

#K2815

SLIDERS

"Slidecage"

CAST

QUINN MALLORY
REMBRANDT BROWN
MAGGIE BECKETT
COLIN MALLORY

MICHAEL MALLORY
CLAUDE
DECKARD
KOLITAR
KALDEEN
STEVEN JENSEN
WOMAN

#K2815

SLIDERS

"Slidecage"

SETS

INTERIORS:

CHANDLER HOTEL/ZEPPELIN

BAR

LABYRINTH

VIEW SCREEN ROOM

HUMAN STRONGHOLD

KROMAGG LAIR

CORRIDOR OUTSIDE KROMAGG LAIR

CORRIDORS

CONDUIT CENTRAL

CONDUIT

SLIDECAGE ROOM

EXTERIORS:

CHANDLER ZEPPELIN

#K2815

SLIDERS

"Slidecage"

CHRONOLOGY PAGE

SCENES	1 - 2	DAY #1
SCENES	3 - 75	NIGHT #1
SCENES	76 - 78	DAY #2

SLIDERS

"Slidecage"

FADE IN

1 EXT. SKY -. DAY (D1)

1

A gorgeous blue sky. Silence, then the THRUM OF ENGINES. A magnificent GOLDEN ZEPPELIN flies into shot, filling the screen with ornate beauty. The name on the bow: CHANDLER.

REMBRANDT (O.S.)

Now this is the life...

2 INT. CHANDLER HOTEL/ZEPPELIN - BAR - DAY

2

REDRESS of our Chandler Hotel set. The bar has no one in it, save our Sliders. REMBRANDT and MAGGIE sit by a picture window, watching the clouds drift by, sipping ice tea.

REMBRANDT

Drifting along, not a soul in this world who wants to do us dirt...

MAGGIE

Who'd have thought there'd be a Chandler in the clouds...

REMBRANDT

Yeah, well, on this Earth the Hindenburg never blew up, so it's only reasonable you'd have a luxury hotel making the L.A. to San Francisco run.

MAGGIE

Reasonable?

REMBRANDT

Maggie, girl, I take 'em as they come...

QUINN (O.S.)

No, it's cosign over sign --

Rembrandt and Maggie look over to see QUINN and COLIN at a nearby table. The timer and a laptop computer before them, the laptop's screen displaying all manner of equations.

QUINN

Will you get your hands off the keyboard?

COLIN

We had a horse with a temperament like you.

QUINN

Yeah? Did it have a brother?

CONTINUED

2 CONTINUED

2

COLIN

No -- a burr under its tail.

QUINN

Well, don't ask if you can look...
You know, you're mighty cocky for
someone who's just learning this.

COLIN

Just let me adjust --

He reaches for the keyboard again. Quinn bats his hand
away, trying to type in numbers himself.

QUINN

Quit it! Quit!

Maggie and Rembrandt hurry over.

REMBRANDT

Hold it! Hold on there!... You two
must be family, you sure fight
like it. How about you take a
minute to unwind, look at the
clouds?

Quinn leans back, focuses on Remmy -- contained excitement.

QUINN

I think we're close, Remmy...

REMBRANDT

You're kidding...

Quinn pushes a button on the laptop. The screen shows a
diagram of the two micro-dots, spewing out numbers, which
then combine into a complex scroll of numbers.

QUINN

By linking the micro-dots our
parents left us to the hard drive
and running a de-encryption
program, we've been able to
download the data. Now it's just a
matter of eliminating the
randomization protocols --

REMBRANDT

Doing the who to what?

COLIN

Separating the wheat from the
chaff.

REMBRANDT

Oh.

QUINN

This final string should do it...

CONTINUED

2 CONTINUED 2

2

Quinn types. Immediately, the rows of numbers on screen fall away to reveal one simple line of numbers: the coordinates.

COLIN

Yes...

QUINN

We've got it... The coordinates to get us home.

MAGGIE

You're sure? These'll take us to the world your parents came from?

QUINN

Where humans beat the Kromaggs and threw them off their world...

COLIN

Our real parents...

QUINN

And maybe the technology to save other worlds...

(to Remmy, weighted)

The world we came from...

REMBRANDT

Earth. The real one.

The others shoot him a look -- "real one," indeed...

REMBRANDT

I mean -- hell, you know what I mean! Push the button, Q-Ball...

Quinn starts inputting the coordinates into the timer.

QUINN

Ready to go home, brother?

Colin nods. Quinn hands him the timer, smiles.

QUINN

Then hit it.

Quinn stashes the computer in his knapsack. 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.

CONTINUED

3 CONTINUED

3

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, dotted
with the ruins of strange buildings of nonhuman design. 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 6

The same bizarre scene as before.

7 ON QUINN, REMBRANDT, COLIN AND MAGGIE 7

MAGGIE

We're not on Earth...

QUINN

Yes, we are... it's just an Earth very different from anything we've seen before...

REMBRANDT

But wait a minute, Q-Ball. What we heard about your home world isn't anything like this.

COLIN

Somehow, we've arrived at the wrong place.

QUINN

But the coordinates were right, I'm sure of it.

MAGGIE

Well, clearly something went wrong.

REMBRANDT

Man, go from ice tea and a comfy chair to this... Story of our lives...

MAGGIE

How long till we slide out?

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

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

I don't know...

CONTINUED

7 CONTINUED

7

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

 CLAUDE (O.S.)
Friends... over here...

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.

 CLAUDE (O.S.)
That's right... in here... There's
nothing to be afraid of...

They enter...

8 INT. VIEW SCREEN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

8

 CLAUDE (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!

 CLAUDE (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...

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!

CONTINUED

8 CONTINUED

8

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.

MICHAEL MALLORY
-- unfortunately cannot return you,
as it would pose a security risk...

REMBRANDT
Hah! Always worked with my old TV.

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

QUINN
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.

CONTINUED

8 CONTINUED 2

8

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 to the home world 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 Magg devils, I can't blame your people for wanting to keep their world safe. It's just a damn shame we walked into it.

MAGGIE

So what do we do now?

QUINN

What we always do... beat the odds.

9 INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

9

As they emerge, there's a distant HOWL, like a primal scream, followed by METAL HITTING METAL, then SILENCE.

REMBRANDT

Either we got some mighty big rats...

MAGGIE

Or maybe it's just us and the Kromaggs...

COLIN

I have never seen a Kromagg before.

REMBRANDT

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

CONTINUED

9 CONTINUED

9

QUINN

Keep sharp, guys...

