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"SLIDECAGE"

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SLIDERS

"Slidecage"

FADE IN

1 EXT. SPA WORLD - DAY (D1)

1

It's like a Maxfield Parrish painting come to life, a lavish vista of magnificent sky and parkland (perhaps atop some very strange-looking mesas, something to make it clear this is not our Earth). Perhaps some pseudo-Greek structures here and there.

REMBRANDT (O.S.)

Man, this is the life.

2 INT. GREEK GAZEBO - ON REMMY AND MAGGIE

2

Beyond lies greenery and blue skies. Remmy and Maggie lie on their stomachs in next to nothing, getting massages from GORGEOUS HUNK AND HUNKETTE, dressed in various wisps of Parrish-like, Greek toga-style stuff.

REMBRANDT

Not a care in the world and no one out to hurt us. Give me spa world any day.

A BABE comes by with a glass of ice tea on a tray, hands it to Remmy.

REMBRANDT

Thank you, darlin'.

He looks over to Maggie, who's really enjoying the hunk giving her the massage.

REMBRANDT

You know, Captain, you look like you fit right in.

MAGGIE

I could definitely get used to this.

QUINN (O.S.)

Okay, if you look here, there's a buried string hidden among the integers --

WIDEN as Rembrandt and Maggie look over to see QUINN and COLIN at a nearby table, engrossed in the laptop computer before them. Its screen shows a diagram of the two micro-dots, spewing out numbers, which then combine into a complex scroll of equations.

REMBRANDT

(to Maggie)
Isn't that just pitiful? Might as well be brains in a fish tank.

CONTINUED

2 CONTINUED

2

COLIN
Quantum physics, transdimensional
geometry...
(shakes his head)
I don't think I'll ever master it.

QUINN
Don't tear yourself down. If you
hadn't sold that electric dowser of
yours, we wouldn't even have this
computer.

MAGGIE
How about you geniuses take a
break, get the kinks out?

QUINN
Normally, I'd be happy to oblige,
but we are on the verge of a Great
Moment.

He types in a command, looks at them excitedly.

QUINN
We've almost got it.
(off Colin)
The coordinates to our home world.

Rembrandt and Maggie come over to them.

REMBRANDT
You're kidding.

As they continue to talk, Rembrandt and Maggie reach over to
some beach bags, pull out casual clothes and pull them on
over their massage wear.

MAGGIE
You said the data from the
micro-dots your parents left you
was just giving you gobbledygook.

QUINN
At first, I thought it was because
Colin's micro-dot was damaged.
Turns out it's designed that way to
stop other people from accessing
the coordinates.

REMBRANDT
People like the Kromaggs?

QUINN
Yeah. But I discovered a hidden
de-ecryption program keyed to our
specific DNA.

Quinn types a series of commands into the laptop.

CONTINUED

2 CONTINUED 2

2

QUINN
It should start eliminating the
randomization protocols --

REMBRANDT
Doing the who to what?

COLIN
Separating the wheat from the
chaff.

REMBRANDT
Oh.

QUINN
Right about now.

He finishes typing. The rows of numbers on screen fall away
to reveal one simple line of numbers.

QUINN
There. There it is.

Quinn stares at the numbers and there's more than excitement
there -- there's a hunger.

QUINN
(to Colin)
The key to where we came from.
Where the humans kicked the
Kromaggs clear off the planet.
(including Rembrandt and
Maggie)
Where maybe we'll find the
technology to free all the worlds
they've conquered.

REMBRANDT
Yeah, including good old Earth
Prime. So what are we waiting for?
I got my toothbrush packed!

Quinn pulls the timer out and starts inputting the
coordinates.

QUINN
Ready to go home, brother?

Colin nods. Quinn hands him the timer, smiles. He stashes
the computer in a knapsack.

QUINN
Then hit it.

They move out of sight of any onlookers. Colin pushes the
button. The timer SHOTS OUT A BEAM. The VORTEX appears.
They leap through, Quinn with the knapsack.

3 INT. LABYRINTH - CORRIDOR - NIGHT (N1)

3

Our guys SLIDE IN, get to their feet, look about. The place is futuristic in design, but rundown. They're in a long corridor, lit only in patches, equipment lying about, wiring hanging from the ceiling. A feeling of chaos.

COLIN

This isn't quite what I was expecting.

REMBRANDT

Hello! Hey! Where's the welcome wagon?

MAGGIE

Let's just find the exit.

They move along the corridor, casting about. Rembrandt moves OUT OF SHOT.

QUINN

I don't see any door out.

Maggie takes a breath, notes:

MAGGIE

Air's got a metallic taste. Like it's processed.

QUINN

Yeah, but what's that tell us?

REMBRANDT (O.S.)

(bleak)
It tells us we're a long way from home.

ANGLE to include Rembrandt. He stands, looking out a window. The others join him and gape in surprise.

4 THEIR POINT OF VIEW - OUT THE WINDOW

4

A barren, alien terrain stretches to the horizon. The NIGHT SKY is afire with weirdly colored clouds, a tapestry of unfamiliar stars and TWO MOONS in the sky.

5 OUR GUYS

5

peer out worriedly, as we...

FADE OUT

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN

6 INT. LABYRINTH - CORRIDOR - ON THE WINDOW - NIGHT
The same bizarre scene as before.

6

7 ON QUINN, REMBRANDT, COLIN AND MAGGIE

7

looking out at the scene with disquiet. Maggie turns to Quinn.

MAGGIE
You're sure you got the coordinates right?

QUINN
Positive.

REMBRANDT
Well, something must've gone haywire. I mean, that looks like something out of Star Trek.

QUINN
The timer always sends us to an alternate Earth, never an alien planet. This is almost certainly Earth -- just one very different from anything we've seen before.

REMBRANDT
Looks pretty dead out there. If this is your home world, where are all the people?

QUINN
I don't know, we just got here.
(exasperated)
Why does everyone always expect me to have the answer?

COLIN
Because you usually do.

Quinn tries to glare, but can't help breaking into a grin.

MAGGIE
So if it's home sweet home, we'll stick around. If not, we'll slide out.
(to Colin)
How long we got on the universal remote?

COLIN
The --? Oh.

Colin raises the timer in his hand to check -- and freezes.

CONTINUED

7 CONTINUED

7

COLIN

Brother, we have a problem.

He shows it to the others -- its LED is frozen at 00:00.

REMBRANDT

The timer's not counting down.

Quinn takes it, tries to punch in some commands -- nothing.

MAGGIE

What's wrong with it?

Quinn shoots her a look -- what were they just talking about?

MAGGIE

You don't know.

QUINN

Yes, that's right.

Suddenly, a soothing MAN'S VOICE issues from behind them.

MICHAEL MALLORY (O.S.)

Excuse me. Over here, please.

Surprised, they turn in the direction of the sound.

QUINN

I know that voice.

Colin nods. He does, too, but -- like Quinn -- can't quite place it. They move toward a doorway.

MICHAEL MALLORY (O.S.)

In here. There's nothing to be afraid of.

They enter.

8 INT. VIEW SCREEN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

8

MICHAEL MALLORY (O.S.)

Good.

As soon as they're all in, the door SLIDES DOWN, trapping them. They spin to face it. Rembrandt POUNDS on it.

REMBRANDT

Hey!

MICHAEL MALLORY (O.S.)

Don't be alarmed. It's merely to afford us some privacy for your indoctrination.

MAGGIE

I don't like the sound of that.

CONTINUED

8 CONTINUED

8

A LIGHT behind them comes on, ILLUMINATING them. They turn to see that it's a BIG VIEW SCREEN. The kindly face of MICHAEL MALLORY appears. Stunned, recognizing the face, Quinn and Colin draw near it, the others following.

MICHAEL MALLORY
Welcome, newcomers. I helped to
invent sliding, the method by which
you've arrived here. My name is
Michael Mallory.

QUINN
Colin, it's our --

COLIN
Father.
(to the screen)
Father! It's Quinn and Colin!

MICHAEL MALLORY
(over the above)
This may well be disorienting to
you, as you were no doubt trying to
get to my world --

QUINN
(to Colin)
He's not here, it's just a tape.

MICHAEL MALLORY
-- but you have instead been
shunted here, by the Slidecage
mechanism.

MAGGIE
Slidecage?

