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"SLIDECAGE"

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SLIDERS

"Slidecage"

FADE IN

1
THRU
2

OMITTED

1
THRU
2

2A INT/EXT. HOTEL DECK - DAY - ON FERNS AND GREENERY (D1)
moving.

2A

REMBRANDT (O.S.)
Man, this is the life.

Arrive:

2B ON REMMY AND MAGGIE

2B

Soft music is playing. Remmy is lying on a massage table under a towel, getting worked over by a beautiful masseuse. Maggie is sitting in a beach chair next to the table, wearing a bikini, holding a reflector under her chin to concentrate the rays. Remmy just groans as the masseuse works. After a moment, a muscular young man in shorts brings Maggie a drink on a tray. She takes it, he starts away.

No. MAGGIE

The waiter stops and turns back to her.

MAGGIE
I want you to stay here while I drink this.

The waiter reacts with a shrug.

MAGGIE
Turn a little to your right.

The waiter turns to his right so Maggie can see his butt.

MAGGIE
That's better.

She sips the drink.

REMBRANDT
A cryin' shame to have to leave this place.

CONTINUED

2B CONTINUED

2B

MAGGIE

It does seem ideal. A world where good tans and massages are compulsory.

Maggie finishes her drink, nods to the waiter, who exits.

QUINN (O.S.)

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

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

REMBRANDT

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

COLIN

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

QUINN

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

MAGGIE

Hey, how about you geniuses take a break, get the kinks out?

QUINN

You're loose enough for the rest of us.
(holds up the timer)
Two minutes thirty. Everyone out of the pool.

Maggie and Rembrandt grumble. Rembrandt tips his masseuse, who exits. He and Maggie go off behind two changing screens, their heads visible above them as they change.

REMBRANDT

So what do you think it'll be this time? Polar ice world? Talking dog world?

QUINN

For once, I can tell you.
(excitedly, off Colin)
We're going home.

CONTINUED

2B CONTINUED 2

2B

Rembrandt and Maggie are stunned.

REMBRANDT
You're kidding.

MAGGIE
You said the data from the
micro-dots your parents left you
was all scrambled.

QUINN
I thought Colin's micro-dot was
damaged.
(shakes his head)
Turns out it was designed that way
to stop other folks from accessing
the coordinates.

Rembrandt and Maggie emerge, fully dressed.

REMBRANDT
'Folks' like the Kromaggs.

QUINN
Yeah. But I discovered a hidden
de-encryption program keyed to our
specific DNA... and there she is.

The rows of numbers on the laptop's screen fall away to
reveal a simple line of numbers. Everyone's jazzed.

REMBRANDT
Finding out how they beat the
Kromaggs will be worth the whole
price of admission.

MAGGIE
Home to meet the parents...

QUINN
Our parents, bro. Like the sound
of that?

COLIN
Yes.

Quinn hands him the timer, smiles.

QUINN
Then hit it.

Quinn stashes the computer in a knapsack as Colin pushes the
button. The timer SHOOTs OUT A BEAM. Our guys run O.S.,
Quinn with the knapsack, and jump through the O.S. VORTEX.

3 INT. LABYRINTH - MAGNETIC CORRIDOR - NIGHT (N1) 3(X)

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

COLIN
This isn't quite what I was expecting.

REMBRANDT
Hello! Hey! Where's the welcome wagon?

MAGGIE
Let's just find the exit.

They walk along, casting about. Rembrandt moves O.S. (X)

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
That doesn't tell us where we are. (X)

REMBRANDT (O.S.)
(bleak)
We're a long way from home. (X)

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

4 THEIR POINT OF VIEW - OUT THE WINDOW 4

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

5 OUR GUYS 5

peer out worriedly, as we...

FADE OUT

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN

- 6 OMITTED 6(X)
- 6A INT. LABYRINTH - MAGNETIC CORRIDOR - ON THE WINDOW - NIGHT 6A(X)
The same bizarre scene as before.
- 7 ON QUINN, REMBRANDT, COLIN AND MAGGIE 7
looking out at the scene with disquiet. Maggie turns to
Quinn.