They edge forward cautiously. Colin hangs back.

REMBRANDT

Don't want to miss the party, farm boy.

COLIN

I was just thinking... back home they'd be rotating the crops, maybe holding a prayer vigil...

(a shy smile)

I'm glad I'm here...

Rembrandt claps him on the shoulder. They hurry after the others.

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

The 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.

11 MAGGIE

11

is some feet from the others. She hears a SOUND from a nearby vent, moves to peer into it.

12 HER POINT OF VIEW - IN VENT

12

Dark, stretching away. Dimly perceived, there's a MAN in it. He draws closer, still deeply shadowed.

13 MAGGIE

13

reacts, thrown -- as though having seen a ghost. Just then, there's a CRASHING and SHOUTS of a brawl drawing near.

The man in the vent darts back into the darkness and away, gone. Maggie reaches out, stepping closer.

MAGGIE

Wait...

14 WIDE

14

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, fists and boots and rough weapons (neither side has guns or blasters, weapons are jerry-rigged from scavenged parts).

Rembrandt wants to jump in, Quinn holds him back, whispering:

QUINN

We see what the rules are...

The fight is nasty on both sides. The Kromaggs are getting the upper hand. Two humans take flight down the corridor.

Rembrandt sees the Kromaggs are manhandling a WOMAN. Without thinking, he emerges, plows into the Kromaggs, allowing her to escape. She runs off after the others.

But now the Kromaggs have Rembrandt. A blow from behind knocks him senseless. They 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. In answer, the door slides SHUT, closing off our guys from Rembrandt and the Kromaggs.

QUINN

Rembrandt!

15 DOWN THE CORRIDOR

15

Unseen by them, the Woman Rembrandt saved hesitates, watching them, then hurries off after her fellows.

16 QUINN

16

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

17 INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

17

Quinn, Maggie and Colin are hurrying in the opposite direction. Quinn points.

QUINN

There, in the dust, another track.

CONTINUED

17 CONTINUED

17

COLIN
You think these people will help us?

QUINN
I don't know, but if they can at least tell us the lay of the land... Maggie, you have any training in --?

He trails off, noting Maggie lost in thought.

QUINN
Maggie...?

MAGGIE
I'm sorry... For some reason, I keep thinking about -- Quinn, my husband... you're sure he died?

Quinn's surprised by this question here and now.

QUINN
Yes... He was killed by Rickman, I saw the body... Maggie, what --

MAGGIE
Nothing. A shadow in a vent. It's just all this talk of family and home and being so close...

COLIN
You thought you saw him?

MAGGIE
No. I saw a shadow. I imagined... what I wanted.

They turn a corner, spy a MAN darting away.

QUINN
Hold it, we're friends!

They run after him, into:

18 INT. HUMAN STRONGHOLD - CONTINUOUS

18

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. CLAUDE, the man they chased, strides up to Quinn.

CLAUDE
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.

CONTINUED

18 CONTINUED

18

Claude is about to hit Quinn again, when the Woman Rembrandt saved pushes forward.

WOMAN

Wait... They were with the one who saved me...

Claude relents, roughly pulls Quinn back up to a standing position. The others let Maggie and Colin go.

MAGGIE

Yeah... and thanks to that, he's been taken by the Kromaggs.

COLIN

You must help us find him...

DECKARD (O.S.)

It's too late...

The crowd parts, revealing DECKARD (40s), dressed much as the others, but clearly their leader. There's a surprising mildness to him... but underneath, an iron command.

DECKARD

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

QUINN

We're not about to do that.

DECKARD

You're new. I'm sorry. You've fallen into a very, very deep hole.

He moves up to Quinn. We get a sense of someone who, however toughened, is just hanging on.

DECKARD

The people you see here, we're all that's left of over two hundred. All the heroes are dead. All the wonderful idealists... I lead. They follow. We survive.

Maggie steps up to him, gets in his face.

MAGGIE

Well, two or three idealists have just arrived... so if you survivors could give us a road map of this place --

DECKARD

This isn't a joke -- we're in a combat situation!

(MORE)

CONTINUED

18 CONTINUED 2

18

DECKARD (CONT'D)

(forces control)

The last free-thinker we had was caught. Tortured. Revealed our location... Now you've found us, you either join... or die.

COLIN

How do we join?

MAGGIE

Colin...

COLIN

It's clearly the superior of the two options.

Maggie turns sharply, eyes the crowd for the least timid-looking, spies Claude.

MAGGIE

You. Yes, you.

QUINN

Maggie, no...

Quinn's seen Deckard's expression, but Maggie's already striding for her target.

MAGGIE

No problem? Surviving by hiding like a rat?

Claude shifts, uncomfortable. She addresses all of them.

MAGGIE

Is that how it is, you're his mute little pets? Someone who helped you has just been hung out to dry. How do you feel about that?

CLAUDE

Deckard... Maybe she's got a point. Maybe --

Rebellion. Disaster. Deckard motions to his followers.

DECKARD

Out. Now.

Men grab Maggie and start hustling her toward a rusted metal plate held flush against the wall by four bolts. Quinn and Colin try to help her, but they're grabbed and held, struggling. Others loosen three of the bolts, holding cloths to their noses and mouths.

As the plate loosens, NOXIOUS FUMES curl out along the edges -- toxic air leaking in. Our guys react big, realizing Maggie's about to be chucked into this lethal atmosphere.

CONTINUED

18 CONTINUED 3

18

QUINN

(to Deckard)
Don't do this! She's got a temper,
give her time...

COLIN

We'll do what you say!

Deckard comes up closer to them.

DECKARD

I don't mind if you hate me.
There's no rule against that. But
don't let that blind you. This is
a desperate and unforgiving
situation.

He nods toward his men. They slide the plate aside on its
one remaining bolt, revealing a RAGGED HOLE punched in the
wall, only dark, FOGLIKE VAPORS visible beyond. They
quickly hurl Maggie outside, then slide it back down and
hurriedly bolt it back tight.

QUINN

No!!!

From outside, we hear Maggie CHOKING, BANGING on the hatch.

Quinn breaks free, rushes for the door. He manages to hold
the others at bay long enough to start frantically loosening
the bolts -- before being knocked unconscious.

19 ON COLIN

19

In anguish, as we...

FADE OUT

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN

20 INT. LABYRINTH - HUMAN STRONGHOLD - NIGHT

20

Moments later. Quinn is just rousing. Colin is still held, though no longer struggling, looking at the sealed, silent hatch with despair.

