow to take a quick look at what's just past the blockade.

A clean-up crew is busily wiping graffiti off a series of walls - the graffiti is red, white and blue and prominently features a defiant American eagle, wings spread, talons clutching a flock of arrows.

The words FREEDOM... LIBERTY... 1776... REBELLION... and JUSTICE have been spray painted alongside a surrealistic rendition of the stars and stripes.

A painted face is drawing special attention from the clean-up crew - they are furiously painting it over but we can see it is an aged man with long hair tied back in what looks like a pony tail.

A SOLDIER spots the Sliders gawking and moves toward them with aggressive intent - a clear signal to move on. They do so with little hesitation, moving down the block again, speaking in carefully hushed voices.

ARTURO

That face they're rubbing out...
it looked familiar somehow.

WADE

It looked a lot like Barbara Bush.

QUINN

I think it's George Washington.

WADE

That would explain it.

They are approaching a crowd on the steps of city hall, gathered to award a top student.

CITY OFFICIAL

... And it is my honor to bestow
this Red Badge Of Courage to
citizen student Vladimir Tolstoy
Wing, who had the fortitude to
blow the whistle on his counter-
revolutionary parents.

The crowd applauds as Quinn's friend Wing is given a red sash and a golden whistle.

ARTURO

It's Wing!

QUINN

Vladimir Tolstoy Wing?

A tough old lady SHOUTS OUT from the back of the crowd.

OLD LADY

His parents were good people, good
Americans!

The crowd of loyal, obedient citizens are aghast.

OLD LADY (CONT'D)

He's the traitor - he's the rat!!

With startling swiftness, a black sedan pulls up and two KGB types jump out. The tough old girl is belting out "God Bless America" as they whisk her into the idling vehicle. The burly KGB men slam the doors and the car streaks away.

Wade notices that some in the crowd that have turned to watch the rebellious woman's apprehension, now seem to be drawn toward Wade. They are WHISPERING and pointing... debating something amongst themselves.

She quietly sidles over to Quinn and Arturo, who have turned their attention to the timer/gizmo...

QUINN

The timer has a built in
regenerative processor.

ARTURO

Clever touch, my boy.

QUINN

In may eventually recharge, giving
us one chance to recreate the gate
- but it also might blow out the
system for good. We'd be marooned
here forever.

ARTURO

What about Rembrandt?

QUINN

(exhaling)

You're right. If we leave without
him, he'll never get home. He was
heading to the ballgame; we have
to go out there and find him.

WADE

(tense)

No time, no time.

They turn to Wade who is eyeing the crowd nervously. They notice it too, Wade's presence is starting a surging uproar.

QUINN

What'd you do?

WADE

It's that damned operator.

QUINN

What?

WADE

The phone company! I disobeyed their commands and now they're after me. We better get out of here.

Wade starts to move - the crowd starts to follow - alarmed and confused, Quinn and Arturo scamper after her.

EXT. ANOTHER CITY STREET - NIGHT - WADE, QUINN AND ARTURO

are running full tilt as they come around the corner. The first of their pursuers appears about forty yards behind, followed by an excited, angry mob.

ARTURO

(huffing and
puffing)

The phone company?! Now I know why everyone hates them!

The crowd is closing in - the Sliders hear WHISTLES, BELLS, and voices SHOUTING "There she is!" "It's her, it's Wade Welles!"

Quinn takes the lead, ducking into an alley and leading his companions between through a narrow passage between buildings.

EXT. NEW CITY STREET - NIGHT - QUINN

leads the fleeing Sliders onto another street, having given their pursuers a momentary slip.

He looks from side to side, searching for a place to hide, and spots a church on the corner.

QUINN

Over here - the church - hurry!

The Sliders race up the steps and enter the building through its pristine double doors.

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT - THE SLIDERS DISCOVER

that the church has been transformed into "The Hall of Soviet Inventions": a museum devoted to famous Russian firsts.

The Sliders glance back over their shoulders to see if anyone followed them in, then move forward toward a young TICKET TAKER manning the entrance to the exhibits.

TICKET TAKER

Good evening Comrades. Entrance fee is one dollar per citizen.

First in line is Quinn - he pulls out a dollar and hands it to the ticket taker. The young man is visibly shaken - looking from the dollar to Quinn with much the same reaction as the cab driver who turned in Rembrandt.

The ticket taker quickly pockets the greenback and covertly slips Quinn a proper dollar bill to replace it. Quinn notes that the magenta colored dollar still has the familiar pyramid and all-seeing eye, but it now says "In The State We Trust" and the picture in the bill's center is of Kruschev, not Washington.

TICKET TAKER (CONT'D)

(stiff, hushed)

Enter Comrades, enter quickly.

Quinn steps through, followed by Arturo. The ticket taker visibly reacts with breathless excitement and shock as Wade passes.

WADE

(to Quinn)

Good grief, he recognized me too!
We're sunk.

QUINN

Just stay cool. We'll get outta this. Somehow.

The three Sliders casually peruse the various exhibits, only to discover that electricity, the cotton gin, the steam engine, the telegraph, telephone, automobile, and game of baseball were all invented in Russia (according to revisionist history).

A wall display features a Russian Jazz hall of fame, and boasts that jazz originated in the Ukraine, before being ripped off by American pirates like Duke Ellington and Benny Goodman.

A picture of the Wright Brothers is accompanied by the notation that Orville and Wilbur were really Russian farmers, disguising themselves as Americans to escape the Czar's meddling.

Wade turns just in time to see the ticket taker is heading her way. She tenses up but has nowhere to run. He comes straight at her, eyes burning. She knows she's had it --

TICKET TAKER

(hushed, excited)

Wade Welles... my God, it is you.

Wade looks to her friends, caught off-guard, uncertain what to say.

Way back toward the building's entrance, Quinn sees that some of the crowd that were chasing them have entered the museum and are searching the place with their eyes.

TICKET TAKER (CONT'D)

It's a miracle. Thank liberty
you're still alive. The Soviets
announced your capture three days
ago. It seemed like the last
straw.

Wade doesn't know how to respond, afraid of a misstep.
Quinn takes the ball...

QUINN

We helped Wade escape, but now
we're in a tight spot. Those
people are on our tail - can you
help us?

TICKET TAKER

(after glancing
back)

I can try. Quickly, come with me.

The ticket taker leads them past an exhibit dedicated to Russian apple pie ("the best in the world") and out a back door.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT - THE SLIDERS

hurriedly follow the ticket taker across the street and down the block. Quinn and company swivel their heads, keenly aware of the menace posed by prying eyes.

They hurry along, praying not to hear a police whistle. The city they all know so well is now the home of Big Brother; San Francisco has become a forboding place fueled by fear and mandatory conformity.

