SLIDERS: ULTIMATUM #2

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PLOT

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EXT. SAN FRANCISCO PARK, NIGHT. A huge, several story cross burns bright, the image illuminated further by huge showbiz-style spotlights that dance around the icon. At its base is a stage, where an intense BROTHER MILTON preaches to the CROWD who have gathered to hear the good word of the Lord, and the promise of the Rapture. The CROWD raises their hands in "Hallelujah!" and drop to their knees in prayer.

In the extreme foreground are our SLIDERS - QUINN, WADE, REMBRANDT and ARTURO. They're joined by this Earth's Arturo, distinguished from his double by his more ragtag outfit and altogether grubbier appearance. All of them look quite severe and troubled by this misguided religious display.

PAGES 2 THROUGH 5

CLOSE UP ON MILTON, fiercely dedicated to the Lord, hands clenched as he paints a word-picture of the life ahead with the Creator.

ANGLE ON THE CROWD, as a dozen or so MEN and WOMEN suddenly dissolve away in angelic blue light. The rest of the crowd is watching them go with wonder and envy. (Use the effect you created in issue #1, Bernard.)

ANGLE ON THE SLIDERS, mouths set in grim lines as they consider the real cause for this "call" back to God; MILTON'S interdimensional experiments with this Earth's Quinn are breaking down the interdimensional walls. REMBRANDT looks especially troubled.

CLOSE ON REMBRANDT AND QUINN, the young physicist putting a hand on the distraught singer's shoulder. REM is relating what the sliding machine he saw in the basement of the Transamerica Pyramid Temple.

ANGLE ON MILTON, arms wide, face impassioned as he continues his sermon. Behind him and slightly to the side we see this Earth's QUINN (Q2, to save my fingers!). He is painfully gaunt, and dressed like a monk, having gone so far as to even shave his head in a "monk's cut" (Tonsure). There's a dangerous fanatic's gleam in his eyes. and not a hint of humor or compassion.

ANGLE ON REMBRANDT AND WADE, REM still kicking himself over being taken in so easily. WADE'S supportive, telling him that faith is nothing to be ashamed of.

ANGLE ON THE TWO ARTURO'S: "our" ARTURO is impatient, his double (A2) also wants to get a move on, but is excited that these travelers have ended his being cut off from society. Both theorists urge the others to come with them and plan a way to reverse the terror MILTON and Q2 have unleashed.

CUT TO: BURGER POPE, a fast food burger joint keyed into this world's religious fixation. It looks like a Burger King (natch) but it says "Burger Pope" across the roof, instead. There's a huge revolving "pope's hat" on the tall signpost outside, with a neon sign that reads, "Eight billion served, 2 billion saved!"

INT. BURGER POPE, where we see our quintet moving away from the food counter carrying trays of this Earth's fast food fare. The

burgers are on buns that look like oversized holy wafers, and the straws are made to look like crucifixes, with little Jesus figures hanging off. Our SLIDERS are looking down at their food uncomfortably, wondering if this is sacrilegious. "Be that as it may," A2 says, popping a fry in his mouth. "The Jonah and Whaler sandwich is excellent!"

The group moves past a YOUNG WOMAN who's in the process of scratching off a game card with the edge of a coin. Directly behind her is a poster featuring a "cartoonish" POPE (the BURGER POPE) holding a golden chalice with both hands. It's overflowing with holy wafers and gold coins. The copy on the poster reads, "Play PENNIES FROM HEAVEN and all your prayers may be answered!"

FOCUS ON THE WOMAN now as she starts jumping up and down, waving the ticket! "I won! It's the 2 million dollar card! I won!"

The blue angelic light warps over and through the woman, dissolving her away in mid-celebration; the winning ticket falls from her disappearing hand.

REM AND WADE, now seated at a table. They pause in biting into the food to look over toward where the woman's just vanished, both of these more "artistic" types introspective and considering how easy it is to believe what is happening is some order of miracle.