Deckard nods at the men holding him. They release him. Deckard notes a tear in Colin's shirt from the struggle.

DECKARD

Your shirt is torn.
(to the others)
Take him to mend it... Then fetch
them soup and some bedding.

COLIN

Quinn...?

QUINN

It's all right...

Colin heads off with the men. The others disperse. Quinn moves to the metal plate, devastated, runs a hand along it. Deckard comes up behind him, speaking more softly now.

DECKARD

You'll be watched, under guard for
a time. I hope you come to a point
of acceptance....
(off his glare)
I know. It's a nightmare for us
all. But things are as they are.
And we need each other.

He starts away.

QUINN

What you did was cold murder.

Deckard stops, turns. We see the strain in him, as though he's just holding on, that he hates what he has to do.

DECKARD

She couldn't have lived here.
Not... someone like her. Trapped,
no way out, she'd have torn herself
to pieces... and taken some of us
with her. I've seen it many
times...

(beat)

But you... you're watchful, a
survivor... You'll adapt.

QUINN

I don't plan to stay that long.

CONTINUED

20 CONTINUED

20

DECKARD

We all say that, at first. But we'd been scattered too far, came rushing home -- too late. Now there's only here... and the enemy.

QUINN

The Kromaggs.

DECKARD

The Maggs take one of ours, we take one of theirs... We open him up, leave him where he'll be found. We hold them off by terror.

QUINN

To fight a Magg, become one.

His eyes flash anger. He turns, starts off.

QUINN

Wait...

He turns back.

QUINN

My friend... the Maggs could be torturing him. At least let us go.

Deckard exhales impatience, starts out. Quinn lifts his knapsack, shows its contents, speaks rapidly, desperate.

QUINN

I have skills, knowledge... Maybe I could help us all get out.

DECKARD

There is no way out!
(gets control, softly)
I'm sorry about your friend... I wasn't always... ice...

He heads off, then glances back, smiling, eyes tortured.

DECKARD

Believe it or not, if I could trade place with your friend right now... I would.

He exits. Quinn watches him go.

21 INT. KROMAGG LAIR - NIGHT

21

Much like the human stronghold, but with a barbarian design touch, lighting dim. MALE AND FEMALE KROMAGGS in thrown-together clothes busy themselves at various tasks, tending to rough-hewn hydroponics, etc. The Kromaggs we saw earlier drag Rembrandt in.

CONTINUED

21 CONTINUED

21

REMBRANDT
Lemme go, you stinking Maggots!
Let go of me!

KOLITAR (O.S.)
You humans are so loud, even when
you're not in pain...

KOLITAR (40s), a FEMALE KROMAGG, surges through the crowd to Rembrandt. Tall and powerful. Her 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 Maggots
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 the hell 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. Enough of
this.
(to the others)
Was he alone?

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.

CONTINUED

21 CONTINUED 2

21

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

You're gonna kill me... so how about we just get it over with...

KOLITAR

Brave words... but foolish... Our Gods tell us that a death long endured secures a place in paradise.

(to one of her men)

Bring the knives.

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

KALDEEN (O.S.)

Mother, please, don't...

Rembrandt turns to see KALDEEN, a teenaged Kromagg, thin and frail, with bright alert eyes. He's in a homemade wheelchair, his body twisted.

KALDEEN

Can't we just talk to him...?

KOLITAR

Silence! You are a shame on our clan!

REMBRANDT

You brought your son here?

Kolitar turns on Rembrandt, a murderous rage in her eyes.

KOLITAR

No, he was born in this hell... Some factor of this place... radiation perhaps... makes conception virtually impossible... Kaldeen's birth was a freak... one that nearly cost me my life.

REMBRANDT

And his father?

KOLITAR

Dead, like so many...

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

CONTINUED

21 CONTINUED 3

21

KOLITAR

But enough of sadness and this world...

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

KOLITAR

Pain can be a kingdom all its own.

She 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, eyes the wound angrily.

KOLITAR

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

REMBRANDT

Guess you don't have doctors around here...

Kolitar gives a SHOUT of rage, rushes Rembrandt, throwing him 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

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'd say anything to live.

REMBRANDT

I haven't lied yet... but if you kill me, you'll never know.

A tense moment... then she lets Rembrandt up.

KOLITAR

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

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

REMBRANDT

We all of us die... only question is when.

22 KALDEEN 22

sits on the periphery, watching Rembrandt, impressed.

23 INT. HUMAN STRONGHOLD - NIGHT 23

Two armed-to-the-teeth GUARDS flank the entrance. Colin sashays up, nods toward the weapons on one's bandolier.

COLIN
These are quite ingenious in how they are fashioned... I've been a weaponsmith myself, perhaps we might share crude technology...

The guard just glares at him.

COLIN
At some later time...

He nods good-bye, hurries to where Quinn is lying some distance off, bundled in blankets, back to the guards.

COLIN
They're heavily armed. I doubt we'd prevail against them...

He crouches... and we see Quinn is using the bedding to conceal that he's patched his laptop into the mainframe computer and is busily typing commands. BLUEPRINTS OF ROOMS AND CORRIDORS flash by on the laptop's screen.

QUINN
Well, whether we go around them, over them or under them, we've got to get to Remy...

COLIN
If he still lives...

The despair in Colin's tone gets Quinn's attention.

QUINN
How you doin', bro?

COLIN
I don't know... I've never been responsible for the death of another before...

QUINN
You didn't cause her death.

COLIN
I completed the equations that brought her here.

QUINN
Yes, and that's all...
(MORE)

CONTINUED

23 CONTINUED

23

QUINN (CONT'D)
You couldn't know we'd get trapped here, or that the leader of this bunch would be homicidal... It wasn't your fault, get that into your thick head... Okay?

Colin doesn't respond. Instead, he looks to the screen.

COLIN
Have you detected a way out?

QUINN
Not yet, but get a load of this...

He types a command. A DRAWING OF THE SLIDECAGE TOWER appears.

QUINN
Slidecage mechanism, it's what's damping our timer and keeping us here... But when I try to access it's innards...

He calls up an area of data that breaks down into STATIC.

QUINN
Looks like someone tried to hack in, crashed the works...
(types a command,
nothing)
Nope... it's totally wiped.

Quinn returns to the parade of blueprints. The light from it shines on Colin's face, his expression grows reflective.

COLIN
When the influenza took my father and mother, I watched them gasping out their lives... and there was nothing I could do...
(beat)
I didn't ever want that feeling again.