MICHAEL MALLORY
Following the recent human/Kromagg
war, we have driven the enemy from
our world and cloaked it so they
cannot return, by these means. In
the interest of --

His image BREAKS UP, the sound GARBLES, it's all distortion.

REMBRANDT
Come back, give us the whole story!
Hey!

No response. Rembrandt HITS the edge of the screen with the
flat of his hand hard. The IMAGE restabilizes.

REMBRANDT
Hah! Always worked with my old TV.

MAGGIE
Doesn't look like they're
maintaining their equipment.

CONTINUED

8 CONTINUED 2

8

MICHAEL MALLORY
(over the above)
-- unfortunately cannot return you,
as it would pose a security risk.
If you are a friend rather than an
enemy, I'm truly sorry.

QUINN
(to Rembrandt and Maggie)
Sh.

MICHAEL MALLORY
Your needs will be provided for,
food and air and shelter. Do not
tamper with the dispensing
machines. If you attempt to
venture outside, the toxic
atmosphere will kill you. Other
than these strictures, you are free
to live by the rules you create.
Make the best of this world. It is
now your world... for the rest of
your lives.

The screen GOES BLANK. The door SLIDES BACK OPEN.

MAGGIE
The rest of our lives?

QUINN
It's a perfect system to protect
their world, make sure the Kromaggs
can't invade. Anyone who tries to
slide there ends up here instead.
(off the timer)
They must have some kind of damping
field to render this inoperable.

REMBRANDT
You saying we've wandered into some
kind of roach motel for sliders?

COLIN
But why would our parents cloak
their world and not come get us?

QUINN
They tried to, but I was kept
hidden from them. And you were
lost, your foster parents dead.

REMBRANDT
Knowing those Kromaggs, I can't
blame your people for wanting to
keep their world safe. It's just a
damn shame we walked into it.

COLIN
So what do we do now?

Quinn looks toward the door, considering.

CONTINUED

8 CONTINUED 3

8

QUINN
What we always do. Beat the odds.

9 INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

9

As they emerge.

REMBRANDT
So who do you think our cell mates
are gonna be?

MAGGIE
Anyone who tried to slide to the
home world. Answer number one
would be --

QUINN
Kromaggs.

COLIN
I've never seen a Kromagg before.

REMBRANDT
When you do, you'll wish you
hadn't.

Just then, there's a DISTANT HOWL, like a primal scream,
followed by METAL HITTING METAL, then SILENCE. Our guys eye
each other warily.

COLIN
I don't think I even want to hear
them.

QUINN
Keep sharp, guys.

They edge forward cautiously.

DISSOLVE TO

10 INT. ANOTHER CORRIDOR - NIGHT

10

Maggie, Quinn, Rembrandt and Colin are scoping out the area.
Quinn peers down the corridor, which seems to go on forever.

QUINN
Place is a real labyrinth. All we
need is a Minotaur.
(turns to Colin)
It's a beast with the head of a --

COLIN
We have that myth where I come
from, too... and I know that
Theseus managed to get out.

REMBRANDT
Yeah, but not before one hell of a
fight.

- 11 POINT OF VIEW FROM VENT - ON MAGGIE 11
some feet from the others.
- 12 ANGLE ON VENT 12
Dark. Stretching away. Dimly perceived, there's a MAN in it, watching her (later we'll know him as THOMAS). He draws closer, still deeply shadowed.
- 13 MAGGIE 13
is unaware of him. Just then, there's a CRASHING and SHOUTS of a brawl drawing near.
- 14 THE MAN IN THE VENT 14
darts back into the darkness and is gone.
- 15 WIDE 15
Hearing the RIOT coming their way, Quinn calls to the others:

QUINN

Get down!

They duck into hiding. A beat, then a BRAWLING GROUP OF HUMANS AND KROMAGGS (around six in all) surge into the area from a side corridor. All are dressed in ragtag clothes. It's like a street rumble, everyone fighting dirty, fists and boots and rough weapons (neither side has guns or blasters, weapons are jerry-rigged from scavenged parts).

Rembrandt wants to join the fray, but Quinn holds him back, whispering:

QUINN

Let's see what the rules are.

The Kromaggs seem to be getting the upper hand. Two humans take flight down the corridor, leaving one human alone. We see now it's a haggard woman, DARLA (30s), the Kromaggs ganging up on her.

QUINN

Okay, now we know.

He and the others dive out, taking on the Kromaggs, allowing the woman to escape. She runs off after her companions. Seeing they're outnumbered, the Kromaggs beat a retreat. At the last, a blow from behind knocks Rembrandt senseless. The Kromaggs drag him back the way they came.

Quinn, Maggie and Colin are after them in a flash, but the Kromaggs have passed through a doorway. Two wires protrude from the wall on the other side. One of the Kromaggs touches the ends of the wires together, making a connection.

CONTINUED

15 CONTINUED

15

In answer, the door slides SHUT, closing off our guys from Rembrandt and the Kromaggs.

QUINN

Rembrandt!

16 DOWN THE CORRIDOR

16

Unseen by them, Darla hesitates, watching them, then hurries off after her fellows.

17 QUINN

17

tries to force the door. No use. He shakes his head to the others. Rembrandt is gone.

18 INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

18

Quinn, Maggie and Colin are hurrying in the opposite direction. Maggie points at a wet footprint.

MAGGIE

There's another one.

COLIN

You think these people will help us?

QUINN

I don't know, but if they've at least got some kind of map --

They turn a corner, spy a MAN darting away.

QUINN

Hold it, we're friends!

They run after him, into:

19 INT. HUMAN STRONGHOLD - CONTINUOUS

19

A dark, steamy room, cluttered and lived in. Colin, Maggie and Quinn rush in -- then stop as they realize they're surrounded by a motley group of MEN and WOMEN. LUTHER, the man they chased, strides up to Quinn.

LUTHER

I know my friends. I don't know you.

He slugs Quinn, who doubles over. Maggie and Colin try to come to Quinn's aid, but they're grabbed and held fast. Luther is about to hit Quinn again when a COMMANDING VOICE BOOMS OUT:

JANIE

Luther, hold up there.

CONTINUED

19 CONTINUED

19

JANIE appears, a powerful woman with a backwoods twang. She addresses the others, speaking quietly, but with authority.

JANIE

Let 'em go.

They release Maggie and Colin. Janie turns to Luther.

JANIE

What happened?

LUTHER

They were chasing me.

MAGGIE

You were running!

Janie puts out a cautionary hand to silence her.

JANIE

Everyone lives a might jumpy here.

She turns to Darla, whom we now see is part of the group.

JANIE

Them the ones jumped into that tangle you got yourself into?

Darla nods, mumbles something. She's painfully shy.

JANIE

Speak up, girl.

DARLA

Yes.

Janie nods, considering. She turns her attention back to Quinn, Maggie and Colin.

JANIE

You're new, aren't you? Probably fresh off the boat.

QUINN

That's right.

JANIE

No reason to get off on the wrong foot. We're all humans. We don't want to hurt you.

COLIN

That's good to hear.

JANIE

Now we don't have many rules, just a few, but they're --

Quinn cuts her off. Time's wasting.

CONTINUED

19 CONTINUED 2

19

QUINN

Excuse me, but if you heard about that mess with the Kromaggs, you probably know one of our friends got captured, and we've got to --

JANIE

He's gone. Or will be, before the night's out. You're going to have to forget him.

The mood in the room takes an abrupt chill.

MAGGIE

We're not about to do that.

JANIE

And you want us to -- what? Go in with guns ablazing, heroes to the rescue? Well, there are no guns here. And all the heroes are dead.

She gestures around her at the others.

JANIE

We were once over two hundred, now look at us. No one but folks who want to go on living. We've got a simple rule here. If you're human, you join us. It's just too dangerous any way else.

QUINN

If joining means abandoning our friend, we can't do that.

MAGGIE

(to Janie)
You won't help us?

JANIE

Believe me, honey, I'm trying to.

QUINN

We've got to go. I'm sorry.

He nods to Maggie and Colin, they start heading back the way they came. She watches them and a hardness comes into her eyes.

JANIE

I'm sorry, too.

She nods to her people, who surge up over our guys and grab them. Janie walks up to them.

JANIE

Last one we let go was caught, tortured, revealed our location. We had forty children here. Dead now, every one.

CONTINUED

19 CONTINUED 3

19

She turns to a man not holding them.

JANIE
Airlock.

