

**SLIDERS # 1 – PLOT FOR 22 PAGES**

*Hi, Dick! Let me just say what a privilege it is to be working with you on this project! I can't wait to see what your talents bring to it. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to give me a call! Best, Dan Chichester*

**PAGE 1**

\_\_\_\_\_EXT. ARID DESERT LANDSCAPE, the sand the color of amber and shot through with harsh-looking clumps of weed. Along the horizon are high mounds, shot through with ragged openings of crumbled rock and dirt: these appear to be small hills, but are in reality the entrances to colonies of monstrously large ANTS, as this is the “ant-world” our team of SLIDERS are trapped on as we begin the story. We open on a CLOSE UP OF A SWEATY, WORRIED-LOOKING ARTURO, hunkered down and letting a handful of the gritty sand run through his hands. He's commenting on their surroundings, and making an oblique reference to the ANTS themselves (we'll clarify that they've been here a short time, and are staying one step ahead of the insects).

CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL a sardonic WADE standing near to ARTURO; she's got a wry look on her face as she watches the big man, hunkered down like some kind of Indian tracker, wondering when he “went native!”

CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL ALL FOUR OF THE SLIDERS, standing in a “grove” of the ragged weeds. ARTURO has risen up to face off with WADE, the professor launching into a, “I'll have you know I possess a degree in

entomology..." as the young woman rolls her eyes. QUINN is studying the timer, as a nervous REMBRANDT strides about nervously.

CLOSE ON QUINN as he studies the timer, announcing that they've got 33 seconds 'til the gateway.

ANGLE ON A PANICKED REMBRANDT as the ground beneath him begins to rumble, cracking upward in a thundering rise of spraying sand and rock. "Wrong, Q-ball..." the music man squawks.

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PAGE 2 & 3 – SPREAD

A gigantic ANT is ripping its way up out of the earth, shaking off sheets of sand and chomping its dripping incisors with hungry energy. The big bug is on the order of the monstrous insects from the classic sci-fi flick, *Them*, except he's more exotic in his mutation (*hey, we've got less of a budget restriction, let's have fun!*) The four adrenaline-charged SLIDERS are backpedaling and skittering away from the ANT as it surges in their direction; REMBRANDT'S finishing his observation, "...we're out of time now!"

*Copy establishes that this is an Earth on which humanity's evolution took a back seat to terrifying insectoid-creatures.*

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PAGE 4 & 5

CLOSE UP ON THE TIMER, the readout blinking the almighty, “00:00:00” that signals it’s time to slide. [Dick, draw the Timer as best you can and fake the rest. We’re trying to get you some schematics of it as soon as possible. Mike DeCarlo can add any missing detail.]

ANGLE ON QUINN, demonstrating his athletic prowess as he rolls forward to just avoid the ANT’S snapping incisors, the young physicist simultaneously firing the beam of warping slide-energy from the front of the timer.

WIDE SHOT of the four SLIDERS and their pursuing ANT hurrying toward the base of a ragged cliff as the swirling slider gateway opens at the base of the rock face.

CLOSE ON REMBRANDT as he’s suddenly pinned beneath one of the ANT’S giant legs; the wide-eyed singer is squeaking, “Oh, man, I thought spiders was bad!”

WHAM! WADE lays into the side of the ANT’S leg with a huge hunk of rock she grips in both hands, the impact knocking the limb aside just enough –

– for a lumbering ARTURO to drag the hyperventilating REMBRANDT free.

REMBRANDT dashes ahead to be first through the gateway, vanishing in the swirl.

ARTURO and WADE follow through right after, literally sucked off their feet by the rushing interdimensional energies.

A wry QUINN is pulled backward through the gateway, one hand cocked like a pistol in the direction of the ANT as the departing physicist fires off a wry one-liner.

KRKOOM! As the gateway dissolves away to nothing more than crackles of energy, the charging ANT slams head-first into base of the cliff, staggering itself as chunks of rock rain down around.

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PAGE 6

A LARGE SPLASH PANEL TAKES UP THE TOP two-thirds of the page, showing us the four SLIDERS tumbling through the curving, rainbow-colored corridor of interdimensional travel. QUINN & WADE are holding hands, not like lovers, but like two kids sharing fun at an amusement park ride, wheeling about each other. REMBRANDT has his hands over his eyes, wanting it OVER. ARTURO is tumbled head over heels in a clownish position, swooping along like he's just had a carpet pulled out from under him.