Quinn turns to him again, says softly:

QUINN
Any time we give our hearts to anyone, in time they'll lose us or we'll lose them... It's the price of being alive.

COLIN
That doesn't stop it hurting.

QUINN
No... it doesn't.

CONTINUED

23 CONTINUED 2

23

He rubs his brother's shoulder, Colin grasps his hand. A moment of connection. The blueprints continue to speed by. Quinn catches something out of the corner of his eye.

QUINN

Hold it, hold it...
(types command)
Go back.

An image of a CONDUIT freezes on the monitor.

QUINN

Yes... venting duct. Comes into this room... and re-enters the building here. Might be able to override the locking code. Only hitch, there's a stretch of it... here... 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.

The thought of Maggie's death is still fresh in Colin's mind. He shakes his head.

QUINN

Colin, Colin, look at me. Look at me. We can do this, we can...
(beat, gentler)
She'd want us to try.

Colin calms, looking at his brother... then nods.

24 INT. CONDUIT CENTRAL - NIGHT

24

Dark. We're in the walls, at some juncture that opens up to a larger space. Maggie lies bundled in rough blankets, unmoving. Then she GASPS, takes a deep breath and sits up.

She looks around, disoriented. It's coming back to her now, sliding to this world, being chucked outside... But how did she get here?

A SOUND behind her.

She turns to see A FIGURE shambling toward her out of the darkness, misshapen, glinting metal. She shrinks against the wall, trying to get away.

The figure emerges from the darkness. It's a man in a weathered environment suit. He puts out a reassuring hand.

CONTINUED

24 CONTINUED

24

STEVEN

It's all right...

He lifts the visor... and we see the face of STEVEN JENSEN.

STEVEN

Welcome back from the dead, Maggie.

A flood of emotion overwhelms her.

MAGGIE

Steven...

(then she realizes)

You're walking... But how --?

(beat, sad)

You're from an alternate world.

You aren't my Steven...

STEVEN

I don't know what you're talking about... but I guess it means you're not the one I lost, either...

MAGGIE

Dead...?

STEVEN

Missing, over the Gulf... the Mexicano pilots blew her out of the sky...

Just then, Maggie remembers Quinn, Colin and Rembrandt.

MAGGIE

I've got to get to my friends...!

She tries to rise, is seized with a fit of coughing. He rushes to her, helps ease her back.

STEVEN

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

(smiles, shakes his head)

Such spirit, you're so like her... only now I'm here to help.

25 INT. KROMAGG LAIR - NIGHT

25

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

KALDEEN

It was smart what you did, to save your life... made yourself useful. It's what I do.

REMBRANDT

Go away, I don't talk to Kromaggs.

CONTINUED

25 CONTINUED

25

KALDEEN

I fix the replicators when they break, the air handlers, too. Once I even got into the computer, downloaded the specs on the Slidecage equipment, not that I could read much of it...

(rolls closer)

My name's Kaldeen... What's yours?

Rembrandt eyes him balefully. This kid isn't gonna quit...

REMBRANDT

Rembrandt.

KALDEEN

(a laugh)
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...

He motions toward the Kromaggs on the other side of the room, paying no attention to them.

KALDEEN

They don't talk to me...

Rembrandt feels pity for the kid, sighs.

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.

CONTINUED

25 CONTINUED 2

25

REMBRANDT

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

KALDEEN

Tell me about your mother... Is she like mine?

REMBRANDT

Mama's got a temper, and she can yell, all right... but, uh, no.

(softer)

When I was little, she seemed about a million miles tall... Nights when the sky flashed and stomped its feet, she'd hold me on her rocker, all bundled up... sing real low... and so, so sweet...

KALDEEN

What would she sing...?

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

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.

26 INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE KROMAGG LAIR

26

Continuing to PULL BACK in the dim corridor, as the SONG ECHOES down empty halls.

REMBRANDT (O.S.)

(singing)

A long way from home...

27 INT. HUMAN STRONGHOLD - NIGHT

27

In the distance, by the entrance, we see a woman bring the guards their dinner. They stand, talking to her a minute, not watching Quinn and Colin. ARRIVE at Quinn and Colin.

They're all bundled up in blankets like before, but they've moved their spot. Seeing the guards distracted, Quinn turns to Colin:

QUINN

Now.

CONTINUED

27 CONTINUED

27

Colin runs a line from Quinn's computer to a nearby vent with a closed hatch. He attaches the line to the control panel, which shows a RED LIGHT.

Quinn types a command. The light changes to GREEN. The hatch SLIDES OPEN. Quinn hurriedly gathers up the computer and line, stows it in his knapsack. He and Colin dive in, their absence not yet noticed. The hatch SLIDES SHUT behind them.

28 INT. CONDUIT - NIGHT

28

Quinn in the lead, crawling along, Colin behind him.

29 INT. CONDUIT CENTRAL - NIGHT

29

Maggie's sitting up, eating soup as Steven looks on.

MAGGIE

So you never had an accident... and your Maggie never quit flying to look after you.

STEVEN

When I lost you -- her -- I buried myself in work, experimented... I guess without caring... landed here.

MAGGIE

And stayed hidden...?

STEVEN

In the conduits...

He indicates a ROW OF MONITORS set high along one wall, switching to various scenes of empty corridors and rooms.

STEVEN

I scavenged parts, set these up to keep an eye on things...

MAGGIE

But why? If you're at all like the man I knew, you might have turned things around, made a difference...

He looks away, hurting. More gently, she adds:

MAGGIE

To cut yourself off, be so alone...

STEVEN

After you, there was nothing but alone...

(MORE)

CONTINUED

29 CONTINUED

29

STEVEN (CONT'D)

(sensing her
disappointment)
I guess I'm not that like him after
all...

She reaches out, takes his hand, comforting.

MAGGIE

I haven't thanked you, have I? For
my life...

The closeness makes him uncomfortable. He gestures at the
environment suit hanging on a hook.

STEVEN

I made myself an environment suit,
so I could explore the ruins...
Good thing, too, or I wouldn't have
been able to get you...

MAGGIE

I saw the ruins through a window
when I first got here.

STEVEN

Centuries old. From an advanced
race... not human... There's
nothing left of them but their
carved stones, a few devices...

He gestures toward some objects on an improvised work table,
-- bits of alien carving, stones with weird hieroglyphs,
some odd, weathered devices. He picks one up, then another.

STEVEN

This can record thoughts... This
disrupts energy fields...
(looks off, thoughtful)
Sometimes, I'd wonder... the last
one of them... alone, looking out
at the night... did he hope someday
he'd be back with those he
loved...?