He nods, walks over to something we see for the first time:
AN AIRLOCK DOOR. Beside it is a LIGHTED CONTROL PANEL. The
crowd starts dragging Quinn, Maggie and Colin toward it.
Our guys struggle like mad.

QUINN
Oh no, oh no no no.

MAGGIE
Don't do this!

COLIN
What's an airlock?!

They've reached it now. Janie comes up to them, expression
hard, but eyes sad. She doesn't want to do this, but feels
she has to.

QUINN
We'll join. All right, we'll join
you!

JANIE
Nah, you'd be the death of us. I
can feel it.

She nods to the man by the controls, who starts initiating
the sequence to open the airlock.

DARLA
Janie, wait.

Darla steps up, speaks hesitantly.

DARLA
The one who got caught, he saved my
life. We owe them.

Janie considers a long, tense beat. It's a difficult
decision. Finally, she sighs, relenting.

JANIE
All right, but it'll be a hard
road... and they'll need something
to break that maverick spirit.
(off Maggie)
Just her.

The men holding Maggie nod, move her to the airlock door,
which SLIDES OPEN, revealing a small chamber beyond, some
toxic wisps of the outside atmosphere remaining inside it.

MAGGIE
(struggling)
No! NO!!!

CONTINUED

19 CONTINUED 4

19

Quinn and Colin are also fighting to get free, to help Maggie, to no avail. The door SLIDES SHUT, trapping Maggie within. We hear her MUFFLED SHOUTING and POUNDING at the door. A man by the controls looks to Janie for the final command.

COLIN

Don't. Please.

QUINN

Take me! Take me instead! For
God's sake!

JANIE

(to the man, flat)
Vent it.

He nods and pushes a button. A FLASHING LIGHT above the airlock door comes on, spinning its warning.

From outside, we hear Maggie CHOKING, BANGING on the door. But the SOUNDS grow weaker and are then silent.

Quinn breaks free, rushes for the airlock door. He manages to hold the others at bay long enough to start frantically keying commands on the controls -- but then is knocked unconscious.

20 ON COLIN

20

In anguish, collapsing to his knees, as we...

FADE OUT

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN

21 INT. LABYRINTH - HUMAN STRONGHOLD - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

21

Quinn is unconscious, on the ground near the airlock. Colin is still held, though no longer struggling, looking at the sealed, silent hatch with despair.

JANIE

(off Colin)
Lock him down. Computer room.

COLIN

I'm not leaving my brother!

JANIE

We're not gonna hurt your brother.
We're done hurting anyone right
now. Go on.

A beat as he stares at her. Then he relents, exits with the others.

Janie walks over to a bowl of water, dips a rag in it. She moves to Quinn, dabs his face with the cloth. Some of her men stand guard a few feet off to make sure Quinn doesn't try anything. Quinn starts to rouse.

JANIE

Come on. Come on now. That's it.
You know your name? Where you are?

Quinn comes fully awake, remembers Maggie being chucked out the airlock.

QUINN

Maggie!

He scrambles for the airlock.

JANIE

She's gone, son, to freedom.

Grief floods Quinn. Then rage. He wheels on her.

QUINN

Don't give me that! You murdered
her! Why her? Why her and not me?

JANIE

You two looked stronger. I thought
you'd have a better chance to
survive.

Quinn sees red. With a cry, he lunges for her. Her men restrain him.

JANIE

The Kromaggs give us no choice,
son.

CONTINUED

21 CONTINUED

21

QUINN
The Kromaggs? The Kromaggs!?
(anguished)
I hope you burn in hell!

JANIE
(erupts)
This is hell, don't you know
that?

She grabs up his knapsack, pulls out the laptop computer.

JANIE
You brought this. Wanna see what
good it is here?

She throws it against a wall. It SHATTERS.

JANIE
We can open a few doors, but the
computers that run this place are
secured up tight. We can't get
into them, can't do a damned thing.
And most of all, we can't leave.

She moves in close to Quinn, furious.

JANIE
I have been here twenty years. I
have seen a river of blood. I do
what I do to keep these people
alive!
(beat)
The Kromaggs don't take prisoners.
Neither do we. We find one, we
open him up, leave him for the
others. We survive by terror.

Quinn says nothing, only glares at her.

JANIE
You can hate me, no rule against
that. But you have got to learn to
obey.

She nods to her men -- take him away. They haul Quinn off.

22 INT. CONDUIT CENTRAL - NIGHT

22

Dark. We're in the walls at some juncture that opens up to
a larger space. In the shadows, we see a misshapen FIGURE,
glinting metal, carrying something.

It sets its burden down gingerly -- and now we see that it's
Maggie, eyes closed, unmoving. She might be dead or merely
unconscious.

23 ON THE FIGURE

23

As we now see that it's actually a man in a cobbled-together SPACE SUIT. He raises his visor, revealing his face. This is THOMAS (40s), a small, hectic man, very bright but nervous, with a sensitive face. He looks down at Maggie, studying her, his expression gentle, uncertain.

24 INT. KROMAGG LAIR - NIGHT

24

Lighting dim. MALE AND FEMALE KROMAGGS busy themselves at various tasks, tending rough-hewn hydroponics, etc. Many have scars from battles, rags obscuring parts of their faces, covering missing eyes or badly healed wounds. The Kromaggs we saw earlier drag Rembrandt in.

REMBRANDT

Lemme go! Let go of me!

KOLITAR (O.S.)

You humans are so loud, even when you're not in pain.

KOLITAR surges through the crowd to Rembrandt. Big and broad, older. His clothes are not military, but there is still something grand and commanding about him. His arm has a ragged bandage around it, with dried blood.

KOLITAR

I haven't seen you. New in town?

REMBRANDT

Yeah, not that it helped.
Everywhere I go, there you Kromaggs are.

KOLITAR

I might say the same of you humans.

Rembrandt looks at the vats and plants. In spite of his loathing for the Kromaggs, he can't help but be curious.

REMBRANDT

What is all this?

KOLITAR

A few of us had burrs, seedlings, adhering to our clothes when we were trapped here. We make our own garments, grow other substances as best we can.

REMBRANDT

Sounds real homey.

KOLITAR

It is no life for a Kromagg. But it is the life we have.
(to the others)
Was he alone?

CONTINUED

24 CONTINUED

24

REMBRANDT

Nah, I had my R&B band with me.

KOLITAR

R and B?

REMBRANDT

Skip it, you're not gonna get anything outta me, okay? You Kromaggs have already done your worst. I've been in one of your prison camps.

KOLITAR

This is no prison camp. Merely a prison.

(considering Rembrandt)

If we let you go, you'd tell the humans our strength in numbers. If we took you in, you'd betray us. So what are we to do?

REMBRANDT

I'd say it's pretty damn obvious.

Kolitar nods, says to one of his men:

KOLITAR

Bring the knives.

Despite his bravado, Rembrandt can't help being afraid. The Kromagg hurries off. A thin VOICE PIPES UP:

KALDEEN (O.S.)

Father, please, don't.

Rembrandt turns to see KALDEEN (18), dressed like the other Kromaggs, except for this difference: he's in a homemade wheelchair, his body twisted, thin and frail... and his face is entirely swathed in rags, only his bright, alert eyes visible.

KALDEEN

Can't we just talk to him?

KOLITAR

Silence, Kaldeen... you don't know humans as I do.

REMBRANDT

You brought your son here?

Kolitar turns on Rembrandt, his eyes evade. And it's telling that when he refers to Kaldeen, he calls him "the boy" rather than "my son" (although Rembrandt doesn't pick up on it at this point).

KOLITAR

The boy was born in this abyss.

(MORE)

CONTINUED

24 CONTINUED 2

24

KOLITAR (CONT'D)
Some factor, radiation perhaps,
makes conception virtually
impossible. His birth was a freak.

The Kromagg appears with a wooden box, holds it out.

KOLITAR
But enough of sadness and this
world.

He opens the box, revealing NASTY-LOOKING, SCAVENGED-
TOGETHER BLADES. He selects one, turns to Rembrandt.

KOLITAR
Pain can be a kingdom all its own.

He draws near Rembrandt. Rembrandt's nerve falters. His
eyes fall on Kolitar's bandage.

REMBRANDT
That arm of yours looks pretty bad.

Kolitar's startled. He eyes the wound angrily.

KOLITAR
It was sustained in battle. It
burns in me.