EXT. DIFFERENT CITY STREET - NIGHT - THE TICKET TAKER

looks left and right, making sure no one is watching, then leads the way across an abandoned parking lot in a rundown section of waterfront, marked by pro-American graffiti.

The fog is rolling in; FOGHORNS add an eerie touch to the dilapidated setting as the ticket taker makes tracks toward a subterranean staircase.

ARTURO

(to Wade, quietly)

It seems you're a V.I.P on this world, Miss Welles. I suggest you do nothing to undermine that notion.

INT. STAIRCASE - NIGHT - THE TICKET TAKER

leads the Sliders down the dank, winding staircase that runs alongside what used to be a multi-level wharfside garage. From the looks of things, no one's been here in years, with the exception of rats and cockroaches.

They finally reach rock bottom, four levels below ground. The ticket taker pushes open a CREAKING rust-eaten door and they step in from the mist.

INT. UNDERGROUND ROOM - NIGHT - A SINGLE RED LIGHTBULB

illuminates this claustrophobic concrete square of a room, casting weird red shadows across the decaying cement walls. There is nothing in this room and there is no place to go.

The ticket taker turns to Wade.

TICKET TAKER

Feel good to be home, Commander?

Wade glances at Quinn and Arturo before answering, with a weak smile and a nod of her head.

TICKET TAKER (CONT'D)

You'll have to tell us how you
escaped - must be quite a story.

WADE

Yeah. Must be.

The ticket taker touches a crack in the wall - the wall
rotates and opens up to another room.

INT. THE UNDERGROUND LAIR - NIGHT - THE SLIDERS

follow the ticket taker into a warehouse lit by lanterns and
stacked with multiple crates filled with guns and
ammunition.

The walls are full of symbols and slogans similar to the
graffiti seen on the street buildings; the consistent themes
are liberty and freedom at any cost.

Pieces of surrealistic Americana are everywhere - red, white
and blue symbols done with a sixties-like anger and
sensibility. A giant "Don't Tread On Me" rattlesnake flag
is prominently hung on the wall.

The Sliders take it all in - this is an urban guerilla den,
loaded with fascinating but unsettling signs of a proud
movement struggling to survive. The room is huge and dark
beyond the throw of the lanterns; the sounds of APPROACHING
BOOTS are coming out of the blackness, heading this way.

Soon, a commando unit steps into the flickering light. They
are of mixed races and ages, sporting bandoleros and war
paint. Men and women, armed to the teeth, lean and hard
from years of street fighting.

The leader, a thirty six year old former airline PILOT with
a five o'clock shadow and surrealistic stars and stripes
headband, steps toward the newcomers, a lethal M-16 in hand.

He studies Quinn... Arturo... then stops directly in front
of Wade. He stares into her eyes with a powerful look of
emotion - she stares back self-consciously, overwhelmed and
intimidated by his intense gaze.

The moment is electric, the room completely silent - what's
he going to do? Wade holds perfectly still, barely
breathing, as the powerful rebel leader moves forward until
they are almost touching.

Wade glances at the rifle, then over at Quinn - fighting an
urge to bolt...

PILOT
(whispering)

Wade.

Pilot passionately takes her in his arms and plants the kiss of the century on her. Valentino would be proud. Soon, Wade is responding to the kiss - Quinn and Arturo exchange looks, wondering if they'll ever come up for air.

At last Pilot pulls away, leaving Wade breathless and dazed. She looks at her companions sheepishly and tries to regain her composure.

Pilot turns to her fellow Sliders, speaking in a voice as cool as the iceworld they left behind.

PILOT
Welcome... to The Revolution.

FADE TO BLACK:

End Of Act Five

Act Six

INT. UNDERGROUND LAIR - MORNING - FADE IN ON QUINN

sleeping on his side on the hard, cold floor, alongside the slumbering Professor Arturo. Both men have their hands tied behind their backs.

Quinn awakens as PAT, a female Asian-American commando, uses an exacto knife to set him free. Arturo wakes with a start - she frees him as well.

The two Sliders flex and unflex their stiff arms and hands while gratefully establishing eye contact with their pretty young liberator. Quinn and Pat share a brief moment, stemming from mutual curiosity and instinctive attraction. Pat is looking right at Quinn, but speaking to both...

PAT

Pilot will see you now.

INT. LAIR PLANNING ROOM - MORNING - PAT LEADS THEM

into a small conference room being used as a center of operations, featuring a detailed grid and topographical map of the city.

Pilot is looking at the map with Wade and DOC, a brilliant and bespectacled 38 year old black man.

PILOT

Get any rest, gentlemen?

ARTURO

Oh sure. I always sleep like a baby when I'm tied up!

PILOT

I understand your resentment but we had to take precautions. Your appearance here was highly suspicious, to say the least.

DOC

It's not every day someone claims to come to us from a parallel Earth.

Wade crosses to her friends.

WADE

They do believe us now.

ARTURO

Is that so? Last night they didn't buy a word - why the change?

DOC

On our world, Commander Wade Welles is a great leader of the revolution.

Her friends look at Wade with surprise and respect. She blushes and looks down shyly.

WADE

Wild huh?

DOC

The Soviets captured her four days ago. She's being held at the NoCal Federal Penitentiary - a converted college campus now used solely for high profile political prisoners...

(arched eyebrows)

... and run by former Professor now Citizen General Maximilian Arturo.

Arturo reddens but tries to spin it to his advantage.

ARTURO

Always a leader of men, no matter what the circumstance.

DOC

Let's hope you're a more righteous man than your doppelganger.

Doc is studying Arturo carefully, distrustfully. Quinn shifts the focus.

QUINN

What made you finally believe our Wade wasn't, well... your Wade?

PILOT

Wade Welles is my commanding officer... and my lover.

Wade looks at Quinn and shrugs, palms up.

PILOT (CONT'D)

The two may look alike... but I can surely tell the difference.

INT. UNDERGROUND GARAGE - PILOT AND DOC

accompany the Sliders across the vast expanse of their reclusive hideout. There is activity all around as underground members clean rifles and stock ammunition. Still, there seems to be a solemn, somber quality to their movements.

As Wade passes, various rebels nod or salute her way, talking quietly amongst themselves, visibly excited by her presence.

PILOT

The rebellion is in decline. Too much money and power on the other side - too many upstanding citizens bought off or grown complacent.

(draws on
cigarette)

Freedom is a forgotten luxury for Mr. and Mrs. Jones.

ARTURO

Then why are you still fighting?

DOC

We've been at it a long time. Pilot here flew for the airlines... I was a surgeon. There's no way to go back to our old lives.

PILOT

(nodding)

It's liberty or death. For all of us.