He turns to look at Maggie. We see uncertainty in her face.

30 INT. CONDUIT - NIGHT

30

Crawling, Quinn and Colin come to a closed hatch. Quinn
touches the control panel by the hatch, looks to Colin.

QUINN

Ready?

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

CONTINUED

30 CONTINUED

30

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. The MIST GROWS THICKER until they're lost from sight.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN

31 INT. LABYRINTH - CONDUIT CENTRAL - NIGHT 31

Maggie notices one of the images on a monitor shows Quinn and Colin struggling through the conduit.

MAGGIE

Oh my God, it's Quinn and Colin...

STEVEN

That conduit, it's not far...

32 INT. SLIDECAGE ROOM - NIGHT - ON THE SLIDECAGE TOWER 32

All cool electronics, lights blinking, HUMMING with power. A HATCH pops open -- Quinn and Colin slide out, coughing, catching their breath. Quinn SLAMS the hatch shut. Colin looks around, sees the Tower.

COLIN

Where are we?

QUINN

In the belly of the beast... That runs the Slidecage effect.

Colin walks toward it, in awe.

COLIN

Amazing...

33 QUINN 33

stands some feet behind Colin. Suddenly, he spies something on the ground in front of Colin, looks alarmed.

QUINN

Colin, no!

He grabs up a tool, throws it past Colin toward the Tower.

34 ON THE SLIDECAGE TOWER 34

As the tool reaches a point mid-air a few feet from the Tower. There's a FLASH and the tool is DISINTEGRATED.

35 ON QUINN AND COLIN 35

As the smoke clears. Colin looks at Quinn in wonder.

COLIN

How did you --?

CONTINUED

35 CONTINUED

35

QUINN

A line of ash, there on the floor.

Colin looks.

36 HIS POINT OF VIEW - ON FLOOR

36

A fine line of ash is scattered along the outer edge of where the invisible force field lies.

37 BACK TO QUINN AND COLIN

37

DECKARD (O.S.)

I thought you understood...

They turn to see that Deckard has entered with several of his people (including the woman Remmy saved), all armed.

DECKARD

That man whom the Maggs caught, who revealed where we were... do you think he just lost us our homes?

(steps closer)

Some of us arrived with children... there were over forty. Our great pride had been, against all odds, we'd kept them safe... until that day.

Quinn dives at the men, trying to get to the exit, Colin following his lead. They fight but are subdued. Deckard comes up to Quinn.

DECKARD

The one who betrayed us was strong, like you. He called me a tin dictator, laughed when I said he might crack... I let him go. I did.

He looks toward the Slidecage Tower.

DECKARD

Sometimes, our people come here to end it... I'm told they don't feel a thing.

Our guys react in horror, realizing his intent. They struggle like mad, to no avail. Expression tormented, Deckard nods to his men, who start manhandling Quinn and Colin head-first toward the invisible force field.

Suddenly, a RAY BEAM SHOOTS from behind them, HITTING the force field, DISRUPTING it, shutting its HUM off momentarily. CRIES OF SURPRISE from everyone.

MAGGIE (O.S.)

That was a warning shot.

38 CONTINUED

38

Steven stops him with a gesture, motions them aside, out of earshot, as Deckard looks on, hopeful.

STEVEN

(quietly)
It's not a weapon... It doesn't
work on people, just energy fields.

COLIN

You were bluffing...

Maggie shrugs.

COLIN

Then perhaps we could use it to
bluff the Kromaggs.

STEVEN

They're not stopped with bluffs.
They stop when they die.

Quinn eyes the humans, then the disruptor, thoughtful.

QUINN

Wait... Could that device be set
for a longer duration?

STEVEN

I think so, yes.

QUINN

If it could render the force field
harmless...
(remembers, frustrated)
Without the Slidecage specs, we'd
still be lost...

STEVEN

The Kromaggs have them... I've seen
it on my monitor.

Quinn considers, then crosses to Deckard.

QUINN

You want a weapon? One that may
really make this stop?

Deckard stares at him: how could he even ask?

QUINN

I've got one. Hope.
(a beat)
I think I can dismantle the
Slidecage. Get everyone home.

Everyone reacts to that, big.

DECKARD

How...?

CONTINUED

38 CONTINUED 2

38

QUINN

With that device getting us through
the force field... and the help of
the Kromaggs.

Deckard is stunned.

QUINN

They've got the specs. We know how
to use them.

(beat)

Like I said, everyone goes home.

DECKARD

You're crazy. Why not just use
that?

(off the disruptor)

Take the specs?

QUINN

(gently)

Because that... is a paper tiger.
It only works on the field. All
we've got is hope. And, like you
said, each other.

Deckard stares -- then laughs.

DECKARD

Well, we may have each other, but
if the Maggs are involved...

(his humor crumbles)

...you can forget hope. Truce?
They'd never agree.

QUINN

Would you?

Deckard's startled. He looks to his people, wanting an end.
Then hardens.

DECKARD

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

QUINN

It's only a small number. We'd
keep them under guard, slide them
back to their people...

(off his hesitance)

I've lost friends to them, too...
but either we try this... or this
is where we die.

A long beat. Deckard's torn.

DECKARD

All right... truce...

CONTINUED

38 CONTINUED 3

38

MAGGIE

Oh, right! We're supposed to rely on that?

QUINN

Maggie...

MAGGIE

Hey, ace! How 'bout you chug-a-lug a dozen gallons of methane?

WOMAN

I've known Deckard twelve years. He never breaks his word...

Maggie's about to protest, but the Woman cuts her off with a look.

WOMAN

Your friend gave his life for me... I wouldn't lie to you.

Maggie sees the truth in her eyes, says nothing. Quinn walks up to Deckard.

QUINN

How do we get word to the Kromaggs?

39 INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

39

A KROMAGG scavenges wire from a wrecked wall panel, casting furtive glances about. Suddenly, a WEIGHTED NET drops down from above, snaring him. He struggles, terrified.

WIDEN to reveal Quinn dropping down from the open overhead panel, followed by Deckard. He bends to the Kromagg, as Maggie, Colin and a couple of Deckard's men join them.

QUINN

Tell your boss we need a truce. There's a way we might get out of here. All of us. But only together...

(beat)

Bring the human and the schematics to the Slidecage room. Three of you, no more. Understand?

The Kromagg nods. Quinn whips the net off him.

QUINN

Go.