The bottom half of the page is a sequence of four small vertical panels, "FLASHBACK" images cluing us in to who these guys were before they started in on this Club Med travel plan for parallel dimensions.

An arrogant ARTURO is standing in front of a blackboard covered in arcane physics formulas, the brainy professor casually gesturing with a piece of chalk as he lectures.

A rocking REMBRANDT is on stage, dressed like Tom Jones, hit by multi-colored spotlights, tearfully wailing a soulful song into the microphone he holds in both hands.

WADE, dressed in a tye-die t-shirt and a colorful "flower child" style vest, is in the midst of making a sale in the computer store she worked at in the first episode. She's gesturing at a major setup of monitor, CPU and hard drives, in one breath laying out both a power-talk of megabytes and an environmentally-oriented

trip about electro-magnetic radiation.

A bright eyed QUINN stands before the massive sliding apparatus (that donut shaped electromagnetic gizmo) he built in his basement, making final adjustments with some hi-tech tools.

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PAGE 7

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO STREET, but on this world the city is a blasted, soulless place: everything (streets, buildings, signs – people – the very air) looks drained and ready to crumble to nothing, a consequence of the energy leech being carried out by the villainous Zercurvians. As we come into the scene, a swirling SLIDERS portal has opened up a few feet off the ground, and our foursome are dumping out onto the dry, dusty (and eerily empty) street.

The foursome stagger to their feet, checking their bruises and looking about with wary, worried sets of eyes. “This isn’t home!” REMBRANDT croons.

WADE comes up to a cable car, overturned on the hill. A piece of the car easily breaks off in her hand, an unsettling dry rot. “I hope not...” she worries.

CUT TO: EST. SHOT SAN FRANCISCO, a long shot on the city, covered in a dry, pallid haze; from this distance we can see some of the higher buildings have actually crumbled away in places, their infrastructure disturbingly visible through the gaps in the facades.

PAGE 8 THROUGH 11

ANGLE ON QUINN, eyebrows raising as he checks the timer – and doesn't like what he sees.

CLOSE UP ON THE TIMER, the numeric display indicating gibberish. "Something's wrong with the timer..." QUINN muses.

An arrogant ARTURO sees a chance for a dig at his protege, wondering aloud as to QUINN'S level of genius.

A nerve-wracked REMBRANDT grabs WADE, directing her attention to something up in the sky. Both SLIDERS are viewing something up there (and OFF PANEL) with wide-eyed wonder – and dread.

QUINN, still oblivious to both what's going on and ARTURO'S jibe, is working the timer and explaining, "No, not with the unit – it's something interfering with it!"

A pale ARTURO looking up as a MASSIVE shadow slides across him from above. "I have some theories on that, Mr. Mallory..."

WIDE SHOT OF THE SAN FRANCISCO STREET, the tiny SLIDERS far below the MONSTROUSLY HUGE ZERCURVIAN sliding ship that is hovering up near the building rooftops. Equivalent in size to a dual-cargo 18

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wheeler truck, the ship is 3 “platters” stacked off kilter atop one another, but not smooth like a flying saucer. Instead, the surface of the craft is marked by bulbous protrusions, techno-organic growths (like elements of the H.R. Giger ship designs in Alien) that “ooze” up at various points along the platters in a “rotting” fashion.

ANGLE BACK ON STREETSIDE, when suddenly a wild-eyed WOMAN in tattered clothes, her hair in a mad-tangle, comes rushing out from an alley. She has the same drawn, pallid tone as the rest of this world, and she’s shrieking about the dire coming of “The Raze!” (another name for the Zercurvians, coined by their many victims)

WADE steps in to try and comfort the WOMAN, and for a moment she calms down, admiring WADE’S smooth vibrant skin, the sense of life she still carries.

Then the WOMAN breaks away in a mad screech, eyes to the sky as she senses something she’s seen again and again since the “Raze” came.

ANGLE ON THE SHIP as arcing lines of yellow electrical bolts begin arcing off it, slashing down toward the ground.

One of the arcing bolts hits the woman, horribly sucking everything living out of her, fusing her into a dry statue with nothing left that’s human.

ANGLE ON THE SLIDERS as a group, wide-eyed with terror at what

they're witnessing.

The SLIDERS slowly approach the dried "statue" of the WOMAN, trapped in her painful, final death-throes, still smoking slightly from the energy leech.