Quinn is looking at Wade in a new light - really seeing her for the first time. He subtly pulls her aside as they continue on.

QUINN

What was that supposed to mean - he can "tell the difference"?

(muttering)

Probably tied us up so he could be alone with you.

WADE

(tiny smile)

Oh Quinn, don't be such a child.

She's delighted to hear him sounding almost... jealous.

INT. COMMUNICATIONS CENTER - MORNING - THE SLIDERS

are led into a small but busy room where Pilot and Doc join four of their people. Two headphone wearing revolutionaries are manning short-wave radios and communicating with guerillas in the field. The walls are filled with TV monitors tuned to different channels - a modern, effective link to the outside world.

Wade moves toward the TV's, fascinated by the bizarre yet eerily familiar media on this Earth. Arturo and Quinn remain by Pilot and Doc...

ARTURO

How did this happen? The U.S., a conquered nation?

DOC

The Sino/Soviet empire swept the globe, beginning in the fifties when we lost The Korean War. First Indo-China fell, then Europe, South America... Their assets and technology grew, ours shrank and collapsed as we were economically isolated from the rest of the world.

PILOT

The U.S. finally went down in the late seventies, our government infiltrated from within. A senator named McCarthy tried to warn us back in '52, but everyone thought he was nuts. Two decades later, he was proved right by a firing squad.

Arturo and Quinn share ironic looks.

ARTURO

McCarthy was nuts - but on this world... the bastard was actually right!

(to pilot and Doc)

On our Earth, the Soviets are history, the Berlin wall torn down, communism all but extinct.

Pilot and Doc exchange looks of hope and disbelief.

PILOT

(half-whisper)

Could that possibly be true? It sounds like a dream.

CUT TO WADE, on the other side of the room, arms folded across her chest, scanning the televisions on the wall.

THE FIRST TV is tuned to a Donahue-like show - THE HOST is wearing a Russian fur hat and moving amongst the studio audience, running up and down the stairs with a mike...

HOST

(on the move)

In case you've just joined us, our topic today is *Was The Czar The Devil?*

He reaches a brute of a lady with massive forearms and a hairnet, who is raising her hand for a question.

HOST (CONT'D)

You have a question for our expert panel?

WOMAN IN AUDIENCE

(rising, deep voice)

No question. Statement. Hail supreme leader!!

Everyone in the audience instantly applauds like robots. The host falls all over himself, applauding hard, awkwardly thumping the mike.

THE SECOND TV features a chess match, shot like a football game, with slow motion replays of a player moving a piece and his opponent's tight-jawed response. The words "*Wide World Of Sports*" are a constant, near the bottom of the screen.

THE THIRD TV shows newsreel footage of captured American Underground members being marched through the streets of Denver at gunpoint, as jeering citizens spit at them.

A man's face fills the entire screen of THE FOURTH TV. It is a powerful face, strong brows, Van Dyke beard. The distinct sound of a ticking clock runs in the background...

PBS SPOKESMAN

It's pledge week on PBS. So pick up your phone and pledge your support for public television. Those who choose not to will be punished. We know who you are.

THE FIFTH TV features upbeat MUSIC playing beneath shots of supermarket aisles with thinly stocked shelves. A housewife with shopping cart is perusing the meager goods, a frozen smile steadfastly plastered across her face...

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Women of America are grateful for the nutritious goods the system provides. And what a variety.

The housewife holds up two generic bottles of dreary dark red ketchup and speaks to the camera...

SHOPPER

Just look - two kinds of ketchup to choose from. Now that's what I call freedom of choice!

The scene shifts to HAPPY MUSIC shots of other shoppers standing in long food lines.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

And here's more good news for the consumer: food lines are getting shorter, as patriotic farmers work the lands and meet their quotas.

CUT TO an interview with a stoic, weathered heartland farmer in overalls, identified ON SCREEN as *Farmer Brown*. He is holding a pitchfork and speaking to the camera, but his voice is obviously being OVERDUBBED by a zealot with a pronounced Russian accent...

FARMER BROWN

(badly dubbed)

The American people are happy to stand in line for my wholesome food. And I'm proud to be sending sixty eight percent of my grain to Mother Russia, where it's needed most. Sacrifice is another word for freedom!

The SIXTH TV must be this world's version of Music Television. A rap video, shot in typical MTV quick cuts and jerky hand-held camera, blares across the screen with synthesized drums beating hypnotically. The words are belted out by a long-haired man with double earrings, dressed like a Cossack and backed by new wave dancing girls...

RAPPER

Comrades-Comrades-get-on-down...
Get-that-grain-right-into-town...

RAPPER (CONT'D)

*Serve-the-state-feed-the-
people...The-in-di-vid-u-al-is
evil!*

Wade turns her attention to THE SEVENTH TV: WHITE LETTERS appear on a BLACK SCREEN: *Live! From San Francisco, capitol of The Western Sector...*

Wade recognizes the familiar THEME MUSIC of The People's Court as the double doors to a courtroom open and Pavel, the cab driver walks down the aisle...

DOUG LLEWELLEN (O.S.)

This is the plaintiff, Pavel Kurlienko. He says he was shocked when the defendant slipped up and handed him a counterfeit bill, stained by the image of fascist dictator George Washington, symbol of the discredited and soon to be totally annihilated American Underground.

The doors open again and a confused Rembrandt Brown enters the court.

DOUG LLEWELLEN (O.S., CONT'D)

And this is the defendant, alias Rembrandt Brown --

ANGLE ON WADE, her eyes popping out of her head!

WADE

Oh my God, Quinn, Quinn, come here quick!

ANGLE BACK ON THE TV where Rembrandt tentatively approaches the defendant's podium.

DOUG LLEWELLEN (O.S.)

... counter-revolutionary skunk and enemy of the people. He is accused of showing his true colors in a taxi.

In classic People's Court style, Rembrandt's name is teletyped over his image, before the camera CUTS TO DOUG LLEWELLEN standing in the back of the half-full spectator area.

DOUG LLEWELLEN (CONT'D)

This is the case of The Rat Caught In the Trap. Now the plaintiff (CUT TO PAVEL) did his civic duty by heroically detaining his insidious passenger long enough for the authorities to arrive. The defendant (CUT TO REMBRANDT) dubiously claims that he is not of this Earth and therefore shouldn't be expected to abide by the laws of civilization.

Rembrandt frowns worriedly at the skewed characterization.

INT. PEOPLE'S COURT SET - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

All rise as the black-robed magistrate enters the room. COMMISSAR WAPNER takes his seat behind the bench, which is elevated to great height so that he can truly look down on those appearing before him.

WAPNER

You may be seated. I have read your complaint sir; you say the defendant is a treacherous terrorist pig?

