

SLIDERS #2

Plot

D.G. Chichester, Dick Giordano, Mike DeCarlo, Digital Chameleon

PAGE 1 - SPLASH

EXT. ALIEN-INVASION EARTH, NIGHT. We're in an alley, looking out at a gritty main street as one of the alien flatbed transports (described at the end of last issue) glides along, stocked with HOLLOW EYED HUMANS captured for the feed. Several ALIENS march beneath, some brandishing their crackling "cattle prod" devices, others armed with exotic shotgun-style weapons (which we'll soon learn fire a form of super-netting): all the offworlders are on the hunt for more humans.

In the foreground, a frightened and wary foursome of our SLIDERS crouch behind a jumbled collection of crates and debris, trying to stay out of sight. ARTURO wears his "trademark" tweed suit, sweater vest and bowtie. QUINN is in a casual outfit of long sleeved button down shirt, jeans, and sneakers. WADE wears a tie-dye t-shirt, jeans and a Jean jacket with a "hippie-ish" fringe on the arms. REMBRANDT is outfitted in a slick suit of slightly shiny fabric, stylishly cut but showy, a flare to the labels; he wears a large bolo around his neck, the stones in African national colors.

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The SLIDERS creep down the alley, careful to stay in the shadows. A grim ARTURO reiterates how this world's leaders cut a deal with the ALIENS: personal power for the leaders, and let the E.T.'s harvest humanity.

CUT TO: CUTAWAY IMAGE: A NEWSPAPER PRESS PHOTO, a black and white of snake oil POLITICIANS shaking hands with evil ALIENS. ARTURO'S VOICE-OVER compares it to the Spaniards and the Aztecs: for a promise of gold, the Aztecs paid no mind as the invaders ravaged the Indian culture.

CUT TO: BACK IN THE ALLEY, an emotionally wrought WADE considering how this Earth's people feel: helpless, resentful. REMBRANDT'S next to her, arching an eyebrow as he cracks, "What's you expect? I mean, on this Earth, McDonald's serves up Scottish people!"

WIDER SHOT OF THE GROUP, as they continue their alley creep, trying to figure out a way to help the people of this Earth.

An uncomfortable ARTURO suggests the possibility of using the anti-bodies in their blood to fashion a form of "Q" virus they faced in the TV show. It might work against the ALIENS, "War of the Worlds" style. A creeped out WADE is looking at him as he talks, seeing his logic, but wondering if the cure is worse than the disease.

QUINN checks the timer.

CLOSE UP ON TIMER, showing "00:03:00" until the gate.

3 monstrous ALIENS suddenly appear to threaten those travel plans: They block the SLIDERS path down the alley; two of the ALIENS brandish the vicious, crackling cattle-prod devices, the third waving one of the exotic-shotguns.

A coldly grinning ALIEN reaches out to pinch ARTURO'S arm; the E.T. likes what he sees. The professor doesn't know whether to be horrified or insulted.

Suddenly, a swirling YELLOW slider gateway opens right on top of the hapless ALIEN trio -

- tearing the three creatures apart in the roaring maelstrom of interdimensional power! Their weapons scatter across the alley as the ALIENS disintegrate.

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REMBRANDT'S ready to charge through what he thinks is *their* gate, but QUINN grabs the singer, dragging him back -

- as MARAUD and half a dozen other of the RAZE appear as menacing figures emerging out of the swirling gate.

MARAUD smiles icily. "What? No thanks for your rescue?" he hisses as the trio of ARTURO, QUINN and WADE back away.

CUT TO: ANGLE ON A NERVOUS REMBRANDT, half crouched and holding the ALIEN shotgun in his hands; it's enough to stop the villain's taunts cold.

MARAUD turns seductive, like a cobra. He offers the Zercuvian navigation technology as a way for REMBRANDT to get back home.

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REMBRANDT shoots back, "I book my own gigs!" as he fires the shotgun, a huge whirling net exploding out of the barrel.

The net - a thick mesh, filled with hook and charged with energy - envelops the RAZE, trapping them in place.

The SLIDERS book in the opposite direction, REMBRANDT hurling the weapon away.

ANGLE ON MARAUD and the RAZE as parts of each of them begin to transform to 2-dimensions, the villains going flat. Like this, they're thinner than the space between atoms, and are slipping *through* the netting like it wasn't even there.

Further down the alley, the SLIDERS charge ahead, trying to put some distance between them and the RAZE. The alley wall is "decorated" with tattered posters of ALIEN fast food: a Kentucky Fried Chicken style ad with an ALIEN holding up a bucket of humans; another poster is Pizza Hut style with a silhouette of a human on the lid.

ANGLE ON QUINN as he aims the timer at the alley wall, the swirling blue portal opening across an ALIEN "McDonald's" style ad (an image of the "golden arches" melded with some offworld glyph.)