ARTURO sneezes, the WOMAN/STATUE disintegrating to dust!

REMBRANDT is shocked, ranting off some black humor one-liners. ARTURO and QUINN are scientifically curious at the phenomena, trading theories.

A compassionate WADE is hunkered down, her gentle hands sifting the dusty remains of the WOMAN. At the same time, WADE's eyes are shooting daggers up at her companions and their quips, reminding them this was a human life.

ANGLE ON A HUMBLER ARTURO AND QUINN, the professor pursing his lips and considering that WADE is both right...and for their own safety they need to find out what that ship is all about. QUINN'S looking up, formulating a plan.

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PAGE 12 & 13

CUT TO: BUILDING ROOFTOP, about ten stories up. CLOSE UP ON QUINN'S WAIST, as he ties a long, rough-hewn length of rope around himself.

CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal an intense QUINN standing near to the edge of the rooftop as WADE helps him tighten the rope around him; she looks none-too-happy at these goings on, as she grumbles, "This is not a good idea!"

CAMERA PULLS BACK TO A WIDE SHOT, showing the slow moving Raze slider-ship (*we'll have to come up with a "cool" name for this!*) as it's gliding past the rooftop. Thing is, it's about 20 feet out from the rooftop, out over the center of the street, and the small figures of WADE and QUINN are seemingly far from getting aboard the alien craft. Behind QUINN and WADE are the equally small figures of ARTURO (working to pry loose a pole-length section of radio antenna) and REMBRANDT (tying off the far end of QUINN'S rope to a ventilator unit).

ANGLE ON QUINN AND WADE. He's handing her the timer, telling her to keep it safe, "Just in case!" She's giving him a warm kiss, cutting off his words and telling him, "Don't even think it!"

CLOSE ANGLE ON REMBRANDT, with the far end of QUINN'S rope, the singer finishing tying off a thick knot around the ventilator slats. He's hyped, calling out enthusiastically, "Ready to roll, Q-ball!"

An uncertain ARTURO is handing QUINN the pole-length section of radio

antenna; an athletically cocky QUINN is patting the professor's tummy, assuring the big man that he (QUINN) is up to it.

QUINN uses the antenna pole to vault off the roof.

WIDE SHOT as his vault carries him in a dizzying arc out over the empty space toward the ship, the long rope trailing out behind him.

QUINN lands on the surface of the ship in a hard tumble –

– and quickly ties his end of the rope to a length of techno-organic cable that loops off the surface of the craft.

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ANGLE ON THE OTHER THREE SLIDERS ON THE ROOFTOP, preparing to use the now-stretched-out rope to *literally* slide across the empty space to the alien craft. WADE has looped another length of rope over the stretched-out rope; ARTURO is preparing to use his jacket; REMBRANDT has a length of chain he's going to use for the purpose.

WIDE SHOT as the other three SLIDERS slide down the length of the stretched-rope, WADE on her rope loop, ARTURO on his jacket, REMBRANDT on his chain.

The trio land-tumble-slam onto the surface of the alien ship, joining QUINN.

ARTURO slips his jacket back on as he leans over a man-sized convex depression along the surface of the ship, the professor considering, "This might be a hatch!"

The hatch suddenly slithers open, throwing ARTURO off balance and plunging the squawking physicist inside the ship.

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PAGE 15 & 16

WADE, REMBRANDT and QUINN stand around the dark opening that just claimed the professor. “He was right,” WADE muses. “It was a hatch!” “Well...he is brilliant!” QUINN observes.

QUINN, WADE and REMBRANDT make their way down into the dark interior of the ship, where they find the chagrined ARTURO getting back to his feet and awkwardly trying to recover his dignity. The corridor is long and very narrow, as befits the Zercurvians 2-dimensional origins.

The wary SLIDER quartet emerge from the corridor into a large control room. Still narrow, but obviously a central station. All right angles – no curves. There are flat panel displays on the walls, showing a combination of the city outside being sucked dry...and swirling patterns of energy that mirror the sliding travel effect. Along the walls are a trio of electromagnets, similar to the large unit in QUINN’S basement; the difference here is that they are pentagon shaped, as opposed to circular, and *very* thin. The entire room is thick with shadows and mystery.

QUINN and ARTURO stand at one of the flat panel displays showing the sliding energy, studying the flat panel controls positioned below the display. The amazed physicists drop into “techno-speak”, considering that this may be some kind of giant sliding machine!