He doesn't need to be told twice. He takes off at a run and is gone.

40 INT. KROMAGG STRONGHOLD - NIGHT - CLOSE ON REMBRANDT

40

chained to the wall. His eyes dart as Kromagg shadows pass over him. Kaldeen rolls up to him, extends a bowl.

KALDEEN

I brought you some food.

Rembrandt grabs it ravenously, slurps some down.

REMBRANDT

Bleh! What is that?

KALDEEN

It's from the food processors...

REMBRANDT

Yeah, but processed from what?
(stops him)
Don't tell me...

KALDEEN

My Mother said she felt the death force receding... that she would kill you soon. That will make me very sad.

REMBRANDT

Yeah, well, it won't do a whole lot for my mood, either... So much for a good turn.

KALDEEN

We are adversarial races. I've been taught it's the way of things.

REMBRANDT

God's will...

KOLITAR

What's that?

REMBRANDT

It's what my Mama used to say about anything bad, it's God's will... Well, maybe that's so with a hurricane or tidal wave, but when it comes to people, I figure we got a say in what we do...

Kaldeen considers, uneasy. Then rolls close, presses a key into Rembrandt's hand.

KALDEEN

Hurry, while they're not looking...

Rembrandt quickly unlocks the chain, hesitates.

REMBRANDT

Come with me.

CONTINUED

40 CONTINUED

40

KALDEEN

(thrown, scared)
Live with the humans? I couldn't.
I -- I --
(forces calm)
I'll be fine --

Rembrandt doesn't like it, but nods.

REMBRANDT

Okay, then... You watch out for
yourself.

He starts away, turns -- just as a KROMAGG BRUISER enters.
He draws his blade and is about to kill Rembrandt!

41 ON KALDEEN

41

Alarmed. And then he does an extraordinary thing -- his
head goes down and his eyes roll up, showing white, as he
concentrates...

42 ON PIECE OF DISCARDED MACHINERY

42

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

43 FAVORING REMBRANDT AND KROMAGG BRUISER

43

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

KALDEEN

Run!

Rembrandt starts off, but just then a SECOND KROMAGG rushes
in. Kaldeen grabs him, tries to stop him. The Kromagg
starts beating on 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.

Rembrandt suddenly stops struggling. Kolitar stands before
them, eyes shifting from Remy to Kaldeen. All tense.

Then, a shuffling from behind. Kolitar turns. It's the
Kromagg Scavenger, just arrived with Quinn's message.

44 INT. SLIDECAGE ROOM - NIGHT

44

Quinn, Maggie, Colin, Steven, Deckard and several of his men
stand waiting. Steven shakes his head.

STEVEN

We'd have heard something by now.

CONTINUED

44 CONTINUED

44

DECKARD
I'm sorry, Quinn... I wish I'd been
wrong.

Quinn nods, turns and starts purposefully out the door.

COLIN
Where are you going?

QUINN
Never send a letter when you can
say it in person.

MAGGIE
We're going with you.

QUINN
No. Alone.
(beat)
I'm about to try and make an
impression.

MAGGIE
Not a chance.

QUINN
It's our only chance. You know the
Kromaggs. You know I'm right.

She does... and knows it's almost certain death. He turns
to go.

MAGGIE
Quinn...

He turns back.

QUINN
Don't say, 'Be careful.' I hate
that.

She smiles. He touches her cheek.

QUINN
(to Colin)
Keep her out of trouble while I'm
gone.

Colin nods. Quinn turns toward the door. Deckard's
watching him.

DECKARD
What you're doing... it's suicide.

QUINN
Nothing changes... till you make
it change.

And then he's gone. Maggie looks after him worriedly.

45 ON STEVEN

45

Watching Maggie, noting the depth of her feeling for Quinn.

46 INT. KROMAGG LAIR - CLOSE ON THE KROMAGG SCAVENGER

46

as he's SMACKED across the face and goes down hard. WIDEN
to reveal Kolitar, enraged, having just struck him. She's
flanked by several of her men.

KOLITAR

Truce? Do the humans take me for
a fool? Traps within traps... Oh,
to have all of them dead and an end
to it!

47 ON REMBRANDT AND KALDEEN

47

Rembrandt again chained to the wall, Kaldeen in his
wheelchair by him. They speak quietly so as not to be heard
by the others.

REMBRANDT

That big piece of machinery, you
moved it with your mind...

KALDEEN

The mutation that made my body
different made my mind different,
too...

REMBRANDT

Do they know?

KALDEEN

No... They'd want me to use it to
kill people... I -- I couldn't...

48 FAVORING KOLITAR

48

Anger growing, glaring at her men.

KOLITAR

And you. Mighty Kromaggs. A
frail human nearly bests the lot of
you! He corrupts you as his kind
corrupted our world! But worst of
all...

She storms up to Kaldeen and Rembrandt, glaring at them.

KOLITAR

He corrupts my son!

She draws a big knife, moves in toward Rembrandt.

KOLITAR

Arm or no arm, human... you die
now.

CONTINUED

48 CONTINUED

48

KALDEEN

Mother, no!

QUINN (O.S.)

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

The Kromaggs spin, to see Quinn standing in the doorway. They rush toward him en masse. He holds his hands out empty.

QUINN

I'm unarmed.

KOLITAR

Search him.

She nods toward one of her 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

Why are you here?

QUINN

I sent a message and got no answer.

KOLITAR

That was your answer. Regrettably, you did not heed it... In my culture, we have warrior fools, mad ones who can walk through flame untouched. It is our way to do them no harm... Sadly, this does not extend to humans.

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

CONTINUED

48 CONTINUED 2

48

KOLITAR
For your courage, I'll give you
your choice of deaths...

FADE OUT

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN

49 INT. LABYRINTH - KROMAGG LAIR - CONTINUOUS

49

Kolitar holds the knife. One of the Kromaggs holding Quinn bares Quinn's throat.

QUINN
Wait! Aren't you curious why I asked you to bring him and the schematics...?

KOLITAR
(spits out, contempt)
Curiosity! It's like the shiny objects you humans attach to land mines!

QUINN
My name is Mallory -- I'm the son of the man who built this trap.

Kolitar can't help but sit up at that.

KOLITAR
Go on...

QUINN
I never knew him, but I was able to design a sliding device on my own. I think I can get us all out of here. We've got a way to disrupt the force field around the Slidecage equipment... but we need your schematics.

KOLITAR
How did you know we --?
(beat)
But then, you're a wizard, aren't you?