REMBRANDT

Hey! Come on now --

PAVEL

-- Is true, Commissar Wapner. He give... he give me this.

The cabbie hands the green dollar bill to the bailiff, who in turn gives it to Wapner. The Commissar looks at it with great condemnation before setting contemptuous eyes on Rembrandt...

WAPNER

Sir, what possible defense could you have for this?

REMBRANDT

(friendly, nervous)

I can explain everything your honor. You see, it's all a big mistake --

WAPNER

(dry)

-- Now where have I heard that one before?

REMBRANDT

This Earth ain't my Earth, you dig? I mean, it looks like it, smells like it - maybe even smells a little better - but it ain't my Earth.

The onlookers are tittering. Wapner is annoyed. Rembrandt hurries ahead, knowing he's in big trouble.

REMBRANDT

This guy I call Q-ball --

WAPNER

-- Q-ball?

REMBRANDT

Right - he sucked me right off the street - then my Caddy and me tumbled through this wormhole - that's some kinda freaked out limbo land that sits between Earth one, two and three. So there I was, just minding my business and freezing my butt off in a cave, when this big albino cyclone come straight at us --

WAPNER

(pained)

-- I've heard enough sir. More than enough.

(holds up dollar)

Do you see the picture on this bill?

REMBRANDT

Well yes, but --

WAPNER

-- You know full well this is the trademark of your organization of thieves, misfits and terrorists - the so called underground resistance. This bill came out of your hand, did it not?

REMBRANDT

Out of my pocket. But your honor --

Wapner silences him with a disgusted wave of his hand and turns to speak directly into the camera...

WAPNER (CONT'D)

Citizens, you have just witnessed a classic case of a criminal who thinks he can take advantage of society but finds out the hard way that rebellion doesn't pay. Don't worry Comrades, his insanity defense won't fly with me.

(quick burst of
applause)

Alias Rembrandt Brown, I find you guilty of subversion, treason, and unmutual behavior. I hereby sentence you to fifteen years in the Alaskan Gulag, without possibility of parole.

Wapner pounds his gavel. Rembrandt gulps. The studio audience breaks into carefree, enthusiastic APPLAUSE, further horrifying Rembrandt.

To the delight of the producers, the condemned manages some defiance as he's led out of the courtroom.

REMBRANDT

I never liked you anyway Wapner!
That prune-faced judge on Divorce
Court was always alot cooler than
you!

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE COURTROOM - DAY

an agitated Rembrandt is being shackled as he exits the courtroom, only to be approached by Doug Llewellen, who is sporting a cordial, contented grin as he conducts an on-camera interview with the convicted prisoner...

DOUG LLEWELLEN

The defendant is coming out of the
courtroom. Mr. "Brown", the
Commissar simply didn't believe a
word you said. How does that make
you feel?

REMBRANDT

How do you think I feel, fool?

Doug chuckles good-naturedly and asks another dark question in his disconcertedly laid back friendly fashion...

DOUG LLEWELLEN

Any idea how cold it is in Alaska this time of year? But breaking rocks should help keep you warm - for the next, oh, fifteen years or so. (smile, raised eyebrow)
No possibility of parole.

Doug shifts the mike back toward Rembrandt. The crying man just looks at it with an angry frown.

DOUG LLEWELLEN (CONT'D)

Thank you very much. Officer Burrell has some confessions you must sign.

(turning to camera)

And that will bring this case to a happy conclusion. The litigants for our next case are now entering the courtroom.

INT. SMALL UNDERGROUND CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY - THE SLIDERS

are having a closed door meeting with Pilot, Doc and Pat. Quinn is pacing, thinking out loud...

QUINN

Seems to me we have a common problem. Your Wade and our Rembrandt, held at the same facility.

DOC

But not for long. Your friend will be carted north in the morning. And Wade's about to be shipped to Moscow for trial.

QUINN

Then we'd better move quickly.

PILOT

What do you have in mind?

QUINN

A raid.

The rebel leaders take a moment to mull that over.

PILOT

(shaking head)

Not possible. We'd never get near --

QUINN
 -- You're forgetting.
 (looks at Arturo)
 The warden here is on our side.

INT. BACK OF TROOP TRUCK - NIGHT - A HALF DOZEN

U.S. commandos are huddled under a canvas canopy, dressed for battle and ready for action. Wade Welles sits at the end of the troop line, across from Doc, dressed like the others in green khaki battle fatigues. The former surgeon speaks softly to Wade, his voice betraying a deep-seated concern...

DOC
 I fear this plan is too risky, too hasty. If we fail, the west coast uprising will be extinguished.
Everything... finished.

Wade glances at the others - all former civilians turned urban guerillas. She senses what they must be feeling: they are crossing The Delaware in the middle of winter... praying for success... and half-expecting annihilation and the end of their movement.

EXT. ROAD LEADING UP TO PENITENTIARY - NIGHT - A CONVOY

of unmarked jeeps and military trucks approaches the university turned political prison.

INT. LEAD JEEP - NIGHT - ARTURO AND QUINN

are in the front seat. Pilot and Pat in the back.

ARTURO
 What if they don't believe me?
 What if I'm still at work?

PILOT
 Your double lives banker's hours
 Professor. Just play your part
 and we'll be okay.
 (pause)
 I hope.

ARTURO
 He hopes. Some revolution.

ARTURO

(to Quinn)

Why am I here? I could be sitting at home, drinking saki and watching Jeopardy.

QUINN

(somber, nodding)

I know - it's tournament of champions week - I miss it too.

EXT. GUARD GATE - NIGHT - THE TWO SENTRIES

step toward the lead jeep, rifles at the ready. They frown when they see the three troop trucks following right behind.

The first sentry draws his gun and aims it at the jeep driver... but quickly lowers it in puzzlement when he recognizes Maximillian Arturo behind the wheel.

SENTRY

Citizen General - sir, what are you doing here?

Arturo freezes for a moment, like an actor with debilitating stage fright. He finally snaps out of it, recapturing some of his intrinsic arrogance, even though his voice is tight and nervous.

ARTURO

Since when do I have to explain my movements to you, soldier?

SENTRY

My apologies sir... I was just... well, surprised to see you at this hour.

ARTURO

I'll overlook it this time.

(deep breath)

Now... open the gate.

SENTRY

But... what are these trucks doing here? I have no authorization --

ARTURO

-- A surprise defense readiness test - and of course you wouldn't be told about it! If the revolutionary dogs launched a raid, do you think they'd call you to say they were coming?

Arturo looks to his companions and laughs heartily. They stiffly join in, trying to sound contemptuous and unconcerned. Arturo snaps his gaze back on the unsettled sentry.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

You will open the gate and you will maintain radio silence. There must be no warning to anyone in the main facility, understood?