Feeling left out of the scientist’s “shop talk”, REMBRANDT AND WADE

mock them by spewing a string of nonsensical techno-babble directed at a series of seven seven-and-a-half foot tall panels that are lined up edge-wise along one wall. The panels look technologically important, and are like slats from a Venetian blind; each slat is about an inch wide and 2 feet deep, glowing with a strange yellowish energy.

REMBRANDT AND WADE FALL BACK, dropping silent as one of the “panels” begins to turn toward them, revealing itself to be not a “panel” at all but an 8 foot tall humanoid figure that is 2 inches thin.

The figure – the leader of the RAZE, ZERCURV MARAUD – turns full toward QUINN and REMBRANDT, a tall gaunt humanoid thing of drawn out limbs and fingers, clad for the moment in a yellow-metallic “spacesuit”, topped by a helmet fit with an ominous black visor that wraps over the eyes.

MARAUD reaches up to remove its helmet, and as he does so we see him slip from his almost 2-dimensional flatness of an inch to a slightly more rounded 3-D. Still bone-thin, and horribly covered in bulbous, tumor-like growths (techno-organic like the exterior of the ship), MARAUD is a fierce, gaunt figure – which is in disturbing contrast to the icy smile that is now crawling across his lips.

“Quinn Mallory!” MARAUD exclaims with chilling delight, his hands wide, his long left hand extended more than his right. (All the RAZE are left handed) QUINN is taken aback, uncertain how this strange creature knows him.

ARTURO steps forward, demanding an explanation for who MARAUD is, and what he's doing to this world.

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PAGE 17 & 18

CUT TO: MARAUD'S BACKSTORY, so perhaps a "flashback" look to the visuals for these next four pages or so.

Looking out at a long, featureless flat plane that stretches to the horizon. This is "Flatland", a 2-dimensional dimension, no up or down, nothing except what exists on the far stretching plane we see before us.

Looking flat down at the plane, and we see what exists here: the FLATLANDERS, 2-dimensional creatures, like living stick figures, humanoid in form but with all the "dimension" of hieroglyphic figures, or cave painting creatures. What we see here are "simple" benevolent-looking beings moving along the flat plane, never considering there's anything more than two-axis to life.

CUT TO: Still looking straight down on a circle of the BENEVOLENT FLATLANDERS, surrounding another group of FLATLANDERS: they are still humanoid, still, but there's a more savage, "skritch" line to their drawing. These are the FLATLANDERS who will become the RAZE, radical elements who propose a search for the mythic third dimension, being shot down by their Flatland peers.

CUT TO: Still looking down on the flat plane, and we see the savage-lined RAZE "clawing" at the flat plane "beneath" them, secretly trying to break through the 2-D level of their existence.

The RAZE'S clawing opens a gash in the flat plane, the plane dropping down in a vicious whirlpool.

The whirlpool expands, sucking everything DOWN – the RAZE, the BENEVOLENT FLATLANDERS, all of the 2-dimensional plane – in a thundering, hellish maelstrom.

CUT TO: THE 5TH DIMENSION: An eerie, shadowy otherworld of drifting blobbish shapes distending in all directions, of thick shadows and savage bright shafts of light. The RAZE'S "experiment" plunged them past the "mere" third dimension into the utter unknown of the 5th. We see several savage-lined RAZE rushing through this existence, their 2-D forms beginning to balloon up to 3-dimensions.

INT. QUINN MALLORY'S BASEMENT. Not "our" QUINN, but identical in appearance to the sliding setup. A half-dozen of the naked RAZE spill out from the sliding whirlpool, the savage creatures now in their gaunt, 3-dimensional forms; an amazed and *hungry*-looking MARAUD is at the forefront.

MARAUD rises to his feet, feeling himself and his new dimensions, looking around in shock and wonder.

QUINN (*this* world's QUINN) strides forward from a bank of equipment, thrilled at what his experiment has netted.

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PAGE 19 & 20

CUT TO: An enthused QUINN with a cunning MARAUD and several of the other RAZE (now dressed in their yellow-metallic jumpsuits) in front of a blackboard covered with arcane physics figures, stacks of books all about. MARAUD'S voiceover relates how QUINN was happy to share his knowhow of sliding.