CUT TO: ANGLE ON WHERE THE WOMAN WAS as 10 other CUSTOMERS - a couple of 12 years olds, a rough looking teen, a fat man and woman, a working class guy, a few yuppies - all dogpile into each other to try and get the winning ticket.

AN ACOLYTE steps in, a gentle and matronly looking woman dressed in robes like MILTON'S, except hers are white. She holds the ticket in one hand, quietly asking the customers around her if they want earthly riches, or to be blessed by God's touch. Chagrined, the CUSTOMERS are backing away, bowing their heads, crossing themselves.

CLOSE ON THE ACOLYTE, cunning eyes darting around to make sure no one's looking as she slips the winning ticket inside her robes.

ANGLE ON OUR SLIDERS and A2, discussing this world's predicament in more detail. ARTURO and A2 sit across from each other. A2 is holding up a napkin - it's got a big pope's hat on it - and using it to represent the dimensional wall. ARTURO is using a French Fry as a pointer.

CLOSE ON ARTURO and A2 as ARTURO has poked twenty or more tiny holes in the napkin with the tip of the French fry. Making the napkin even more ragged is the spreading French fry grease, turning the thin paper slick and translucent.

CLOSE ON A TROUBLED LOOKING A2 as he gently pulls in opposite directions on the perforated napkin, the wall tearing away to nothing. "This is what is happening to my world," he says to the SLIDERS. "Won't you please help me? Won't you please help us all?"

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EXT. EST. SHOT TRANSAMERICAN PYRAMID "TEMPLE," DAY. As established last issue, this is San Francisco's famous Transamerica Pyramid with a monstrous cross grafted into its rooftop. An effective angle to get this across would be from high up slightly above the skyscraper, looking down the dizzying length.

INT. TEMPLE DRESSING ROOM: A half dozen confused and half-naked ACOLYTES - men in age from their early twenties to their mid-sixties - are looking into their empty lockers, searching for their robes.

INT. TEMPLE BASEMENT, where a long, dark flight of steel stairs lead downward. Our SLIDERS and A2 creep along the stairway, all of them dressed in Acolyte robes, explaining their getting in so deep without arousing suspicion.

The SLIDERS are at the thick steel door - bomb shelter-style - that leads to the Sliding Chamber beyond. The door is closed shut, the men trying to figure a way in. WADE has moved to a small electronics access panel to one side of the door.

CLOSE IN ON WADE, the panel deftly popped open to expose wires and circuit boards behind; she's crossing two wires to cause a spark.

PAGE 7 & 8

A cocky WADE making a big, "After you!" gesture as the massive door hisses/swings open; the chauvinistic and embarrassed men shuffle past her.

INT. SLIDING CHAMBER. As established last issue, beyond the door is a large spread of hi-tech equipment, a more refined version of QUINN'S original sliding machine. In no way refined is the huge warp of energy that spreads across the far wall of the room, a stretched and distorted rend between dimensions. We see ghostly apparitions - which we now know to be lost humans from this dimension - trapped and torn apart as they're sucked between the worlds. It's a terrible, disturbing display of energy, suggesting it's going to cut loose at anytime and consume the planet.

Our SLIDERS enter this scene, awestruck and filled with dread at the sight before them.

ANGLE ON ARTURO, directing his attention to the large sliding coil itself.; he's coldly wondering if they can adapt the machine to take them back home. Nearby, a revolted WADE is giving ARTURO a look that could kill. "Can you think about anything but yourself?" she demands, pointing toward the OFF PANEL apparitions.

QUINN checks a bank of equipment, openly sarcastic of his double's work.

QUINN'S cockiness drains a little as he checks a board filled with elaborate equations: he notes that Q2'S sliding process is significant different than his own. While QUINN branched out to many worlds, Q2's rend is to only one other dimension. And it's possible that a disruption of energy on the other side might fuse the "torn" tapestry back into one piece.

WADE at a large screen computer workstation, punching in some keys as she tries to run a built-in simulation of what MILTON and Q2 were up to.