ARTURO and REMBRANDT plunge through the gateway.

WADE pulls on QUINN'S hand, ready to jump together -

- but he pulls back, surprising her as he draws her into a gentle kiss -

CLOSE UP ON THEIR HANDS as QUINN presses the timer into her grip -

- and then pushes the shocked WADE away from him, sending her stumbling through the gate with the precious timer. "They want me," QUINN whispers after her. "I can't risk you all!"

The gate vanishes, leaving only a wall for QUINN to back up against as the RAZE close on him, menacing.

MARAUD glares at QUINN, the young scientist trying to be cocky with a, "So...what's up?" comment.

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EXT. ATLANTIS EARTH, DAY. *This is a parallel Earth where Atlantis never sank, and the warrior-philosophers of that mythic continent moved on to conquer the rest of the world. Now the planet is one unified force, heavily under that look we're so "familiar" with as "saying, Atlantis": fantastic-Grecian architecture, exotic spiral-towers, colorful togas (not all just white) and powerful Greco-Roman armor. The armor and weaponry is especially eye-catching, having several modern twists: heavier plating, more body conforming, swords and shields that give off laser-like energy glows that accentuate their power.*

A blue sliders portal has opened up about 10 feet above a rolling green hill, the portal facing straight down and dumping out the tangle of ARTURO, WADE, and REMBRANDT.

ARTURO and REMBRANDT stagger to their feet, congratulating themselves on their escape from the RAZE; but WADE is grief -stricken, looking up to the dissolving gateway and crying out QUINN'S name.

CLOSER ON THE TRIO, as WADE shows them the timer she now holds, explaining how QUINN forced it on her and her through the gateway. The two men are pale as they realize the implications for QUINN.

CLOSE ON ARTURO AND REMBRANDT, the professor musing at the noble sacrifice QUINN has made; a suddenly tense REMBRANDT is looking over his shoulder, tapping the professor on his. "Don't use that word," REMMY requests. "What word?" the professor replies.

CUT TO: WIDE SHOT OF THE HILL, the trio of SLIDERS being stalked by a heavily armed squadron of ATLANTEAN WARRIORS, swords at the ready, closing in a circle around our heroes. "Sacrifice," REMBRANDT squawks.

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CUT TO: EXT. ENERGY CORRIDOR BETWEEN WORLDS. We see several ZERCUVIAN SLIDING SHIPS riding the colorful waves of interdimensional energy.

INT. ENGINEERING SECTION within the main ship. It's all straight angles, as befits the ZERCUVIAN'S 2-dimensional background, and filled with a strange collection of scientific and mechanical equipment of all sizes and complexity. CLOSE ON QUINN sitting at a long, low workbench, covered in a collection of unfathomable devices. There are things that look like microscopes and soldering irons...but there are also paper-flat tools that look like the *outline* of exotic wrenches, screwdrivers, etc. QUINN is gingerly holding up one of these between his fingertips, even his genius brain having a hard time wrapping itself around what to do here. "What do you expect me to do with this?" he's demanding.

CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal the long, low engineering section. Beyond the workbench are several rows of massive sliding engines, like the huge donut-shapes unit in QUINN'S basement, but more powerful and outlandish. MARAUD is leaning down over the bench trying to be "friendly," but barely holding in his desire and rage. He's explaining how they need QUINN'S genius to control *when* the gateways open, instead of having to wait for random opportunity.

MARAUD wheels about, gesturing wide at all the fantastic equipment, pleased with the RAZE'S, "mastering of this awesome technology!"

CLOSE ON A GRIM QUINN, darkly declaring how the RAZE stole it all from QUINNS of other Earths.

A COLD MARAUD leans over QUINN'S shoulder, the villain quite menacing as his hand goes 2D and he slips it *into* the microscope to illustrate his point, "I've killed QUINN MALLORYS before, young human. I won't hesitate to do so again!"

WIDE SHOT as MARAUD storms out of the chamber, declaring that QUINN will bend to their will.

CLOSE ON QUINN, mouth tight as he watches the villain go. "You're messing with the wrong quantum physicist," he promises.

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EXT. ATLANTIS EARTH, DAY. EST. SHOT OF ATLANTEAN CITY OPEN AIR MARKET: noble Grecian columns, twisting towers of fabulous crystal are the backdrop for a milling populace swarming through streets crowded with vendors busily hawking provocative wares and foods. ARTURO, WADE and REMBRANDT are being led by ZENO, a powerful and friendly Atlantean warrior; our SLIDERS are looking about them with wonder, obviously not captives but guests.

CLOSER ON THE FOURSOME, ZENO handing them each an exotic fruit from a nearby food stand. The SLIDERS are surprised at how readily the ATLANTEANS accepted their story of parallel Earths.