The sentries are looking at one another, wondering what to do. The first sentry eyes Quinn... Pilot... Pat...

SENTRY

Understood sir.

ARTURO

Very well.

SENTRY

But I will need a handprint identification before allowing your team to pass.

Arturo glowers at him.

SENTRY (CONT'D)

Policy sir. Your own in fact.

ARTURO

I'm well aware of my own policies, mister!

The sentry snaps off a crisp salute, as a sign of acknowledgement. Arturo nervously glances at his friends, then exits the jeep and walks toward the sentry post.

SENTRY

I see you're not limping sir. Knee feeling better?

Arturo doesn't answer, doesn't want to take the chance. The second sentry holds out an object that looks like a lit, horizontal computer screen. Arturo places his hand on it...

SENTRY (CONT'D)

Left hand, sir.

Arturo clears his throat, trying not to show how tensed up and under the gun he feels. He removes his right and places his left hand on the monitor.

INT. JEEP - NIGHT - QUINN, PAT AND PILOT

have their eyes on the guard shack. Pilot smoothly slips Quinn a pistol, after first making sure it's loaded.

PILOT

(quietly)

If they discover he's an imposter,
hit the ground running and don't
be shy about using your bullets.

Quinn looks at the mean looking gun in his hand, wondering how he got himself into this deadly mess.

INT. GUARD SHACK - NIGHT - ARTURO

lifts his hand off the scanner... and nervously awaits the results. A COMPUTER VOICE from the scanner is the arbiter...

COMPUTER VOICE (V.O.)

Handprint identification complete.
Maximillian Arturo, Citizen
General, People's Army, Western
Sector.

Arturo is immensely relieved. He shoots the sentry a haughty look - the young soldier swallows hard.

SENTRY

Forgive the formality sir, but I
was only following --

ARTURO

-- You did a fine job soldier.
Tell me your name and I'll see
that you're commended.

SENTRY

But... you know my name sir.
Lieutenant Reynolds. You selected
me for this post.

ARTURO

(laughing it off)

Of course I did Reynolds, of
course. I was only having you on.

Reynolds' face is an unreadable mask. Arturo buttons up his overcoat, choosing not to linger and risk further mistakes.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

You will ignore all warning bells and alarms triggered by this mock raid. We must do our utmost to conduct the test in as real a manner as possible.

EXT. GUARD GATE - NIGHT/SECONDS LATER - THE GATE GOES UP

and the clandestine raiding party passes through, under the wary, watchful eye of the diligent sentry. Once the convoy is gone, the sentry thinks for a moment before reaching for the base phone that hangs on the wall by the sentry post.

SENTRY (INTO PHONE)

Put me through to the home of
Citizen General Arturo.

MOVE IN ON THE SENTRY as he summons up his courage...

SENTRY (CONT'D)

Yes, I realize this is highly unusual... but I consider it a potential Code Blue... and I'll take personal responsibility.

(eyes narrow)

There's something strange going on.

FADE TO BLACK:

End Of Act Six

Act Seven

EXT. ENTRANCE TO HOLDING CELLS - NIGHT - ARTURO

strides up the stairs of what used to be his university and approaches two armed PRISON GUARDS standing on each side of the double doors. Looking beyond Arturo to where the commandos are jumping out of the truck, they start to raise their rifles...

ARTURO

Guns down, men!

(they comply and
salute)

Wargame inspection. Open the
doors.

A guard unlocks the doors and the commando team races in. Arturo explains to the startled guards...

ARTURO (CONT'D)

We're running a mock raid on this
facility to test its battle
readiness. You are to guard this
door and make sure no one enters
behind us. Understood?

Taut salutes indicate compliance. Arturo enters the facility; the guards shut the doors and stand ready once again.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT - ARTURO AND QUINN

look around in wonder at the familiar corridor that used to lead to Arturo's physics classroom. The architecture is the same, but the place now has the feel of a stockade rather than a university.

Pilot, Doc and several U.S. commandos escort a number of captured, disarmed guards down the hall.

DOC

(excited)

Caught 'em with their pants down.
They tell us the prisoners are
being held on the lower levels.

ARTURO

(quietly, to Quinn)

Dear God... that's where we kept
animals for the veterinary school.

INT. PRISON CELL - NIGHT - ON REMBRANDT

pacing back and forth in a cell he is sharing with two downtrodden prisoners: a goateed old man and a nerdish scientist.

A grim-faced GUARD pushes a tray through an opening in the bars.

PRISON GUARD
Food comin' through for the TV
star from People's Court!

A famished Rembrandt eagerly moves to accept the tray but pulls up short when he sees what's on it: an aged onion and a puny radish.

REMBRANDT
What the hell's this?

PRISON GUARD
Dinner and breakfast. Bon
appetite.

The sadistic guard LAUGHS heartily at Rembrandt's pained expression... but as he turns to go he discovers a rifle pressed against his neck.

PILOT
Open the cage, pal.

The surprised guard does as he's told. Rembrandt spots Arturo and Quinn backing up Doc and pumps his fist in exhilaration at the sight of these familiar faces - he hugs his fellow Sliders gleefully as he and the other prisoners are set free.

REMBRANDT
Never thought I'd be so glad to
see you guys. Hey... where's
Wade?

QUINN
She's uh... off looking for
herself.

REMBRANDT
Huh?

ARTURO
We'll explain later - come on.

They move down the chaotic hall - all around them, the raiders are capturing guards and opening cells, freeing scores of grateful political prisoners.

EXT. SENTRY POST - NIGHT - SENTRY REYNOLDS

hangs up the guard phone and turns to the other sentry...

SENTRY

I just spoke to Arturo personally
- he's home in bed.

A tense Reynolds checks the chamber of his pistol...

SENTRY (CONT'D)

Size of enemy force is uncertain.
Send for reinforcements and sound
the perimeter alarm.

INT. PRISON/BELOW GROUND FLOOR - NIGHT

The last of the prisoners are being freed when A BOOMING
KLAXON rhythmically blares across the facility, accompanied
by flashing red lights.

DOC

Trouble - we gotta move, now!

QUINN

What about Wade?

DOC

(on the move)

She's with Pilot - he'll see she
gets out okay!

The Sliders react to the sound of GUNFIRE ringing out just
outside the building.

EXT. FRONT STAIRS - NIGHT - PAT AND HER COMMANDOS

are laying down covering fire as Quinn and company join the
freed prisoners in a dash for the revving commando trucks.

The first Soviet/government forces haven't had time to fully
form yet - they are being driven back by the scrambling
Underground guerilla fighters.