QUINN
Nothing matters, except that we can get out of here...

KOLITAR
(considers, then cagey)
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.

He senses Kolitar is on the fence, presses:

CONTINUED

49 CONTINUED

49

QUINN

On my world, there was a man named Benjamin Franklin, who said, "We must hang together... or we most certainly will all hang separately."

Kolitar gives a small smile at that.

50 INT. SLIDECAGE ROOM - NIGHT

50

Maggie, Steven, Colin, Deckard and two of his people wait for Quinn. Maggie sits on a box, jittery, Steven observing her anxiety, as Deckard paces.

51 ON DECKARD

51

Noting Colin studying him, he stops.

DECKARD

You keep looking at me...

COLIN

It is a puzzle... You care about your people, you seem to have a good heart... yet you commit such cruelties...

It surprises him. He gets a hard look, drawing inward.

DECKARD

To lead, you have to do things you don't want to.

COLIN

I haven't seen much... only a few worlds... and yet I can't believe that's true.

He softens again, melancholy.

DECKARD

Cherish your innocence...

52 WIDE

52

as Quinn, schematics in hand, enters with Rembrandt.

QUINN

Hail the conquering hero.

Everyone reacts, Maggie running to them, followed by Colin, Steven, Deckard. Maggie embraces them, overjoyed.

MAGGIE

Quinn! Remmy, oh Remmy!

CONTINUED

52 CONTINUED

52

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

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

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

Rembrandt's surprised to see Steven.

STEVEN
Steven Jensen... but not hers...

REMBRANDT
I'm sorry, Maggie...

STEVEN
I am, too.

Both Rembrandt and Maggie take this in. Then Kaldeen rolls into the room. Rembrandt notes him.

REMBRANDT
This is Kaldeen... my friend.

Kaldeen beams at that. Deckard steps up to Quinn, eyeing the schematics, amazed.

DECKARD
You got them.

QUINN
Yeah... and, uh...

He looks nervously back toward the door... where Kolitar enters with her whole band of Kromaggs, who eye the humans warily.

Deckard and his people freak, going for their weapons. Seeing this, the Kromaggs reach for theirs. Quinn steps between them, arms raised.

QUINN
Easy. We're friends here... or at least we share a common goal.

DECKARD
You said only three.

QUINN
It was an all or nothing deal...
I'm sorry, they insisted.

CONTINUED

52 CONTINUED 2

52

DECKARD

Then all my people come as well...

MAGGIE

Great idea, put a match to the powder keg.

DECKARD

(to Quinn)

Say yes, or we end it now.

Quinn doesn't like it, but sees he means it.

QUINN

Do what you have to... but keep your word.

DECKARD

As long as they keep theirs.

He gestures, the humans resheath their weapons. The Kromaggs follow. But neither likes it.

53 ON DECKARD

53

He nods to one of his men, who exits to fetch the others. Claude sidles up to him, out of earshot of our guys and the Kromaggs.

CLAUDE

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

DECKARD

We can't... Stay watchful.

DISSOLVE TO

54 INT. SLIDECAGE ROOM - NIGHT

54

All the humans are there now, as are all the Kromaggs. We're PANNING the two armed groups standing waiting, eyeing each other with hatred. A very uneasy truce.

55 DECKARD

55

glares at Kolitar.

KOLITAR

You would burn me with your gaze, human...

DECKARD

I'm seeing the ghosts of all you've slaughtered...

56 STEVEN, QUINN, MAGGIE, REMBRANDT AND COLIN

56

Facing the lighted Slidecage Tower, some feet off. We hear the DISTINCTIVE HUM OF THE FORCE FIELD (but don't see it). The HARMONIC DISRUPTOR is set atop a tripod, aimed toward the field. Steven's fiddling with its controls, making some last adjustments.

Kaldeen sits in his wheelchair some feet off, watching avidly. Quinn moves up to him.

QUINN
I understand from Rembrandt you're
the one who downloaded the
schematics.

KALDEEN
(flattered, shy)
I didn't understand everything...

Quinn smiles at him warmly.

QUINN
At your age, I didn't understand
Windows Three Point Oh.

Kaldeen's perplexed, not knowing what that is, but smiles back.

Rembrandt edges up to Steven, casts a nervous look at the humans and the Kromaggs.

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

STEVEN
The dissonance frequency has to be
just right... Ah.

He pushes a button on the DISRUPTOR. It LIGHTS UP, its TIP GLOWS, pointed at the Tower. It gives its own HIGHER-PITCHED SOUND.

57 ON THE TOWER

57

The FORCE FIELD gives off a FLASH and is gone. The HUM is silent. We hear only the SOUND of the DISRUPTOR (which CONTINUES until it's knocked over in a few minutes).

58 ON QUINN, STEVEN, MAGGIE, COLIN AND REMBRANDT

58

STEVEN
The force field should be off.

REMBRANDT
There's a world of difference
between should and is...

CONTINUED

58 CONTINUED

58

Quinn tosses an object toward the Tower. It falls harmlessly to the floor, unsinged.

QUINN

Okay...

He strides toward it, Colin following. Rembrandt and Maggie hang back, keeping an eye on the crowd. Steven stays by the disruptor, operating it. Deckard and some of the others try to follow, but Steven waves them off.

STEVEN

Stay back... too many bodies might disrupt the field.

59 BY THE TOWER

59

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

COLIN

It's like the plans.

QUINN

Let's see what the maestro can do...

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

60 ON THE HUMANS AND THE KROMAGGS

60

Watching this, heartened, distracted for a moment from each other.

61 ON REMBRANDT AND KALDEEN

61

REMBRANDT

Pretty soon you'll be seeing blue skies, white clouds...

Kolitar, seeing Rembrandt talking to Kaldeen, scowls, wheels her son away.

62 BACK ON QUINN AND COLIN

62

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

QUINN

Uh-oh, we've got a problem... According to the readout, if I disable this, slide everyone to the home world... the system stays off.

CONTINUED

62 CONTINUED

62

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

QUINN
The Kromaggs could just waltz in
and invade it.

They look at each other, knowing the only thing they can do.

COLIN
Then there's no going home...

QUINN
Not for now. I'm sorry...
(beat, typing)
But there might be one other thing
I could do... rig a feedback
loop... using the slide signatures
in our bodies, it would 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...

63 ON KOLITAR AND KALDEEN

63

Both watching the Tower. Kolitar murmurs to the boy:

KOLITAR
Soon you will be with your kind...
They will tend to you, heal your
broken body... and you will be a
Kromagg warrior to make your clan
proud...