REMBRANDT
Guess you don't have doctors around
here.

Kolitar's frustration at his unhealing wound boils up in
him. With a ROAR, he throws Rembrandt to the ground,
pressing the blade to his throat.

KOLITAR
That foul slop from the human
processors. We're malnourished,
unable to heal ourselves.

REMBRANDT
(struggling to get out
the words)
My mama had a remedy. From the
Bayou. Might be able to make it --
and that arm wouldn't end up
killing you.

Kolitar's surprised -- and suspicious.

KOLITAR
You just want to live.

REMBRANDT
And you do, too. If you kill me,
you'll never know.

A tense moment. Then he lets Rembrandt up.

CONTINUED

24 CONTINUED 3

24

KOLITAR
Very well. But understand this:
you have only postponed your death.

Rembrandt looks him right in the eye, doesn't back down.

REMBRANDT
We all of us die. Only question is
when... and how.

KOLITAR
(to his men)
Give him what he needs.

He turns and strides off.

25 KALDEEN

25

sits on the periphery, watching Rembrandt. Kolitar comes up
to him.

KOLITAR
You remember how I told you of the
serpent in the garden, how the
humans despised it and tried to
kill it? They hate anything that
is not like them.
(beat)
You are not to speak to him, do you
understand me?

Kaldeen starts to protest, then nods obedience.

26 INT. TERMINAL ROOM - NIGHT

26

A circular room with a row of computers. Colin stands by a
keyboard and monitor, typing in different commands. With
each try, the screen shows ACCESS DENIED.

COLIN
I'm not getting anywhere with this.
Quinn --?

Quinn's not listening. He's running his hand along the
locked door, grieving.

QUINN
Beat the odds, that's what I told
her. Like always. We didn't beat
them this time.

COLIN
I'm grieving for her, too. But we
have to get to Rembrandt, and the
only one who might be able to do
something with this computer is
you.

CONTINUED

26 CONTINUED

26

QUINN

So I can get us out of here, get
you killed, too?

(looks off)

I was traveling to get home. She
was just traveling for me.

Colin comes up behind Quinn, speaks softly.

COLIN

On my world, death is our close
companion. Most families lose a
child, or a parent, or both. When
influenza carried off my foster
mother and father, at first I
didn't want to live. Why had it
taken them and not me?

He puts his hand on Quinn's shoulder, rubs it.

COLIN

We all die, Quinn, we really do...
and while we're here, all that's
left us is to remember those we've
lost, and live for the ones still
here.

Quinn turns to him and the two embrace as Quinn breaks down.
A beat, then Quinn gets command of himself again.

QUINN

Okay. Okay...

He moves to the computer.

QUINN

Let's see what we can do.

27 INT. CONDUIT CENTRAL - NIGHT

27

Maggie lies bundled in rough blankets, unmoving. Then she
GASPS, takes a deep breath and sits up.

She looks around, disoriented. A SOUND. She turns to
Thomas, hurrying up to her. He gives her a reassuring
smile.

THOMAS

It's all right, you're not dead.
(off the surroundings)

I mean, it would be a pretty sorry
afterlife if it looked like this.

Maggie tries to speak, croaks out:

MAGGIE

Where am I?

CONTINUED

27 CONTINUED

27

THOMAS

(offhanded)
In the walls. You're confused,
that's only natural after what
you've been through. Pitching you
out in the methane, honestly, I
don't know what they were thinking.
(extends a hand)
Thomas. Thomas Beecham.

MAGGIE

Maggie Beckett.

THOMAS

Maggie... You know, I would have
figured you for a Betty, or maybe a
Lola. When I saw you in the
corridor with your friends --

Her friends! Maggie tries to rise.

MAGGIE

I've got to get to them.

She's seized with a fit of coughing. He rushes to her.

THOMAS

Easy, easy there. You're not up to
anything yet.

He helps ease her back. She gives a cry of frustration, but
relents.

THOMAS

That's it, just relax, you're a
guest.

(sheepish)

Matter of fact, you're the first.
I'm a bit of a stay-at-home. But
when I saw what was happening to
you, I --

Some inner emotional pain flashes in his face, something
dark and down deep. He wipes it away, all brightness again.

THOMAS

Well, what's done is done. You get
some rest now.

He starts away, but she grabs his hand, murmurs:

MAGGIE

Thank you.

He flushes, embarrassed, gives a small smile. Pats her
hand.

28 INT. TERMINAL ROOM - NIGHT

28

Quinn at the keyboard, typing busily, Colin standing over him. The screen still shows ACCESS DENIED, but the image is breaking up, scrambling periodically.

QUINN

Okay, I think we're making some headway. See, we've got a little advantage our backwoods Mussolini doesn't know: we're the kids of the guy who built this.

(beat, typing)

And I'm praying that the de-encryption string he hid in our micro-dots might also be embedded in here somewhere.

COLIN

You think he realized we might land here?

QUINN

Let's hope.

The screen clears to reveal rows of numbers and words.

QUINN

Aha. We are in.

Quinn quickly scrolls through, reading, searching.

QUINN

Looks like many of the master systems run independent of each other. We can't access them from here.

COLIN

So what can we do?

QUINN

I'm working on it... Yes. Venting duct. Comes into this room and re-enters the building here. Might be able to override the locking code.

(beat, looks at Colin)

Only hitch, there's a stretch of it that's open to the outside atmosphere.

COLIN

(alarmed)

But that's what killed Maggie.

QUINN

She didn't have a way back in, we will. It's only a few hundred feet.

Colin shakes his head, frightened.

CONTINUED

28 CONTINUED

28

COLIN

We can't.

Quinn looks him in the eye, says gently:

QUINN

Colin... for the living.

Colin calms, looking at his brother. Then nods.

29 INT. KROMAGG LAIR - NIGHT

29

Rembrandt's chained to a wall, one arm manacled close to the wall, the other free. He adjusts a dressing on Kolitar's arm.

KOLITAR

(hisses)
It stings.

REMBRANDT

That means it's working. Don't fuss with it.

KOLITAR

What do you call this?

REMBRANDT

A poultice.

KOLITAR

Poultice... We have nothing like it.

REMBRANDT

Yeah, well, there's a whole lot you Kromaggs don't have. Mercy. Empathy.

KOLITAR

We are adversarial species. It is natural for us to destroy each other.

REMBRANDT

Yeah, well, guess I'm going against nature cause it looks like I'm saving your life.

Kolitar grasps Remmy's free arm, locks it into the other manacle held tight to the wall.

KOLITAR

I won't be able to say the same for you.

He exits. Rembrandt sighs, shakes his head.

REMBRANDT

Then I'd better enjoy the moment.

30 OFF IN A CORNER

30

in the shadows, unseen, Kaldeen sits watching Rembrandt.

31 INT. CONDUIT CENTRAL - NIGHT

31

The space suit hangs on a hook. Maggie stands studying it.

THOMAS (O.S)

I cobbled that together so I could
explore outside.

She turns to see Thomas approaching with a tray bearing
various bowls of glop.

THOMAS

Good thing, too, or I wouldn't have
been able to get to you. You're
looking worlds better.

MAGGIE

Still pretty unsteady on my pins.

He helps her to a chair.

THOMAS

Naturally, to be expected.

(off the tray)

Hey, presto, I cooked something.
Actually, it comes from a gizmo in
the wall, so it's more accurate to
say I extruded it. I didn't know
what you liked, so I ordered up a
choice. Artificial ham.
Artificial turkey.

(beat)

It all tastes the same,
unfortunately.

Maggie tries some. Makes a face.

THOMAS

But it does grow on you.

(beat)

So. How'd you land here? I assume
you were off world.

MAGGIE

I was traveling with my friends.
It's a little complicated.

THOMAS

Complicated is good. It makes for
a long story. And time we have in
abundance.

MAGGIE

How about you? How'd you end up
here?

CONTINUED

31 CONTINUED

31

THOMAS

(evasive)
Oh, various and sundry, this and that. It's not really important.

MAGGIE

Been here awhile?

THOMAS

In the walls? Not long. Oh... ten years.

MAGGIE

Ten years?

THOMAS

It's not as bad as it sounds. Really. I always liked tunnels and corridors. Remember that TV show? Beauty and the Beast? Not the Disney one, the other one. God, I loved that.

Maggie's looking off at a ROW OF MONITORS set high along one wall, switching to various scenes of empty corridors and rooms.