CUT TO: MARAUD holding up his left hand: it's beginning to morph back to 2-dimensional flatness. The RAZE'S transition through the 5th dimension means they need special energies to retain their newly won forms. And if those energies mean sucking this world dry, well...there are always new worlds to drain, as well!

A screaming QUINN strapped to a chair as a coldly grinning MARAUD leans over, the RAZE'S 2-dimensional hand slipping *into* the back of QUINN'S neck, the savage creature torturing the physicist for the last of the sliding secrets.

CUT TO: MONTAGE of a large ZERCURVIAN SLIDER SHIP, spewing out vicious arcs of yellowish crackling leeching energy; a far shot of an Earth seen from space, the planet's normal green and blue gone brown and lifeless; another screaming QUINN, under torture by the RAZE. MARAUD'S VOICEOVER relates how the RAZE took what they learned from that first QUINN to begin traveling between dimensions, leeching the energy they needed, torturing new QUINNS as they found them. For on every world they've visited where sliding had become a reality, it was always QUINN MALLORY who'd invented the process...and the fact of the matter is, the RAZE *need* a new QUINN MALLORY to finish their

education.

END FLASHBACK/BACKSTORY.

CUT TO: INT. RAZE SHIP, MARAUD resting his left hand on a flat bank of equipment, relating how while they learned how to *navigate* through dimensions, they are still at the mercy of *waiting* for a sliding window. But now, with a new QUINN who has been actively sliding dimensions, perhaps the RAZE can learn the final secrets they need to pillage the inter-dimensions at will.

ANGLE ON A SHAKEN REMBRANDT AND WADE. REMMY whispering, "Man, I thought people in the music business were bad news!" while WADE just declares MARAUD and the RAZE as simply, "Monsters!"

WIDE SHOT, LOOKING DOWN ON THE CONTROL ROOM as we see a dozen more yellow-metallic jump-suited/helmeted RAZE slipping out from the shadows and closing on the SLIDERS. "Yes, I suppose we are!" chortles MARAUD in reply to WADE'S condemnation.

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PAGE 21 & 22

CLOSE UP ON THE TIMER as it beeps "00:00:00".

A swirling blue sliding portal opens behind the SLIDERS.

QUINN tackles his friends back through the portal.

MARAUD screaming, "Stop them!" as another nearby RAZE hisses, "Too late! They've slid!"

MARAUD at a flat panel control, tracking swirling patterns of yellowish sliding energy on an overhead flat panel display. The glaring villain vowing to track the SLIDERS, and navigate after them as soon as the next portal opens for the RAZE.

CUT TO: INT. HOTEL ROOM, NIGHT. We've cut to later in time, shortly after the SLIDERS have made it to the new Earth they're now on. We're looking at a CLOSEUP OF A LAPTOP computer screen, with some menu options across the top (FILE EDIT FORMAT VIEW), a section for some "on screen" text, and a small grainy video file that's playing a scene of a "classic" flying saucer crashed in the desert. ARTURO'S OFF PANEL VOICE is relaying that on this Earth the legendary 1947 UFO crash at Roswell was all too real.

CLOSER ANGLE on the laptop screen, now displaying a grainy circa 1947 newspaper photo of several POLITICIAN (in period outfits) shaking hands with

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several ALIENS, the “classic” gray head, bug eyed extra-terrestrial common to UFO literature. ARTURO’S history continues, as he relates that the crash was the precursor to a diplomatic mission that struck a deal with the Earth’s leaders.

CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal a worried QUINN, WADE and REMBRANDT standing behind the seated ARTURO, the professor working a small laptop computer that’s hooked up to a nearby phone. Their current digs are cheap and run down, heavy curtains on the windows. There’s a stack of books and magazines grouped around, along with several videotapes, all research material to bring the SLIDERS up to speed on this grim earth.

WADE goes to the window, pulling aside the curtain just enough to peek out at the night. ARTURO’S OFF PANEL VOICE finishes up that the politicians got trinkets and power...in exchange for farming out the rest of humanity to feed the hungry aliens.

CUT TO: EXT. CITY STREET, where a group of ALIENS, armed with extraterrestrial “cattle prods” are herding humans onto a flatbed transport, an anti-gravity device who’s back end is fenced in by a combination of razor wire and crackling force field. In the background, we can see the 3rd story window WADE’S looking out of, the worried SLIDER whispering, “Looks like we went from out of the fire into a frying pan...”