MAGGIE
You're sure you got the coordinates
right?

QUINN
Positive.

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

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

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

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

COLIN
Because you usually do.

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

MAGGIE
So if it's home sweet home, we'll
stick around. If not, we'll slide
out.

(to Colin)
How long we got on the universal
remote?

COLIN
The --? Oh.

CONTINUED

7 CONTINUED

7

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

MAGGIE
You don't know.

QUINN
Yes, that's right.

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

MICHAEL MALLORY (O.S.)
Excuse me. Over here, please.

Surprised, they turn in the direction of the sound.

QUINN
I know that voice.

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

MICHAEL MALLORY (O.S.)
This way. There's nothing to be afraid of.

(X)

They move off toward:

(X)

8 INT. ARRIVAL AREA - NIGHT

8(X)

Quinn, Colin, Maggie and Rembrandt enter.

(X)

MICHAEL MALLORY (O.S.)
Good.

As soon as they're all in:

(X)

(X)

CONTINUED

8 CONTINUED

8

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.

(X)

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

QUINN
Colin, it's our --

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

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

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

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

MAGGIE
Slidecage?

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

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

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

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

REMBRANDT
Hah! Always worked with my old TV.

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

CONTINUED

8 CONTINUED 2

8

MICHAEL MALLORY

(over the above)

-- unfortunately cannot return you,
as it would pose a security risk.
If you are a friend rather than an
enemy, I'm truly sorry.

QUINN

(to Rembrandt and Maggie)

Sh.

MICHAEL MALLORY

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

The screen GOES BLANK.

(X)

MAGGIE

The rest of our lives?

QUINN

It's a perfect system to protect
their world, make sure the Kromaggs
can't invade. Anyone who tries to
slide there ends up here instead.

(off the timer)

They must have some kind of damping
field to render this inoperable.

REMBRANDT

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

COLIN

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

QUINN

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

REMBRANDT

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

COLIN

So what do we do now?

(X)

CONTINUED

8 CONTINUED 3

8

QUINN

What we always do. Beat the odds.

They walk further along, scoping out the area.

MAGGIE

Place is a real labyrinth.

QUINN

All we need is a Minotaur.

(turns to Colin)

It's a beast with the head of a --

COLIN

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

REMBRANDT

Yeah, but not before one hell of a
fight.

9
THRU OMITTED
10

9
THRU
10

11 POINT OF VIEW FROM VENT - ON MAGGIE 11

An UNSEEN PERSON is watching her. We HEAR the O.S. observer's breathing. Maggie is unaware of him. Just then, there's a CRASHING and SHOUTS of a brawl drawing near. (X) (X) (X)

12 THRU 14 OMITTED 12 THRU 14

(X)

15 WIDE 15

Hearing the RIOT coming their way, Quinn calls to the others:

QUINN

Get down!

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

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

QUINN

Let's see what the rules are.

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

QUINN

Okay, now we know.

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

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

CONTINUED

- 15 CONTINUED 15
In answer, the door slides SHUT, closing off our guys from Rembrandt and the Kromaggs.
QUINN
Rembrandt!
- 16 DOWN THE WAY 16(X)
Unseen by them, Darla hesitates, watching them, then hurries off after her fellows.
- 17 QUINN 17
tries to force the door. No use. He shakes his head to the others. Rembrandt is gone.
- 18 INT. MAGNETIC CORRIDOR - NIGHT 18(X)
Quinn, Maggie and Colin are hurrying in the opposite direction. Maggie points at a wet footprint.
MAGGIE
There's another one.
COLIN
You think these people will help us?
QUINN
I don't know, but if they've at least got some kind of map --
They turn a corner, spy a MAN darting away.
QUINN
Hold it, we're friends!
They run after him, into:
- 19 INT. TERMINUS OF MAGNETIC CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS 19(X)
Colin, Maggie and Quinn rush in -- then stop as they realize they're surrounded by a motley group of MEN and WOMEN. LUTHER, the man they chased, strides up to Quinn. (X)
LUTHER
I know my friends. I don't know you.
He slugs Quinn, who doubles over. Maggie and Colin try to come to Quinn's aid, but they're grabbed and held fast. Luther is about to hit Quinn again when a COMMANDING VOICE BOOMS OUT:
JANIE
Luther, hold up there.