Kaldeen reacts with alarm... then comes to a decision. He
wheels deliberately away from his mother, up to Rembrandt.
The words pour out in a torrent.

KALDEEN
I want to go where you go, I don't
want to be with the Kromaggs
anymore!

KOLITAR
Human! What poison have you worked
on my son?!

KALDEEN
(ignoring him, to
Rembrandt)
Please, please let me stay with the
humans!

Kolitar storms up to him, in a rage.

CONTINUED

63 CONTINUED

63

KOLITAR
Kaldeen, you are my son! You will
do as I say!

To punctuate her point, she draws his dagger -- perhaps not even intending to use it, just that his blood is up.

64 DECKARD

64

some distance behind her, sees her drawing her knife, assumes it's to kill Rembrandt. He shouts to the others.

DECKARD
We're betrayed!

He pulls his own knife and lunges forward.

65 MAGGIE

65

turns in time to see this.

MAGGIE
No!

She dives toward them.

66 WIDE

66

Maggie's too late -- Deckard stabs Kolitar in the back. With a GRUNT, she goes down. Deckard raises his arms high, bloody knife in one hand.

DECKARD
Kill them! Kill them all!

And the bloody brawl is on, humans and Kromaggs, grappling to the death, with fists, knives and other weapons.

Steven is knocked down by a Kromagg, the disruptor toppling over, out of commission.

67 ON THE TOWER

67

There's the FLASH of the FORCE FIELD SNAPPING BACK ON, then it's invisible again, only the DISTINCTIVE HUM telling us it's on, trapping Quinn and Colin within its boundary. Colin lunges forward to aid Maggie and the others, but Quinn holds him back.

QUINN
Colin, no! We're inside the force
field!

68 WIDE

68

Rembrandt rushes to Kaldeen to protect him.

Deckard continues his attack amid the chaos... Kolitar rises up behind him, not dead. She spins him around, stabs him in the heart.

KOLITAR
Retribution...

Deckard crumples dead.

Steven is on the ground, half-conscious. A Kromagg rushes to kill him. But then Maggie is there, taking the Kromagg down, saving Steven.

Suddenly, while Maggie is still on her knees, Kolitar grabs her hair, pulling her half way up, blade at her throat. The other humans and Kromaggs continue their battle all about them. Kolitar calls out to Quinn:

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

Quinn watches in horror, uncertain. Rembrandt is frozen, too.

MAGGIE
Don't do it, Quinn!

QUINN
Maggie...

Kolitar tenses, readying to kill her.

69 KALDEEN

69

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

70 A KROMAGG BLADE

70

lies on the ground nearby, discarded. Suddenly, it SHUDDERS and MOVES with telekinetic force.

71 FAVORING KOLITAR AND MAGGIE

71

As the blade flies to its mark -- lodging in Kolitar's heart. Eyes wide with surprise, she GASPS... then falls dead, releasing Maggie.

72 KALDEEN

72

sits in his chair, grieved.

KALDEEN
Mother...

73 WIDE

73

Maggie looks down at Kolitar's body, perplexed.

MAGGIE

How --?

REMBRANDT

(soft, moved)
It was Kaldeen...

The brawl is continuing. Quinn SHOUTS to the combatants:

QUINN

Stop it! Stop! Your leaders are
dead! There's no victory here,
we'll only kill ourselves!
(beat)
Or we can go back where we came
from, all of us, an end to this
hell... Let it end!

He's starting to get through to them, some are stopping, others slowing...

QUINN

You've forgotten what it is to
live... honor yourselves and those
you've lost... Stop...

Silence descends, all have stopped fighting. They breathe hard, eyeing each other.

QUINN

Good, that's good...

Steven stands, a little shakily, rights the disruptor, turns it back on, aimed at the force field. As before, there's a FLASH and the HUM is gone. Maggie moves to Steven, to make sure he's all right. Rembrandt hurries to Kaldeen, who seems in shock.

REMBRANDT

You okay?

Kaldeen blinks his eyes, then focuses on Rembrandt, nods sadly.

QUINN

(working on the Tower)
Almost got it... Another minute,
and it'll send us all 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 Kaldeen?
He's from here.

Colin and Quinn exchange a glance as it sinks in.

CONTINUED

73 CONTINUED

73

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...

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 rolls closer to Quinn and Colin, drawing Rembrandt with him. Maggie has joined them. Kaldeen speaks in a low tone, so that the Kromaggs can't hear.

KALDEEN

My father was right... humans and
Kromaggs are born enemies, bent on
killing each other. Maybe someday
it won't be that way, but it is
now. They must be kept apart...
(off the Tower)
This will need someone to monitor
it, keep the defense net
operational...
(to Rembrandt)
I've always been alone... but now
I'll be of some use.

Rembrandt looks into his eyes... then nods.

74 MAGGIE

74

sidles up to Steven. They look at each other a long beat.

MAGGIE

I never got to say goodbye...

She hugs him hard. They break the clinch, Steven still holding her shoulders. He indicates Quinn.

STEVEN

He's got brains and guts... I like
him. He's just the sort of man I'd
want you to choose, if something
happened to me.

She starts to protest, not wanting to hurt him. But he stops her, says gently:

CONTINUED

74 CONTINUED

74

STEVEN
It's okay, Maggie... You went on
with your life, that's what the
living do...

He kisses her cheek, gentle.

STEVEN
Just be happy.

She nods, tears in her eyes, then looks over at Quinn.
Ready.

75 FAVORING QUINN

75

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

KALDEEN
Safe journey.

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

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

DISSOLVE TO

76 EXT. CHANDLER ZEPPELIN - DAY (D2)

76

Flying through rolling clouds, pure beauty.

COLIN (O.S.)
Not home yet...

77 INT. CHANDLER HOTEL/ZEPPELIN - BAR - DAY

77

Maggie, Rembrandt, Quinn and Colin sit looking out the big
picture window, drinks by their side, watching the clouds
roll by.

COLIN
But there's room to breathe...

78 ON MAGGIE AND REMBRANDT

78

Rembrandt gazes out, expression melancholy.

REMBRANDT
Blue skies, white clouds...

CONTINUED

78 CONTINUED

78

MAGGIE

What are you thinking about?

REMBRANDT

Lost friends...

She nods, gives a sad smile.

MAGGIE

Yeah...

She puts an arm around him. We PUSH past them, until the clouds and blue sky FILL FRAME, as we...

FADE OUT

THE END