Rembrandt and Arturo dart under a hail of bullets and make
it to the cab of a nearby truck. Quinn is a few paces
behind, desperately searching through the tumultuous discord
for any sign of Wade.

He spots her just as she's fleeing the building with Pilot; the rebel leader's guns are blazing, the first of the commando trucks is starting to pull away.

Three more commandos, including Pat, turn toward the main building and launch grenades onto its roof. They are well aimed and blow the ceiling off the facility in a fiery crescendo.

Quinn runs back to Wade, taking her by the hand and sprinting toward the cab where Rembrandt and Arturo are already entrenched. The truck is under fire and on the move as they catch up and leap onto the edge of the cab with the help of their Slider friends.

Quinn hangs on tight to Wade, his own body kept from falling off the accelerating vehicle by the strong grip of Rembrandt Brown. Quinn holds Wade to his chest as Soviet bullets riddle the side of the cab --

QUINN

(to Wade, above
din)

Hold on!! We're almost there!

The truck continues to accelerate, blazing past a machine gun nest and crashing through the lowered sentry gate. It careens onto the city street - nearly tipping over as it turns - and streaks away, followed by the other commando vehicles.

Quinn can see Pilot firing from the back of his jeep as another explosion rocks the former university building, sending a blazing fireball into the heavens.

CLOSE ON QUINN holding Wade tightly so she won't fall; the dark city street flashing by just below their precarious perch on the outside of the cab.

QUINN (CONT'D)

(whispering to her)

We made it. We can all get away
now... try and make it home.

Wade doesn't respond. Quinn pulls back and looks at her face... her eyes are closed... her skin pale and cold to the touch... she is barely breathing. Quinn looks down at the near lifeless body and sees that the back of her shirt is covered in blood. She must've been hit as the truck was pulling away.

Quinn is devastated. He holds her face in his hands and looks for any sign of hope, but the life that once radiated from Wade Welles seems gone. He holds her tight and speaks in A TREMBLING WHISPER...

QUINN (CONT'D)

God Wade no!! I... I never
should've brought you here... It's
my fault Wade, my fault...

He holds the back of her head to his chest and closes his
eyes in anguish. Then he hears her MOAN...

QUINN

Stop the truck! Stop it!!

EXT. ROADSIDE - NIGHT - DESPITE THE DANGER

the truck has pulled to the curb in a residential area.
Arturo is frantically applying resuscitation techniques on
the fallen Wade, who has been gently placed on the grass in
front of a spacious house.

The Professor obviously has a certain amount of medical
knowledge and is using it with as much skill as possible to
keep Wade alive.

Rembrandt and Quinn are on their knees alongside their
friends, feeling desperate and helpless.

Rembrandt looks up to see that one of the other trucks has
also stopped and Doc is racing back toward them. The
medical man quickly assesses the situation and takes over
from Arturo...

DOC

Move back, give me some room!

Rembrandt gets to his feet and pulls Quinn back with him.
They watch with bated breath as Doc explores the wound.

WADE (O.S.)

Quinn?

Quinn thinks he's hallucinating, hearing that voice from
behind. He turns, immensely relieved to find Wade - the
identical Wade from our world - approaching on foot, having
stepped out of the back of the truck Doc was riding in.

Quinn surprises Wade by moving to her and hugging her with
all his might.

Wade is happy but confused by the raptured greeting Quinn is
giving her. Her attention is drawn to the body ten yards
ahead, now being surrounded by a throng of sad and obeisant
rebels.

Quinn pulls her head back into his shoulders before she can get a clear view...

QUINN
(intense whisper)
Don't look.

WADE
But --

QUINN
-- Trust me. Close your eyes...
we're going home.

MOVE IN ON QUINN holding the woman he thought he lost.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. UNDERGROUND HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT - THE RAIDING TRUCKS
have all made it back to the rundown area of town where the
Sliders first met them.

INT. UNDERGROUND LAIR - NIGHT/LATER - THE UNDERGROUND
is bustling with frenetic activity - the rebels are in the
process of hurriedly packing up and moving. In a far corner
of the room, Underground Radio is announcing the incredible
news of their stunning raid on the political prison.

MOVE IN on the back of a rebel radio man, wearing headphones
and speaking into the shortwave microphone with the rapid-
fire skill of a deejay.

REBEL ANNOUNCER
This is the voice of America...

KEEP MOVING IN on the back of the rebel announcer...

REBEL ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)
It's time to wake up, people! The
resistance has struck a mortal
blow against the powers that be,
freeing scores of illegally
imprisoned citizens and sending a
fiery message of defiance to those
who've stolen our country.

REVERSE ANGLE to get a look at the announcer: he has long
wavy hair, a three day beard and wears mirrored shades. We
recognize the cool, confident voice now... on some other
worlds he is known as The Spaceman.

REBEL ANNOUNCER/SPACEMAN (CONT'D)

Don't believe the papers - don't
believe the puppet media drones -
always question authority.

(wry smile)

And remember, Mr. and Mrs. Jones -
you don't need a weatherman to
know which way the wind blows...

PAN AWAY from the Spaceman and into the moving throng of
rebel soldiers. A WOMAN'S VOICE comes into the room through
a speaker system, urging everyone to be quick and precise in
their movements. She reminds them that The Underground must
relocate quickly, before stirred up government troops can
follow leads and triangulate this base.

ANGLE ON QUINN AND WADE walking with Doc, Pat and a somber
but focused Pilot, who is attentively supervising his
soldiers movements.

DOC

The bullet's lodged in the upper
muscles of the back - heavy blood
loss but no internal organ damage.
Commander Welles is a very lucky
lady - we expect complete
recovery.

The Sliders are glad to hear it.

PAT

The raid has given the movement a
tremendous shot in the arm. Word
will spread across the country; it
may give others the spirit to keep
fighting.

PILOT

Thanks to what you've told us of
your world, we know they can be
defeated. You've given us hope
again.

Pilot leans forward and gently kisses Wade's cheek.

PILOT (CONT'D)

Good luck. I hope you make it
home.

Pilot nods at Quinn, then he and his lieutenants stride
away, throwing themselves back into command, barking orders
and hurrying up the troops.

Arturo makes his way through the crowd and rejoins his companions. The professor is holding a mass of computations he's been working on in a back room.

ARTURO

Computers are banned for individual use - unavailable even through the black market. Hell, owning a xerox here will get you executed. It's made my computations ponderous and far more challenging, but I think I finally licked it. Here Quinn, take a look...

(indicates several numbers)

The timer's internal hyperspace reference circuits were partially fused during our last Slide. I believe the probability of getting home would be enhanced by our prompt return to the exact point of arrival. Golden Gate Park.

As Quinn huddles with the professor, going over the scratch calculations, Wade is attracted by the barely audible sound of SINGING, coming from somewhere outside. Curious, she heads in that direction...