ZENO lustily devours his fruit, his expression amused as he explains, "This is Atlantis!" His cultures history of magic and adventure make them ready for anything.

WADE gets a bit haughty and bleeding-heart liberal, grumbling that the Atlantean culture conquered the entire planet by force.

REMBRANDT'S nearby, smiling broadly at two young LADIES in revealing togas who turn to admire him. "Yeah, Wade, but they obviously did it with style!"

ZENO considers her words seriously, countering with the fact the world is now at peace - many people, one culture. Is that so wrong? Although he admits it has been boring from a military man standpoint...

...he grows wistful as he reminisces about the last action they really saw, when the star people tried to attack in the Atlantis equivalent of 1947. "Star people?" the SLIDERS demand, asking to know more.

ZENO leads them to a large mural painted along the long wall of a temple - he and the SLIDERS are tiny figures at its base. The mural shows a hieroglyphic-style story of mighty ATLANTEAN WARRIORS using their swords to drive off ALIENS that are the mirror of the extraterrestrials of invasion-Earth. ZENO explains how the Atlantean raw ferocity and fighting style caught the invaders off guard and sent them packing.

ANGLE ON THE SLIDERS AND ZENO, our heroes grinning hopefully as they ask, "Do your people like to travel?"

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CUT TO: INT. ZERCUVIAN SHIP ENGINEERING SECTION. CLOSE UP ON QUINN AND MARAUD, in each other's faces. MARAUD has his 2D fingers positioned about to slice into QUINN'S face but our boy is barely flinching. "I'll find another QUINN..." MARAUD is hissing.

CUT TO: EXT. ENERGY CORRIDOR BETWEEN WORLDS, and we again see half a dozen or so RAZE ships twisting on the colorful waves.

CUT TO: ENGINEERING, MARAUD wheeling about, viciously demanding the secrets to controlling the sliding gateways! QUINN is refusing to cooperate, having no fear.

"Do your worst!" QUINN taunts. "Oh, I will..." the chilling MARAUD promises.

"...to that tasty WADE!" MARAUD is pulling out a credit card sized transmitter, telling his pilot to chart a course for the world the other SLIDERS went to, and to make the slide on the next available gateway.

MARAUD stalks out, chiding QUINN for toying with him. QUINN is left behind, calling out, "No, no, not Wade, not my friends!" It seems the scientist's resolve has been broken-

- until we go in for a CLOSEUP and see the cunning grin on his face. "Bait and hook!" he whispers.

CLOSE ON A SET OF PLANS in QUINN'S hands, hastily scrawled on a shiny piece of "paper" (or the RAZE equivalent). The plans show a series of circles (gateways) with arrows linking each of them in an endless loop: one arrow leads into a gateway, it's arrow leading into another gateway, etc. There's all manner of incomprehensible "ZX-R-Q" formula written around the edges. The idea is to create a "vortex of recursion" that will trigger gateways infinitely within each other and keep the RAZE on the move.

QUINN at one of the sliding engines, attaching a strange device - cobbled together wires and tubes and "flat" tools - to the back of one of the engine units. "You want gateways," QUINN chuckles. "I'll give you gateways..."

CUT TO: ZERCUVIAN SHIP CONTROL ROOM. MARAUD is standing behind the PILOT, another RAZE in the full metallic-yellow jumpsuit. The PILOT is twisting a large compass device - two circles the intersect each other - both discs covered with strange glowing characters.

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EXT. ATLANTIS-EARTH, DAY. ZENO and the three SLIDERS are looking up as a terrible thunderous noise cracks across the sky, and a sickly yellow flash comes down from above.

ANGLE ON THE HILL where the three SLIDERS first materialized: 5 ZERCUVIAN SHIPS emerge from five sliding gateways that have opened in the sky. A sixth gate way is open at ground level, and a sixth ship - MARAUD'S - is emerging from that swirling yellow portal.

CLOSE ON MARAUD'S SHIP as a hatch opens, and MARAUD shoves QUINN outside.

MARAUD grabs WADE, his fingers morphing to 2D as he threatens to slice them into her throat. "Give me what I want!" he bellows to QUINN.

CLOSE ON QUINN'S HAND, holding one of the credit card thin transmitters. It's been grafted to one of the flat tools - a tool that looks like a tuning fork. QUINN'S pressing a small button on the transmitter, promising, "here it comes!"

CUT TO: ENGINEERING, CLOSE ON THE SLIDING ENGINE that QUINN altered earlier. Sparks are flying off the device and the sliding engine as QUINN'S sabotage takes effect. The yellow sliding energy is arcing off the engine.

CUT TO: MARAUD spinning about as he hears the raging sliding engines grinding into overdrive; his surprise causes him to loosen his grip on WADE.