THOMAS

I see you've noticed my home entertainment center.

(draws up to monitors)

I set these up to keep an eye on things. Generally, from eight to twelve I watch the humans, from twelve to four the Kromaggs. Quite diverting.

(confidential)

I have my favorite characters.

MAGGIE

We could use these to find my friends.

Thomas grows uncomfortable.

THOMAS

Well, yes, theoretically. But I wouldn't recommend it. Some of the things you might see -- You're not up to much excitement.

MAGGIE

Thomas, please. It matters.

He looks away, doesn't want to say yes. But she's looking at him with such warmth, he can't deny her.

THOMAS

All right.

Maggie smiles, grateful.

32 INT. TERMINAL ROOM - NIGHT

32

Quinn's typing commands at the terminal, Colin nearby.

QUINN

Got it.

There's an ELECTRONIC SOUND and a CIRCULAR VENTING HATCH SLIDES OPEN. Quinn and Colin dive in. The hatch SLIDES SHUT behind them.

33 INT. CONDUIT - NIGHT

33

Quinn in the lead, crawling along, Colin behind him. They come to a closed hatch. Quinn touches the control panel by the hatch, looks to Colin. A tense beat.

QUINN

We won't be in there long. Just think of it like being underwater in a swimming hole.

COLIN

A swimming hole isn't filled with methane, brother.

QUINN

You don't always have to be so literal. Ready?

COLIN

No, but we'd better get to it.

Quinn nods. They take several quick, deep breaths, then hold it. Quinn keys a command on a panel beside the hatch.

It SLIDES OPEN -- beyond lies a further length of conduit, SWIRLING TOXIC ATMOSPHERE within. They crawl forward as fast as they can, as the hatch closes behind them.

We MOVE WITH THEM in the tight, hellish space, as the poison air swirls about them. Colin starts to falter, Quinn grabs him, helps pull him along, determined. But they seem to be running out of steam, losing the battle. The MIST GROWS THICKER until they're lost from sight.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN

34 INT. LABYRINTH - CONDUIT - NIGHT

34

Choking, Quinn half-drags Colin determinedly along. Play the tension, then:

35 INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

35

A hatch in the wall opens and Quinn and Colin slide out, COUGHING, accompanied by FUMES. Quinn seals the hatch behind them. Both continue to HACK, gasping for breath.

As they start to recover, Quinn turns to Colin.

QUINN

I feel like I've just been through the longest car exhaust in the world.

They break down laughing, slap each other on the back, glad to be alive. Then they catch their breath, laughter dying down.

COLIN

Now to find Rembrandt... if he still lives.

They look about. WIDEN to reveal that they're back at the JUNCTION OF ENDLESS, IDENTICAL CORRIDORS, or one that looks just like it.

QUINN

Assuming we don't die of old age first.

(off the corridors)
You call it.

Colin considers, picks one.

COLIN

That one.

QUINN

Why that one?

COLIN

I like how it's decorated.

Quinn smiles.

QUINN

There's hope for you yet.

Quinn starts off, his footsteps ECHOING loudly. Colin puts a finger to his lips, cautioning.

COLIN

Remember, there are Minotaurs.

CONTINUED

35 CONTINUED

35

Quinn moves in close, speaking in a low tone.

QUINN
They haven't taken on the Mallory
boys yet.

Colin gives a small smile, Quinn claps him on the back, and they head off down the corridor.

36 INT. KROMAGG LAIR - NIGHT

36

Rembrandt lies by a wall, chained and manacled to it. Kaldeen rolls up.

KALDEEN
I'm not allowed to talk to you.

REMBRANDT
Well, to tell you the truth, I'm not exactly in the mood for conversation myself. Go on, get out of here, before you get in trouble.

KALDEEN
Everyone's out foraging. Except the guards, and they're not watching us.

Rembrandt raises up his chain.

REMBRANDT
You wouldn't happen to have the key on you?

Kaldeen shakes his head.

REMBRANDT
No, I didn't think so.

He rolls closer, eyeing Rembrandt.

KALDEEN
I've never been this close to a human before.

REMBRANDT
Well, get an eyeful.
(studying him)
How come you keep your face all covered up like that?

KALDEEN
Because I'm hideous. We don't have looking glasses, but my father has told me.

REMBRANDT
How nice of him.

CONTINUED

36 CONTINUED

36

KALDEEN

What you did to save your life, it was clever. Made yourself useful. That's what I do. I fix the processors when they break, the air handlers, too.

(rolls closer)

What's your name?

REMBRANDT

Rembrandt.

KALDEEN

That's an odd one.

REMBRANDT

It's after a painter.

KALDEEN

Are you a painter, too?

REMBRANDT

No. I'm a singer.

KALDEEN

I've heard of songs. Are you from the home world?

Rembrandt stiffens, gets a suspicious look. Is this a Kromagg trick, sending a kid to question him?

REMBRANDT

Is this an interrogation?

KALDEEN

(surprised)
No, just talking.

REMBRANDT

I'm not from the home world, never seen it. And from the way it's going, doesn't look like I will.

He looks at the chain, shakes his head.

REMBRANDT

When my mama was dressing me for kindergarten, I never expected to wind up here.

KALDEEN

Tell me about your mother. I never knew mine.

Rembrandt considers a beat, then:

REMBRANDT

When I was little, Mama seemed about a million miles tall.

(MORE)

CONTINUED

36 CONTINUED 2

36

REMBRANDT (CONT'D)
Nights when the sky flashed and
stomped its feet, she'd hold me on
her rocker, all bundled up, sing
real low.

KALDEEN
What would she sing?

Rembrandt thinks a moment, then starts SINGING, low and
sweet.

REMBRANDT
(singing)
Sometimes I feel like a motherless
child... Sometimes I feel like a
motherless child...

Kaldeen listens to his first song ever, captivated. We PULL
BACK slowly as the two figures become small in the shadowed
room, alone. The SONG CONTINUES.

37 INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE KROMAGG LAIR

37

Continuing to pull back in the dim corridor as the SONG
ECHOES down empty halls.

REMBRANDT (O.S.)
(singing)
A long way from home...

The song dies out on the still air.

38 INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

38

Quinn and Colin moving along. Quinn halts, pricks up his
ears.

COLIN
What?

QUINN
I thought I heard something.

He gestures Colin to follow him down a side corridor.

QUINN
C'mon.

39 INT. CONDUIT CENTRAL - NIGHT

39

Maggie's standing, watching the various monitors as they
switch from scene to scene. Thomas watches her from several
feet back, uncomfortable, wanting to distract her.

THOMAS
You know, you're gonna get eye
strain that way.

CONTINUED

39 CONTINUED

39

She keeps watching. He holds up a homemade checkerboard with bolts and washers for checkers.

THOMAS
Look here, made it myself.
(an invitation)
I'm a positive fiend at checkers.

No response. He digs down into a pile of clothes, comes up with a tattered paperback of VALLEY OF THE DOLLS.

THOMAS
How about a good book? Had it in my back pocket when I arrived. Or I could recite it for you.

Maggie keeps watching the screens. An image of Quinn and Colin appears on one of the monitors.

MAGGIE
There. There they are.
(turns to Thomas)
Do you recognize it?

Thomas says nothing, eyeing the screen nervously.

MAGGIE
Thomas, do you know where that is?

THOMAS
Well, I -- I, that is --

MAGGIE
Thomas --

THOMAS
It's a corridor, not far from here.

MAGGIE
Show me the way.

She starts off. He hangs back.

THOMAS
That's not such a good idea, really.

She turns back to him.

MAGGIE
What are you talking about?

THOMAS
It would be much better if we just stayed here, safer, trust me.

MAGGIE
Thomas, they're my friends. I've got to go to them.

CONTINUED

39 CONTINUED 2

39

THOMAS
Out there, terrible things can
happen. You only had a taste and
you're here by the skin of your
teeth.
(off the room)
This is a controlled environment.
No one knows about it, no one comes
here. We can live out our lives...

Maggie reacts -- live out our lives? She shakes her head,
firm.

MAGGIE
No. No.

He sees she means it. His heart sinks. She speaks gently.

MAGGIE
Thomas, you've been very kind to
me, but I have no intention of
staying here. I'm going to my
friends, whether you come with me
or not. But I'd rather you come.

THOMAS
No, that's out, no no no.