EXT. UNDERGROUND HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT - WADE

recognizes the deep, soulful voice, coming from a large tent, erected at the edge of the compound. She moves that way...

REMBRANDT (SINGING, O.S.)

... Amazing grace... how sweet the sound...that saved a wretch like me.

She quietly enters the tent. Six bodies, rebels killed in the raid, are covered in American flags. A few mourners stand in silent tribute as Rembrandt sings the timeworn hymn beautifully, with straightforward, heartfelt tenderness.

REMBRANDT (SINGING, CONT'D)

... I once was lost... but now I'm found... Was blind... but now I see

Tears flow, perfectly meshing with the pain in the singer's voice. Rembrandt looks up at Wade with somber eyes - even in this world, so far from home, death is all too real.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT - THE FOUR REUNITED SLIDERS

move across the city streets, heading back the way they came. The wind is kicking up and the sidewalks are largely deserted, giving the cityscape an eerie, forbidding quality.

Rembrandt's voice reverberates from the previous scene...

REMBRANDT (SINGING, O.S.)

*Through many dangers, toils and
snares... I have already come...
'Tis grace has brought me safe
thus far... and grace will lead me
home*

A frustrated Quinn is making adjustments on the gizmo as they hurry across town - the gusting wind makes him squint, and forces him to raise his voice above its roar...

QUINN

I have no way to verify whether
the timer is fully charged.
Assuming the Professor's
computations are precise, with a
minimal standard of deviation --

REMBRANDT

-- Quit talkin' like a brain, Q-
ball and say something a normal
man can understand. You gonna get
us outta here or what?

QUINN

I honestly don't know. Keep your
fingers crossed.

The Sliders have hurried within a block of Golden Gate Park when a trenchcoated man steps out of the shadows and abruptly blocks their path. The wind is whipping up all around them as the grim stranger shines a flashlight from face to face, getting a good look at the Sliders.

TRENCHCOAT

You're violating curfew. I'll see
your papers. Now.

Quinn and Arturo hesitate; Wade is completely exasperated by the delay, her patience shot. She rolls her eyes irritably and steps toward him...

WADE

We don't have time for this!

She shocks her companions by landing a swift kick to the groin - the security man is wide eyed from the astonishment of being so challenged and doubled over from the effects of her well aimed boot.

Rembrandt grins broadly at Wade, high fives her, and finishes the job...

REMBRANDT

Ain't got no papers Jack, but I'll
show ya my fingerprints.

Rembrandt throws a clean uppercut that decks the man and sends his flashlight flying. Quinn is looking at Wade, amazed...

QUINN

Gee Wade... I didn't know you had
it in you.

WADE

Me neither. Guess my double's
shown me my untapped potential.

REMBRANDT

(rubbing his fist)
Man, that was fun!
(indicates fallen
man)

Only wish you was Doug Llewellen.

The Sliders hurry from the scene, heading for the park. The man in the trenchcoat groggily recovers and blows his shrill WHISTLE as loud as he can. The Sliders break into a sprint, looking back over their shoulders with each new step.

EXT. GOLDEN GATE PARK - NIGHT - THE SOUND OF DISTANT

whistles fill the air, getting steadily closer, as the out of breath Sliders stop near the statue of Lenin in the midst of the deserted, moonlit park.

QUINN

Here goes nothing.

Quinn activates the gizmo and presses several buttons. Wade crosses her fingers. Nothing happens. The whistle blowers are drawing near. Quinn looks at his friends helplessly... and tries again.

The gizmo finally BEEPS yellow... The gizmo BEEPS red... The smoke ring gate appears with A SUDDEN CRACKLE, blasting them with an electric wind and rotating before them in awesome purple black hues...

VOICES IN THE DISTANCE (O.S.)
There they are!! Get them!!

WADE
Make it wider Quinn, hurry!

Quinn turns up the power, making the gizmo quiver, shake and sizzle. The angry flock of whistle blowers are almost upon the Sliders.

QUINN
Okay, do it!!

One by one the Sliders leap into the void. The first of the whistle blowers arrives just as Quinn vaults headfirst into the shimmering black hole.

The whistle blowers reach the scene one after another... and can only stare in wonder and disbelief at the rotating purple smoke rings. The inhabitants of Soviet America hear a loud sound like a THUNDERCLAP and the smoke ring gateway instantly recedes to the size of a black button... then nothingness.

EXT. GOLDEN GATE PARK - NIGHT - CUT TO THE SAME PARK

but devoid of people and activity at this time of day. The wind blows, the air CRACKS, the smoke rings form just above the ground. One by one the Sliders pop out of the black center - Arturo, Rembrandt, Wade and Quinn land on the soft grass... and the gateway dissipates behind them.

CLOSE ON THE SLIDERS rising slowly, almost afraid to look around after the last two rude awakenings. The park is quiet and well manicured, the night calm and still.

ANGLE FROM BEHIND THE PARK STATUE... it's molded in the figure of a man, and stands just a few yards from where the Sliders reappeared. We see the Sliders approach it cautiously, looking up with a mixture of hope and dread.

Arturo EXHALES and wipes his brow.

ARTURO
Thank you God.

REVERSE ANGLE to include the front of the statue of...

Abraham Lincoln.

The Sliders look to one another hopefully... and then are attracted to the sound of SNORING coming from just beyond Lincoln. They move to find Crazy Kenny lying beside the bushes, sound asleep.

It's the man Quinn is long familiar with - same ragged beard and dirty clothes, same wacked-out Revolution Now buttons pinned to his grimy, tattered t-shirt.

Quinn is so grateful to find Kenny back in his normal state, he leans over and drops a couple of bills by his knapsack.

QUINN (CONT'D)
(heartfelt half-
whisper)

Good to see you again, man.

The optimistic Sliders move on and we see the bills Quinn left behind: a green twenty with Andrew Jackson... and a pink two dollar note featuring Trotsky.

EXT. CITY STREET ON OUTSKIRTS OF PARK - NIGHT - THE SLIDERS

exit the park, still wary but increasingly optimistic. Everything looks as it should. Arturo raises his arm and achieves success. A cab pulls to the curb.

INT. TAXI CAB - NIGHT - QUINN JUMPS IN THE FRONT

Arturo, Wade and finally Rembrandt climb in the back. As the cab pulls away, Rembrandt SHRIEKS, freaking his friends and making a jumpy Arturo hit his head on the roof.

WADE
What is it Rembrandt? What's
wrong?

Rembrandt points toward the driver with a shaky finger...

ANGLE TO INCLUDE THE DRIVER... it's Pavel Kurliencko!

REMBRANDT
(tense whisper)
That's the guy that turned me in!!