CLOSE UP ON THE COMPUTER SCREEN, showing a computer graphic of two Earths, joined by the "bridge" of micro-sliding holes that create a vortex of energy between the linked dimensions. QUINN'S OFF PANEL VOICE (perhaps he's reflected in the screen, if it doesn't muddy the computer graphic too much) is considering the particulars of these worlds linked as they are. It might be possible to

jump to the 2nd dimension and bungie back to the first, not unlike QUINN'S original recall for his own sliding mechanism.

An uncomfortable ARTURO is holding up the timer, imploring the rest of the group to come to their senses: they have less than half a day on this Rapture world, there's no sense in risking their necks and chances of getting home on this risky slide within a slide.

QUINN’s giving the professor an “enough of your attitude!” look as the young physicist throws a big electrical switch - leading to a flaring portal of energy opening in the center of the lab: a full scale sliding tunnel, tinged with purple.

The SLIDERS jump into the breach, A2 most enthusiastic about both the adventure and the chance to save his world. Bringing up the rear is a dark and brooding ARTURO, not happy about this detour at all.

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Between dimensions, the SLIDERS careen down the colorful plasma corridor. A2's eyes are wide and amazed as he tumbles head over heels; REM, WADE, AND QUINN look determined as they whirl about each other; ARTURO has his eyes knit shut, his hands pressed to the side of his head, the expression of a man who has simply HAD ENOUGH.

CUT TO: TEMPLE, NIGHT. A dark, dank dungeon like surrounding. The walls are roughed out stone, with thick, smoky torches set in at odd angles. Bloody streaks stain the rock, and lengths of chain and hooks hang down from above. At the center of the floor is a large demonic pentagram (remember, Bernard, the Satanic religion uses the symbol of the inverted pentagram, point-side-down!), dumping our unsuspecting SLIDERS right down on top of it.

This is SATAN EARTH, a dimension literally gone to the devil. Here, Satanism and its trappings are celebrated as commonly and casually as we celebrate the Fourth of July. And as fervently as the Rapture world has embraced God, this world has embraced the Devil. The world's trappings are Gothic, hellish, decadent, its inhabitants equal parts salacious, sullen and savage.

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A dark and fearsome image of our four SLIDERS and A2 begin staggering to their feet in the center of the evil pentagram. Surrounding them are a dozen SATANISTS in hooded robes, gathered about the pentagram in a loose circle. Several faces are visible - cruel and unclean - but many are hidden in shadow beneath the cowls of the robes. Each of the dark worshippers brandishes a long and wicked looking ceremonial dagger. One of the SATANISTS has whipped back his hood to reveal a wild-haired, wild-bearded Rasputin-like character; he's pointing his knife towards the dazed, pale SLIDERS and declaring them demons raised from the pit.

PAGES 11 THROUGH 13:

"RASPUTIN" roughly grabs a seriously scared REMBRANDT, the big Satanists claiming the singer as a prize.

WADE swings a large, crude stone urn (in the shape of a goat's head) clobbering RASPUTIN and freeing REM.

QUINN grabs a tall and crudely made wrought-iron candle-stand, dripping with wax and grue. He swings it in a wide circle to drive the Satanists away from him and his friends, wax and flicks of flame flying out from the candles as they break free.

The SLIDERS and A-2 breaks out of the ritual circle, headed for a rough-stone corridor that leads out of the chambers -

- but ARTURO is grabbed from behind by the bloodied RASPUTIN and several other muscled , hooded SATANISTS.

Part way down the stone corridor, QUINN spins about as he realizes the professor's been taken.

CUT TO: THE SLIDER'S POV, as a dozen hooded SATANISTS charge in pursuit. Under their hoods, vicious eyes sparkle; in their hands, crude and deadly ritual blades gleam.

A-2 pulls QUINN along, this professor using a mix of reason and compassion ("You can't save him if you're dead!") to urge QUINN along.