He continues saying no, shaking his head vehemently over:

MAGGIE
Thomas, there's nothing to be
afraid of. They're nice, they
won't hurt you. At least talk to
them --

THOMAS
(explodes)
I don't talk to people!

The violence of his reaction stops her. He's anguished,
tied up in knots. A beat, then:

MAGGIE
You talked to me.

THOMAS
You were different.

MAGGIE
Why?

THOMAS
I don't know! So much death here,
so useless. I couldn't stand to
let them have one more!

He sinks down, turns his tormented face up to her.

CONTINUED

39 CONTINUED 3

39

THOMAS

You wanna know why I'm here, why I'm in the walls? During the war, I was with the Eighth Armored Division, off world. Wouldn't know it to look at me, would you? One day, I just couldn't take it. I ran off, went AWOL. After awhile, I changed my mind, came back.

He struggles to get the words out, tears in his eyes.

THOMAS

There'd been an ambush, they were all torn apart, in pieces. I wasn't in my right head for a long time, I wandered for years. Finally, I wanted to go home. But it was too late, you see, I'd missed the deadline. So I landed here.

(beat)

It was only right. I should have been with them, not here... So I walled myself off.

Maggie comes down to his level, close, speaking softly.

MAGGIE

Thomas, whatever you did, whatever you were, you saved me... and maybe ten years of solitary is enough.

He looks at her and a change comes over him.

40 INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

40

Quinn and Colin move cautiously along.

QUINN

All those years playing Pacman, I never thought I'd end up inside it.

He pauses, grows thoughtful. Colin's look questions.

QUINN

You know, it's funny, I've got this feeling that somehow Maggie's looking down on us.

COLIN

(smiles)

At the end of our road, they say we're reunited with --

Suddenly, several PEOPLE appear in the corridor before them, running toward them.

CONTINUED

40 CONTINUED

40

PEOPLE
(AD-LIB "There they are! Get
them!" etc.)

Quinn and Colin turn and run the other way. But the way
behind them is blocked with more HUMANS running toward them.
They're trapped.

Just then, a vent cover opens in the wall and Maggie pops
her head out.

MAGGIE
In here!

Quinn is thunderstruck to see her.

QUINN
Maggie. Oh, God.

His face fills with joy and relief. She sees this reaction
and smiles, moved. A moment between them. But from behind
her, Thomas calls:

THOMAS
Get in. Quickly!

They hurry to climb in, but it's too late. The humans reach
them, pull them back out, get all four.

41 INT. HUMAN STRONGHOLD - NIGHT

41

The group of ragged humans we've seen before. Quinn, Colin,
Maggie and Thomas are thrust into the group, which circles
them, keeping them in.

MAGGIE
Boy, this is one place I really
didn't need to come back to.

COLIN
(off airlock door)
There aren't any more like you
outside, are there?

THOMAS
Unfortunately, no.

42 ON MAGGIE AND THOMAS

42

He's frightened, trying to bear up. She looks at him with
regret.

MAGGIE
I'm so sorry I got you into this.

He gives her a small smile.

CONTINUED

42 CONTINUED

42

THOMAS

Not at all.

(beat)

It's good to be alive before I'm
dead again.

She smiles back.

43 FAVORING JANIE

43

as she bulls through the crowd up to our guys.

JANIE

I had an uncle who was plumb crazy
once. Wandered into the street,
set things on fire. He didn't
cause me half the grief you have.

She comes right up to Quinn, glares at him.

JANIE

If you had brought the Kromaggs
down on us, I swear I'd have chased
you into the next life and killed
you all over.

Quinn stares right back, doesn't give an inch.

QUINN

You're not gonna kill anybody.

JANIE

Oh, and just why not?

QUINN

Because we've got something you
need.

JANIE

A snappy line of patter?

QUINN

The answer to how we got out of
that room... and how you all might
get out of here.

She studies him, intrigued.

JANIE

You haven't run out of rope yet.

QUINN

Where's the mechanism that runs the
Slidecage?

JANIE

In Kromagg territory.

Quinn nods, heartened.

CONTINUED

43 CONTINUED

43

QUINN
I was hoping you'd say that.
She looks at him quizzically.

44 INT. KROMAGG LAIR - NIGHT - CLOSE ON REMBRANDT

44

chained to the wall, dozing. A shadow falls over him. He stirs, looks up to see Kaldeen.

KALDEEN
My father says he can feel the death force receding, that he'll kill you soon.
He rolls up close, produces a key and unlocks one manacle.

KALDEEN
Hurry, while they're not looking.
Rembrandt takes the key, hurriedly unlocks the other restraints.

REMBRANDT
I'm not just gonna leave you for them to --

KALDEEN
They need me, nothing will happen. Go!

REMBRANDT
First, there's something I've got to do.

He reaches out and pulls the rags free of Kaldeen's face. Kaldeen's arms fly up to shield his face.

KALDEEN
No.
Rembrandt gently lowers Kaldeen's arms -- revealing the face of a normal human boy. He hadn't been sure, but he'd suspected it.

REMBRANDT
Oh, my lord.

KALDEEN
I told you I was hideous.

REMBRANDT
You're not hideous, you're beautiful. Don't you know that you're --

Suddenly, they're interrupted by the SOUND of KROMAGGS COMING ON THE RUN. Rembrandt grabs hold of Kaldeen's wheelchair.

CONTINUED

44 CONTINUED

44

REMBRANDT
You're coming with me.
(off Kaldeen's protests)
Just trust me.

Kaldeen looks into Rembrandt's eyes and nods. Rembrandt takes off for the door, wheeling Kaldeen as fast as possible.

Just as they get out the door, Kolitar appears on the other side of the room with several of his men, hurrying.

KOLITAR
Kaldeen, no!
(to his men)
Stop them!

The Kromaggs take off on the run after them.

45 INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE KROMAGG LAIR - CONTINUOUS

45

Rembrandt's moving as fast as he can, but he's slowed by Kaldeen's chair. A Kromagg makes a flying tackle, knocking Kaldeen over and taking Rembrandt down. The Kromagg starts to beat Rembrandt.

46 KALDEEN

46

gapes at this in alarm. Then he does an extraordinary thing: his head goes down and his eyes roll up, showing white as he concentrates.

47 ON PIECE OF DISCARDED MACHINERY

47

lying on the ground. Suddenly, it moves, then takes off through the air.

48 FAVORING REMBRANDT AND KROMAGG

48

The machinery STRIKES the Kromagg, knocking him down and out. Rembrandt's amazed, having seen it fly through the air on its own.

KALDEEN
Run!

Just then, a SECOND KROMAGG rushes up. Kaldeen grabs him, tries to stop him. The Kromagg starts beating Kaldeen. Seeing this, Rembrandt turns and dives at the Kromagg, tackling him. By then, other Kromaggs appear, leap on Rembrandt and subdue him, hold him tight.

They hustle Rembrandt and Kaldeen back into:

49 INT. KROMAGG LAIR - NIGHT

49

They're shoved roughly against a wall. Rembrandt whispers to Kaldeen:

REMBRANDT
I saw. You moved that with your mind.

KALDEEN
It's only when I'm scared. They don't know.

REMBRANDT
There's something I gotta tell --
Kolitar strides up to them, glaring. Rembrandt clams up.

KOLITAR
Kaldeen. Cover yourself.
Kaldeen hides his face once more.

KOLITAR
I will think how to deal with you.
(to Kromagg)
Take him to his room.

The Kromagg wheels Kaldeen off. Kolitar moves closer to Rembrandt. Guards stand a few feet behind.

KOLITAR
Does he know? Tell me!

REMBRANDT
Nah, there was no time. My God, how could you do it? He's a human being!

Kolitar says nothing.

REMBRANDT
You got him in some kind of raid, didn't you?

Slowly, Kolitar nods, in the memory.

KOLITAR
My own son was killed and there was no hope of having another here, so I took this one. An odd whim. We all go a bit mad here... or more than a bit.
(beat)
I kept him as a pet at first. He was so bright and this place was so tedious. Then I saw what great use he could be. Those hydroponics, he designed them. And the filters to keep the air breathable.

REMBRANDT
And no one's ever told him?

CONTINUED

49 CONTINUED

49

KOLITAR

My men were forbidden.

REMBRANDT

What you've done is a sin.

KALDEEN

A sin? I let him live, made him something grander than he could ever have been. And you came close to ruining it. By the Gods!