The others now recognize the plaintiff from the People's Court. Pavel is looking back at the terrified Rembrandt with soft, concerned eyes. He speaks with a moderate accent.

PAVEL
Are you okay, my friend?

REMBRANDT

Don't you know me?

The cabbie's eyes narrow...

PAVEL

Yes... yes! I do know you!

REMBRANDT

(reaching for the
door)

Let me out!

PAVEL

Spinning Topps! You is Crying
Man, no?

Rembrandt's fear quickly turns to ego. His hand leaves the door handle and he smooths his hair.

REMBRANDT

Why yes my good fellow. I am The
Crying Man.

PAVEL

You great. Have all your record -
big price on black market for
Topps.

Rembrandt leans back in his seat and glances at his friends with a confident smile.

REMBRANDT

That settles it. We're home.

EXT. QUINN'S STREET - NIGHT - THE CAB

approaches Quinn's house.

PAVEL (O.S.)

I am here eight years now and
still think I am dreaming.
Greatest country in world, God
bless George Washington.

The cab stops in front of the Victorian and the Sliders get out. Rembrandt pays the man, throwing in a hefty tip.

PAVEL

Do Svedanya.

REMBRANDT

Arrivederci.

After the happy driver pulls away, the others notice Quinn's guarded expression. He starts walking toward his house; the others follow closely...

QUINN

That gate's been squeaking since I was twelve...

He doesn't have to finish the sentence; all eyes are on the front gate. CLOSE ON QUINN'S HAND as he summons his courage and pushes the gate open...

The gate SQUEAKS.

The happy Sliders hug each other. All except Quinn.

REMBRANDT

(pained)

I'm gonna kill this guy. What now?

Quinn holds up his house key.

QUINN

Will this open the front door?

REMBRANDT

Aw man, don't do this to me!

CUT TO THE KEY smoothly sliding into the lock and turning to the right, successfully opening the door.

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT - AS HIS ANXIOUS FRIENDS LOOK ON

Quinn checks the pipes and finds that they're leaking as usual. He takes a deep breath and reaches for the door - the handle comes off in his hand.

Before Quinn can comment, the door pushes open and Quinn's mother appears on the stairwell looking down on The Sliders.

MRS. MALLORY

Quinn, you're home.

The Sliders exchange looks, appreciating the irony.

MRS. MALLORY (CONT'D)

Perhaps your friends would like to join us for dinner. We're having your favorite.

QUINN

Mom...

QUINN (CONT'D)

(suddenly serious)

... what's my favorite?

Quinn's mom is wondering what's going on, wondering if she's being set up for a joke. She hesitates... The Sliders hold their breath...

MRS. MALLORY

Why... Lamb chops and Rice-a-Roni,
of course.

REMBRANDT

(worried frown)

Lamb chops and Rice-a-roni? Man,
you weird.

He looks to Quinn, his jaw dropping when he sees the grim, troubled expression on the young man's face.

WADE

Quinn... is that your favorite?

He hangs his head a little and doesn't answer... his friends are dying with every silent second.

MOVE IN ON QUINN as he slowly raises his head, breaks into a big grin and winks at Wade...

QUINN

We're home.

The Sliders explode with joy. Rembrandt throws up his hands as if celebrating a touchdown and hugs Arturo, practically squeezing the life out of him - Wade throws herself into Quinn's arms and they hold each other like never before.

ANGLE ON MRS. MALLORY trying to understand their bizarre, overemotional reactions.

MRS. MALLORY

Good thing I didn't mention
dessert.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT - PAN THE TABLE

where the happy Sliders are digging in with gusto, turning a mid-week dinner into a celebratory feast.

Mrs. Mallory enters the room with a tray of hot rolls - she has set one too many place settings but no one seems to care - they are all happily wolfing down her food.

Rembrandt, already halfway through his second chop, nods at Arturo...

REMBRANDT

Professor A is right - you are all gonna be famous. And I'm gonna be even more famous! You'll need publicists and booking agents. We'll say no to Geraldo and yes to that funky Sally Jessie Raphael. I've always had a thing for her - don't know why.

ARTURO

(stroking his chin)

Perhaps Armand Assante could capture the essence of Maximilian Arturo: genius, author, scientist, lover, interdimensional explorer and world class culinary artiste.

QUINN

Forget the shallow benefits - think of the scientific advancements. Some Earths are bound to have outlawed war or cured cancer.

ARTURO

Yes, and some may have perfected war and created new cancers.

QUINN

I prefer to think of the bright side - like that Garden of Eden my double mentioned. That's one world I plan to find, no matter how long it takes.

WADE

But Quinn... maybe that's why we should keep the gateway a secret.

ARTURO

Are you out of your mind?

WADE

Think it through - if people from our Earth discover a place like that... they'll surely change it. Corrupt it. Paradise... or paradise lost?

The table falls silent as each Slider considers the ramifications of any course they choose. The ever moving, always serving Mrs. Mallory has no idea what they're talking about.

QUINN

There'll be plenty of time to
consider our options. Right now,
I'd like to propose a toast.

They all lift their glasses.

QUINN (CONT'D)

To Kansas.

Wade catches on right away, recalling the chilling image of
the ice planet and frozen Golden Gate Bridge. It takes a
moment, but Arturo and Rembrandt figure it out too.

The four Sliders touch glasses... and share a quiet,
satisfying moment of thanks.

THE SLIDERS

Kansas.

The conversation resumes, quickly turning boisterous and
festive once again. Quinn is about to say something... when
a sound from another part of the house draws his attention.

He listens... trying to shut out the noise at the table.
The sound is vague at first... muffled... reminding him
of... FOOTSTEPS... slowly coming down the stairs.
He looks to the unattended table setting, then back toward
the source of the FOOTSTEPS. Someone is definitely on the
staircase and heading this way.

The FOOTSTEPS stop. The door opens. A man walks in.

Quinn drops his fork.

TIGHT ON A PAIR OF BLACK SHOES walking across the room
toward the table, each step becoming more audible as the
other Sliders stop talking, taking note of Quinn's frozen
reaction..

ANGLE ON A WHITE-HAIRED MAN sitting down directly across
from Quinn.

The room is silent. Quinn's throat is dry as a bone - the
words come out in a hollow half-whisper...

QUINN

Hello dad.

WADE

(quietly shocked)

But... isn't your father...

Quinn nods, never taking his eyes off this older version of the father he lost fourteen years ago.

MICHAEL MALLORY

What's the matter son? You look
like you've seen a ghost.

FLASHCUT to Arturo, Rembrandt, Wade and Quinn as each freezes, their minds racing around the same shocking facts.

They must Slide again.

They're still not home.

FADE TO BLACK:

THE END