WIDE SHOT ON THE HOVERING ZERCUVIAN SHIPS as several wildly swirling yellow gateways slide open around them.

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One Zercuvian ship is sucked violently away through a gateway.

INT. ZERCUVIAN SHIP CONTROL ROOM, the view off kilter. Two PILOTS in metallic yellow jumpsuits are struggling with the sparking controls.

CUT TO: EXT. SKY OVER ATLANTIS-EARTH, as another ZERCUVIAN ship is pulled apart by two gateways that have opened on opposite sides of the ship; one half of the ship is flowing into one gateway, the other half through the other gate.

CUT TO: A snarling MARAUD charging back to his ship, promising revenge.

ANGLE ON QUINN AND ARTURO, both looking up at the fireworks in the sky. The older man is gruffly admiring of QUINN'S physics, the two swapping shop talk.

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WADE breaks up their back patting, reminding ARTURO they need the Zercuvians navigation to send the Atlantean army to invasion-Earth...and maybe to get themselves home.

A queasy QUINN squeaks, "You want me to go back in there?"

WADE grabs two shields from ZENO and another warrior, passing one of the shields off to a non-too-thrilled REMBRANDT.

INT. SHIP, the four SLIDERS moving warily down one of the long, narrow corridors.

TOW YELLOW-JUMPSUIT ZERCUVIANS are oozing out from the shadows near the SLIDERS, the cunning bad guys morphing from flat 2D to bulbous and fearsome 3D.

WADE AND REMBRANDT swing their shields, slamming and staggering the ZERCUVIANS into oblivion.

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INT. CONTROL ROOM, sparks flying about, the four SLIDERS at the compass. WADE AND REMBRANDT keep watch as ARTURO and QUINN direct their attention to the device.

ARTURO traces the strange characters on the compass, making a best guess on how to reposition it to get a portal back to the invasion world.

QUINN throws his muscle behind the compass, but it doesn't turn as easily for him as it does for the strangely muscled-RAZE.

Suddenly, a 2D MARAUD hurls himself from out of the shadows in front of the compass, meaning to slice through the shocked ARTURO and QUINN.

CUT TO: ENGINE ROOM, as the doctored ENGINE cuts loose with another shower of sparks and a pulse of yellow sliding energy.

CUT TO: CONTROL ROOM, as a new mini-gate opens behind MARAUD, sucking the screeching bad guy leader away in a ragged yellow swirl.

QUINN puts his all into the compass, wrenching the device around just enough.

EXT. ATLANTEAN HILL. ZENO has massed a phalanx of warriors behind him, and is urging them to "adventure and glory!" through the swirling portal that now opens in front of them.

CUT TO: ZERCUVIAN SHIPS HATCH, as our four SLIDERS burst out of the smoking ship -

- just before it, too, is sucked away through another swirling portal.

ANGLE ON THE SLIDERS, as WADE pulls out the beeping timer to conjure up their own **blue-tinged** portal.

The foursome plunge through the gateway, cursing not getting the RAZE navigation system...and hoping the Atlantean army can do some good on the ravaged invasion-Earth.

CUT TO: EXT. SAN FRANCISCO ALLEY, NIGHT. A menacing ALIEN patrol scopes the streets, cattle prods and net-shotguns at the ready; they're closing in on several shadowy figures at the end of the alley.

The ALIENS step back, shocked as the "figures" come into the light to reveal themselves to be ZENO and a half dozen of his WARRIORS. Their weapons are up and glowing, and the warriors are smiling broadly at the prospect of battle. "It's a glorious night to die, don't you think?" asks ZENO.

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CUT TO: EXT. RESTAURANT ON "FAT-EARTH." (Here, everyone indulges their appetites to the fullest!) The restaurant is large and stylish, a sort of Super Four Seasons. Many HUGELY OBESE people are coming in and out of the door, crowding past each other even in the widened entrance.

INT. RESTAURANT, where our foursome are seated at a table just PILED with all manner of delicacies that are also HUGE (big chicken wings, enormous slabs of pie, etc.) OBESE WAITERS and BUSBOYS lumber about, as other FAT PATRONS gorge themselves at their own tables.

Our SLIDERS men are dressed in tuxedos, with WADE in an attractive evening gown. ARTURO is just having the time of his life, ("This is paradise!") as he goes at his plate. The others are less enthused, picking at their food. "How long are we going to be here?" WADE wants to know. "Three weeks!" QUINN admits.

"Eat up!" encourages ARTURO. "We have to blend!" "Oh, God, I'm going to look like Roseanne..." WADE laments as she takes a little bite into a huge chicken wing.

REMBRANDT balances a mongo piece of pie on his fork, the dessert heaped with whip cream and cherries. "I just hope they got alka seltzer on this Earth!"