He draws a big knife, moves in toward Rembrandt.

KOLITAR

Arm or no arm, you die now.

QUINN (O.S.)

Offhand, I'd say we're all dying.

The Kromaggs spin to see Quinn being escorted under Kromagg guard. They rush toward him en masse. He holds his hands out, empty.

QUINN

I'm unarmed.

KOLITAR

Search him.

He nods toward one of his men, who roughly pats Quinn down.

REMBRANDT

Quinn! What the hell are you doing here?

QUINN

I got to missing those loud shirts of yours. You okay?

REMBRANDT

Except for being beat on, chained up and fed lousy.

KOLITAR

You are a comrade of this one, a recent arrival?

QUINN

Yeah, and so far I can't say I'm impressed with the accommodations.

Kolitar walks up to Quinn.

KOLITAR

In my culture, we have mad ones who show no fear, can do what someone sane would never dare. It is our way to not harm them. Sadly, this does not extend to humans.

CONTINUED

49 CONTINUED 2

49

They seize Quinn roughly. Kolitar moves closer with the knife.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN

50 INT. LABYRINTH - KROMAGG LAIR - CONTINUOUS

50

Kolitar approaches Quinn with the knife, a Kromagg holding Quinn from behind.

QUINN
Wait! Aren't you curious why I'd
do something this crazy? My name
is Mallory -- my father built
this prison!

Kolitar hesitates, intrigued.

KOLITAR
Go on.

Quinn nods at the Kromagg, holding him by the arms.

QUINN
This guy's putting a crease in my
biceps.

KOLITAR
Let him go.

He releases Quinn.

QUINN
Thank you. I think maybe I can
unlock the Slidecage, but the
equipment is in your territory. So
we need to bargain.

KOLITAR
You humans with your bargains. You
bring nothing but destruction.

REMBRANDT
Listen to him, man! He's telling
the truth!

QUINN
You Kromaggs are a lot of things,
but you're not stupid. I'm talking
truce, and we all might get out of
here.

KOLITAR
To the home world?

QUINN
(falters)
I -- can't say that. To an
alternate Earth, perhaps. I won't
know until I get into the guts of
the machine.

CONTINUED

50 CONTINUED

50

KOLITAR
So what do you want?

QUINN
Safe passage.
(off Rembrandt)
And you let him go.

KOLITAR
Perhaps I am a fool, but to be
rid of this place...
(to Rembrandt)
Come.

Rembrandt approaches.

REMBRANDT
Bring the boy, or no one goes
anywhere.

Rebellion flares in Kolitar's eyes. He doesn't like giving up what he considers his. Then he sees the need of it and nods agreement.

51 INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

51

Maggie, Thomas, Colin, Janie and two of her people wait for Quinn.

52 ON MAGGIE AND THOMAS

52

MAGGIE
He's been gone too long. We never
should have let him go alone.

THOMAS
I've been watching the Kromagg show
for many seasons. Believe me, it's
the only thing that had a chance of
working.

There's a little CLATTERING off in a vent. Thomas jumps.

MAGGIE
How are you doing?

THOMAS
Hm? Oh. It's odd to not be in a
vent. I feel naked.

MAGGIE
All my friends who've been at
nudist colonies say you soon get
used to it.

He smiles at that.

53 WIDE

53

JANIE
(to Colin, Maggie,
Thomas)
Time to move out. He's dead by
now.

QUINN (O.S.)
That's a popular word with you.
Quinn arrives around the bend, Rembrandt behind him.

MAGGIE
Quinn! Remmy, oh Remmy!
Maggie and Colin embrace Quinn and Rembrandt, laughing.

REMBRANDT
Didn't think you could get rid of
this face, did you? How the crops
hanging, farm boy?

COLIN
(perplexed)
Crops don't hang, Rembrandt.

REMBRANDT
(ruffles his hair)
Stay as sweet as you are!

Just then, a group of Kromaggs appears behind them. Kolitar
is in the lead with Kaldeen, whose face is no longer
covered. Janie and her men go for their weapons. Quinn
steps between them, holding up his arms.

QUINN
Easy, we're all friends here. Or
at least, we share a common
interest.

They relent. Kaldeen rolls up beside Quinn. Janie is
astonished to see him, in wonderment.

JANIE
Who is this boy?

REMBRANDT
Someone who's been on a Kromagg
vacation for about sixteen years.

54 ON QUINN AND MAGGIE

54

MAGGIE
I thought you'd had it.

QUINN
We keep thinking that about each
other, don't we?

MAGGIE
Just keep coming back.

55 ON KALDEEN AND JANIE

55

KALDEEN
(to Janie, tentative)
Do you know me?

She studies him hard, trying to find something she recognizes. Then, amazed:

JANIE
You're Jules Konig.

He brightens. A name, a human name.

KALDEEN
My mother and father...?

JANIE
Gone, I'm sad to say.

56 WIDE

56

KOLITAR
Come, we'll take you to the
mechanism.

57 FAVORING JANIE, QUINN AND REMBRANDT

57

She speaks in a low voice so the Kromaggs can't overhear.

JANIE
You didn't have to bring all of
them.

QUINN
It was part of the deal.

REMBRANDT
Gonna get on the train, you need to
be at the station.

QUINN
(to Janie)
Go fetch your people.

Janie moves in close to Quinn, practically hisses:

JANIE
I need to talk to you.

He sees that nothing's going to happen till she's had her say. He says to the others:

QUINN
Head on. We'll catch up.

Our guys head off with the Kromaggs. Quinn turns back to Janie.

QUINN
Say what you've got to say.

CONTINUED

57 CONTINUED

57

JANIE

We can't let Kromaggs back on the home world.

QUINN

They'll be under guard. And soon as they get there, they'll be sent wherever they came from.

JANIE

Or just maybe when we slide outta here, they don't.

QUINN

Safe passage goes both ways. When we get where they're taking us, leave your war behind.

He turns and heads off after the others. Janie watches him go. One of her men sidles up to her.

MAN

I thought you said we could never make peace with those monsters.

JANIE

We can't. Stay watchful.

DISSOLVE TO

58 INT. SLIDECAGE ROOM - NIGHT

58

All the humans are there now, as are all the Kromaggs. A few are just entering. Maggie, Colin, Rembrandt, Janie, Thomas and Kaldeen are among them.

59 FAVORING QUINN AND KOLITAR

59

Quinn approaches the steps leading to the Slidecage Tower. Kolitar grabs his arm to hold him back.

KOLITAR

Careful. There is a force field that kills all who near it.

Casually, Quinn keys the de-encryption sequence into a control pad on a nearby wall.

60 ON THE SLIDECAGE TOWER

60

As the FORCE FIELD FLASHES and WINKS OUT, turned off.

61 ON KOLITAR AND QUINN

61

Kolitar gapes in amazement.

CONTINUED

61 CONTINUED

61

QUINN

Not anymore.

(grins)

Didn't know I was telling the truth, did you?

62 FAVORING QUINN, COLIN, MAGGIE AND REMBRANDT

62

Rembrandt's eyeing the humans and Kromaggs. They're each keeping to themselves, two distinct groups, eyeing each other with hatred. A very uneasy truce.

REMBRANDT

We got the Sharks and the Jets here. Better get a move on.

Quinn nods, says to Colin:

QUINN

Come on.

Colin follows Quinn up the steps to the Slidecage Tower. Maggie and Rembrandt stay at the base of the steps, keeping an eye on the crowd. Kolitar and some of the others try to follow Quinn and Colin, but Rembrandt waves them off.

REMBRANDT

Give em some elbow room, okay?

63 BY THE TOWER

63

Colin helps Quinn open an access panel on the Tower, revealing circuitry and a keyboard input panel.

Quinn starts inputting commands. As he does so, the frequency and pattern of lights on the Tower changes.

64 ON THOMAS

64

Trying to shrink away from the crowd pressing in around him. He hasn't been around people in years and it's making him very nervous. Maggie comes up.

THOMAS

It's rather close in here, don't you think? So many bodies...

MAGGIE

Just keep telling yourself that soon you'll be back with friends and family.

THOMAS

Actually, that was never my strong suit. Thanksgivings were a horror.

He spies Kolitar nearby, eyes him quizzically.

THOMAS

You know, you look different on TV.

65 ON REMBRANDT AND KALDEEN

65

Kaldeen watches Quinn and Colin working on the Slidecage Tower, excited, eager. Rembrandt smiles at him.