CONTINUED

ACT TWO

FADE IN

21 INT. LABYRINTH - TERMINUS OF MAGNETIC CORRIDOR - NIGHT - 21(X)
MOMENTS LATER

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

JANIE
(off Colin)
Lock him down. Computer room.

COLIN
I'm not leaving my brother!

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

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

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

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

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

QUINN
Maggie!

He scrambles for the airlock.

JANIE
She's gone, son, to freedom.

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

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

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

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

CONTINUED

21 CONTINUED

21

JANIE
The Kromaggs give us no choice,
son.

CONTINUED

32 INT. TERMINAL ROOM - NIGHT

32

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

QUINN

Got it.

(off Colin's
nervousness)

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

COLIN

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

QUINN

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

COLIN

No, but we'd better get to it.

Quinn nods. They take several quick, deep breaths, then
hold it. Quinn keys a command.

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

33 INT. CONDUIT - NIGHT

33

SWIRLING TOXIC ATMOSPHERE within. We MOVE WITH QUINN AND
COLIN in the tight, hellish space. Colin starts to falter,
Quinn grabs him, pulls him along, determined. But they seem
to be running out of steam, losing the battle. The MIST
GROWS THICKER until they're lost from sight.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN

34 OMITTED 34 (X)

35 INT. LABYRINTH - CORRIDOR - NIGHT 35 (X)

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

As they start to recover, Quinn turns to Colin.

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

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

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

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

QUINN
Assuming we don't die of old age
first.
(off the corridors)
You call it.

Colin considers, picks one.

COLIN
That one.

QUINN
Why that one?

COLIN
I like how it's decorated.

Quinn smiles.

QUINN
There's hope for you yet.

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

COLIN
Remember, there are Minotaurs.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED 3

39

THOMAS

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

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

THOMAS

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

(beat)

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

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

MAGGIE

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

He looks at her and a change comes over him.

40 OMITTED

40(X)

40A INT. ARRIVAL AREA - NIGHT

40A(X)

Quinn and Colin move cautiously along.

QUINN

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

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

QUINN

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

COLIN

(smiles)

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

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

CONTINUED

40A CONTINUED

40A

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

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

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

MAGGIE
In here!

Quinn is thunderstruck to see her.

QUINN
Maggie. Oh, God.

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

THOMAS
Get in. Quickly!

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

41 INT. TERMINUS OF MAGNETIC CORRIDOR - NIGHT

41(X)

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

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

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

THOMAS
Unfortunately, no.

42 ON MAGGIE AND THOMAS

42

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

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

He gives her a small smile.

CONTINUED

77 CONTINUED

77

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

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

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

78 ON THOMAS AND KALDEEN

78

THOMAS
You ever read 'Valley of the
Dolls'?

DISSOLVE TO

79 OMITTED

79 (X)

79A INT./EXT. HOTEL DECK - DAY - ON FERNS AND GREENERY (D2)

79A (X)

(X)

COLIN (O.S.)
Not home yet.

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

(X)

COLIN
But there's room to breathe.

80 ON MAGGIE AND QUINN

80

Quinn's gazing off thoughtfully.

MAGGIE
Penny for your thoughts.

QUINN
Not the Minotaur.

MAGGIE
Okay, a buck for the rest.

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

CONTINUED

80 CONTINUED

80

MAGGIE

What are you saying?

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

QUINN

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

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

QUINN

And just maybe I've found my home.

She smiles at a world of possibility.

81 FAVORING REMBRANDT

81

Looking out at the beautiful day, thinking of Kaldeen.

REMBRANDT

Blue skies, green trees.

A BEAUTY brings a tray of ice tea. Each of our guys takes
a glass. The Beauty moves out of shot. Rembrandt proposes
a toast. (X)

REMBRANDT

Here's to distant friends.

THE OTHERS

Distant friends.

They CLINK GLASSES, as we...

FADE OUT

THE END