REMBRANDT

Blue skies, green trees. Not long to wait, buddy.

66 ON QUINN AND COLIN

66

Quinn stops inputting commands, looks troubled (Our guys are out of earshot of the others).

QUINN

We've got a problem. There's been some damage to the system. If I disable it to slide everyone to the home world, it'll stay off.

COLIN

You mean, the world wouldn't be cloaked any longer?

QUINN

The Kromaggs could just waltz in and invade it.

COLIN

Then there's no going home.

QUINN

Not for now, bro. I'm sorry.

COLIN

We're trapped here?

QUINN

Maybe not. Using the slide signatures in our bodies, I might be able to rig a feedback burst. It'd ship all of us to where we just came from. And anyone else who tried to slide to the home world.

COLIN

No more Slidecage.

Quinn nods. He starts typing in the commands.

67 ON KALDEEN

67

Rembrandt has moved a few feet off, is talking to Maggie. Kaldeen and Kolitar are glancing about. Their eyes meet. There's a hesitancy in both of them.

KOLITAR

Kaldeen...

CONTINUED

67 CONTINUED

67

KALDEEN
You should have told me.

KOLITAR
I wanted to spare you the shame.
You showed such promise. In all
but skin, you came to be my own.

Janie hurries up, getting between Kolitar and Kaldeen.

JANIE
You just keep on back. You stole
him, but we're taking him home.
(to Kaldeen)
Jules, you will be among your kind
and learn human ways.

Kaldeen quails at this. The woman is downright scary in her intensity. Seeing her press in on Kaldeen, something snaps in Kolitar. He rushes up to the boy.

KOLITAR
Kaldeen, come with us. It will be
as it has always been. A Kromagg,
not some inferior --

JANIE
(overlapping)
Jules, this is your birthright --

KALDEEN
I don't want either of you!

Frantic, he rolls up to Rembrandt, Maggie standing by. The words pour out.

KOLITAR
Rembrandt, please, take me with
you. Don't make me go with them.
Please!

Janie and Kolitar both rush after him, angry, determined Kaldeen belong to each of them.

KOLITAR
Kaldeen, your glory --

JANIE
Kromagg, leave him be --!

She draws her knife, intending to use it on Kolitar. Kolitar pulls his own blade.

KOLITAR
Woman, he is mine!

Maggie lunges for him, but too late. He stabs Janie to the heart. She falls dead. Kaldeen is horrified.

Maddened, in a rage, Kolitar grabs Maggie, backs to the wall, the knife at her throat. All eyes are on him.

68 QUINN AND COLIN 68
turn from their labors to spy this, horrified.

69 WIDE 69
Kolitar calls out to Quinn:

KOLITAR
Human! Send us to the home world!
Now! Send us or she dies!

MAGGIE
Quinn --

Her tone says to Quinn, "Don't do it." Quinn watches in horror, uncertain. Rembrandt is frozen, too. Kolitar tenses, readying to kill her.

70 KALDEEN 70
seeing this, comes to a decision. His head tilts down, eyes rolling up as he concentrates.

71 JANIE'S KNIFE 71
lies on the ground nearby, discarded. Suddenly, it SHUDDERS and MOVES with telekinetic force.

72 FAVORING KOLITAR, MAGGIE AND REMBRANDT 72
As the blade flies to its mark -- lodging in Kolitar's heart. Eyes wide with surprise, he GASPS. Then falls dead, releasing Maggie. She looks down at Kolitar's body, perplexed.

MAGGIE
How --?
REMBRANDT
(soft, moved)
It was the boy.

73 ON THE HUMANS AND THE KROMAGGS 73
Drawing their weapons, heading toward each other, about to launch into combat.

QUINN
Hold it! Your leaders are dead!
They stop, look to Quinn, who's coming down the steps.

QUINN
I'm electing myself leader -- and
I'm declaring peace! It doesn't
matter who killed who, who's got a
grudge. The war is over.

CONTINUED

73 CONTINUED

73

Now he's right among them, looking from human to Kromagg and back again, speaking to each as an individual, not a mob.

QUINN
We're getting out of here, going
back where we came from. Anyone
got a problem with that?

The fight has gone out of them. Silence.

QUINN
Good...

74 KALDEEN

74

sits in his wheelchair, looking at the crumpled body of Kolitar.

KALDEEN
Father...

Rembrandt comes up to him, puts a hand on his shoulder.

DISSOLVE TO

75 INT. SLIDECAGE ROOM - ON QUINN - NIGHT

75

Working on the Slidecage Tower, Colin, Maggie, Rembrandt Thomas and Kaldeen nearby. The humans and Kromaggs are some feet off, scattered about the room.

QUINN
(to our guys)
Almost got it. Another minute and
it'll all send us back to where we
most recently came from.

Kaldeen looks at Rembrandt, startled. Rembrandt picks up on what he's thinking.

REMBRANDT
Hold on there. What about him?
He's from here.

Colin and Quinn exchange a glance as it sinks in.

COLIN
He has no sliding signature.

QUINN
(sick about it)
I can't alter the parameters
without crashing the whole system.

Kaldeen understands what that means. Resigned:

KALDEEN
It's all right.

CONTINUED

75 CONTINUED

75

REMBRANDT
No way, it's not all right.
(to Quinn)
What're you saying? We're just
gonna maroon him here?
(to Kaldeen)
We're not leaving you alone!

Kaldeen speaks in a low tone so the Kromaggs can't hear.

KALDEEN
Humans and Kromaggs are born
enemies. Maybe someday it won't be
that way, but they've got to be
kept apart.
(off the Tower)
This will need someone to keep it
running. I've always been alone...

Thomas clears his throat, getting Quinn's attention.

THOMAS
Um, there anyway you could let me
out of the party?

MAGGIE
What are you saying? You want to
stay here?

THOMAS
I'm really not up to Times Square.
(to Kaldeen)
You mind a roommate, kid?

KOLITAR
(delighted)
No.

QUINN
Field's pretty narrow. Just be on
that side of the room.

Thomas nods. Maggie kisses him on the cheek.

76 REMBRANDT

76

rubs Kaldeen on the shoulder, bends to him.

REMBRANDT
We'll be back for you. That's a
promise.

Kaldeen nods.

77 WIDE

77

Thomas wheels him over to the far side of the room.

CONTINUED

77 CONTINUED

77

QUINN
All right. Let's do it.
(to the crowd)
Take a last look 'round. In a
minute, your horizon's gonna be a
whole lot wider.

Quinn keys in the final sequence. There's a BLINDING FLASH,
accompanied by the SOUND OF THE VORTEX.

When it clears, Thomas and Kaldeen are alone in the room.

78 ON THOMAS AND KALDEEN

78

THOMAS
You ever read 'Valley of the
Dolls'?

DISSOLVE TO

79 INT. GREEK GAZEBO - DAY (D2)

79

Back on Spa World. We're ON blue skies, green trees.

COLIN (O.S.)
Not home yet.

We PULL BACK to reveal Maggie, Rembrandt, Quinn and Colin,
sitting in the gazebo, looking out at the terrain.

COLIN
But there's room to breathe.

80 ON MAGGIE AND QUINN

80

Quinn's gazing off thoughtfully.

MAGGIE
Penny for your thoughts.

QUINN
Not the Minotaur.

MAGGIE
Okay, a buck for the rest.

QUINN
What we just went through. It
wasn't the Minotaur. It was
Orpheus and Eurydice. When she
died, he loved her so much, he went
into the underworld and brought her
back.

MAGGIE
What are you saying?

CONTINUED

80 CONTINUED

80

She's asking if he just said he loved her and he knows it.
He smiles, elusive, looks out at the sky and the trees.

QUINN
I'm saying the sun is shining and
it's good to be alive.

He looks back at her, looking deeply into her eyes.

QUINN
And just maybe I've found my home.
She smiles at a world of possibility.

81 FAVORING REMBRANDT

81

Looking out at the beautiful day, thinking of Kaldeen.

REMBRANDT
Blue skies, green trees.

A toga-clad BEAUTY brings a tray of ice tea. Each of our
guys takes a glass. The Beauty moves out of shot.
Rembrandt proposes a toast.

REMBRANDT
Here's to distant friends.

THE OTHERS
Distant friends.

They CLINK GLASSES, as we...

FADE OUT

THE END