CUT TO: ARTURO held tight by a large SATANIST on each arm. The professor is struggling , letting loose the bluster...but he's also pale and scared. A physically smaller SATANIST is pushing the snarling RASPUTIN to one side...

...the smaller SATANIST sweeping back her hood to reveal herself to be this world's WADE (SORCERESS-WADE). Her hair is a bit longer and in a "radical" cut, trendy and more than a bit primal. She's smiling coldly, her only emotion cunning and a bit of seduction as she reaches up to rake her long nails along the shocked professor's cheek in a harsh caress.

EXT. ALLEY, dark and steamy, twisting and cluttered with debris. The dozen SATANISTS mill about, scoping for the escaped SLIDERS. Grumbling, blades to their sides, they're about to give up the hunt.

Behind them, at the end of the alley, we can see the back of a large tractor trailer truck.

ANGLE ON THE BACK OF THE TRUCK, looking in through the just open doors. Inside are stacked and stowed a variety of metal cauldrons, of all colors and designs: some are traditional black iron, others are glittering with sequins, others painted like rainbows. We see our SLIDERS (and A2) just peeking out from inside a particularly large cauldron.

The SLIDERS slip out of the back of the truck, and we can see that along the side of the parked truck is painted, "Cauldrons, Unlimited! For stew or brew!" There's a picture of a "cartoony" SORCERESS stirring a big cauldron with an oversized spoon. The SLIDERS are looking around at their surroundings - shadowy, steamy - unease on their faces. "What the hell is this places?" REM wants to know.

PAGE 14 - SPLASH

"I think that about sums it up," A2 remarks as we get a big, "WIDE ANGLE" shot of the street and all its vile debauchery. Our SLIDERS are small figures down in one corner of the image, as the rest of the street stretches away from them. It's a vision of a world where Satanism has been embraced, and the prime directive of man has become "Do what thou will!"

Prostitutes openly solicit business dressed in "demonic" fashions (fake horns and tails). Other Satanists, dressed in stylish variations of ritual robes, smash in windows of cars and stores to take what they want. Open fires burn in corners, sending up clouds of soot and foul stench. Down one side of the street, cackling group of young KIDS (about 12 years old) chase a group of OLD TIMERS, the kids waving hockey sticks and firing off guns into the air.

Steam jets from vents in the street, providing hissing ambiance, and finishing off that gone-to-hell feel.

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The shocked SLIDERS pass in front of a fast food restaurant: McDevil's, the sign out front of the McDonald's riff are three end points of a down-turned pitchfork, the handle of the implement stabbing up from the tines and into the sky.

The SLIDERS stop in front of a record store ("Hell's Bells") where dangling CDs emblazoned with pentagrams hang in a window display. There's a big poster of this Earth's Rembrandt "Howling Man" Brown, an Ozzy Osbourne style performer with a wild-eyed Little Richard look, wearing Alice Cooper fright makeup and nothing more than a codpiece. The other SLIDERS are taken aback at the image, but REM is wondering about the guy's audience size.

Looking over the SLIDERS' shoulders as they turn to face a small park (dead grass, leaf-less, gnarled trees, packs of wild dogs.) At the front of the park there is a statue of ANTON LAVEY, bald and intense, sporting a goatee and a pentagram pendant, his lips caught between a smile and a sneer...sculpted flames lick up around his legs. A large plaque to the side of the statue reads, "Anton Lavey, glorious leader of the world coven." Beneath that, "Do what thou will is the only law!"

ANGLE ON THE SLIDERS, all disturbed as WADE id's the man from their home world, where Anton Lavey is the head of the Church of Satan.

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INT. SORCERESS-WADE'S INNER SANCTUM, a dungeon-esque room of rough stone, but also decorated with rich velvet hangings, plush sofas, bowls of delicacies. Along the wall are several basketball-sized, geode style crystals, polished and set in elaborate metal fittings. The crystals glow with gentle, vaporous blue energy.

We open on a CLOSE UP OF A TENSE AND HUMILIATED ARTURO, naked except for a leather loincloth and too-small leather vest. He wears a studded leather collar, and chains bind his hands and feet.

CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL THE ROOM, as well as SORCERESS-WADE (WW). She's shed her ritual robe to reveal a sexy dominatrix outfit. Around her neck is a small pendant fashioned from one of the geode stones, also glowing with soft blue-light. She's circling around the embarrassed and scared ARTURO, the coldly smiling woman flicking a small riding crop with one hand. Her other hand is holding up a big chunk of meat on a bone. WW taking a big, sensuous bite, reveling in the juices, uncaring to the mess.

She waves the meat in front of ARTURO'S face; it's been a while since he's eaten, he's starving. He leans forward to take the bite she offers -

- and his teeth snap on nothing as she jerks it away from him, laughing. "You're hungry for something more than this," WW coos. "I can tell." She rides ARTURO verbally, mocking his humiliating position, wanting him to admit who's put him here...and who he harbors resentment against.

CLOSE ON A BROODING ARTURO, head tilted down, looking up from under heavily lidded eyes. "Quinn Mallory put me here..." he murmurs, referring to the original sliding experiment.

WW smiles, using one long nail to pick at a string of meat in her teeth. "Now we're getting somewhere..."

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INT. LIBRARY, filled with cobwebs, flickering lights, log shadows and huge, evil tomes bound in cracked leather...or worse. That's not to say Satanist don't have a use for technology: we open on a CLOSE UP of a microfilm viewer, projecting a grainy front page of a newspaper ("The Devil's Advocate"); there's a picture of a smiling BOB DOLE, giving a big "devil's horn" hands sign (pinky and thumb pointed up), the headline reading, "Majority Disciple Bob Dole Applauds Hollywood Debauchery!" OFF PANEL, WADE is giving a run down on this world's status quo.

CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal WADE seated at the microfilm viewer, the other SLIDERS (A2 subbing for ARTURO) grouped around, They're moodily underlit by the light from the unit.

At the checkout desk, a bull-muscled, scar faced male LIBRARIAN is facing off with a spinstery OLD CRONE as she heads off with a thick book of spells. "Hey, you didn't check that out!" "To hell with that," the CRONE is cackling. "I'm stealing it!" "Do what thou will!" the LIBRARIAN is firing back.

Back on the microfilm viewer, and we see another front page. This one features the entrance to an amusement park ("Satan's Kingdom"), the gate in the shape of a grinning devil's mouth. A smirking ANTON LAVEY, dressed in ceremonial robes, is in the picture; he's using a curved dagger to cut the opening day ribbon that stretches across the mouth. The headline reads, "Satan's Kingdom Here On Earth! LaVey's Folly Opens To Record Crowds!" WADE'S OFF-PANEL V.O. explains that on this world, Satanism and its doctrine of indulgence was an accepted religion, a legitimate alternative to "mainstream" faiths.

Another front page, this photo showing a group of robed SATANISTS around a pentagram, candles burning at the point. Above the circle are distorted and ghostly human figures, twisted out of shape and howling in agony. The headline reads, "Satanist Sensation Continues To Build! Religious Leaders Conjure Entities From Beyond! "No Faith...Just Results!" WADE explains that the religion exploded as Satanic rituals began to produce documentable phenomena, spiritual apparitions that left the participants charged with feelings of power.

ANGLE ON THE GRIM SLIDERS, soaking in WADE'S review. Together, they realize the "apparitions" for the phase-distorted abductees from the Rapture world. It's the last of their life essence that's providing the "charge" to the worshippers of this world.

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INT. SORCERESS-WADE'S CHAMBER. She's holding up the pendant around her neck, dangling the geode glowing with blue energy. She looks very intense as she explains the power the Satanists have tapped into. An ultimate high, a thing of power that gives you the confidence to achieve whatever you want...and the right to indulge that ability.

CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal ARTURO, now dressed in a Satanist robe, sitting across from WW at a big table filled with rich foods. A SLAVE - a well muscled stud dressed in skimpy leather items - is holding up a goblet of wine for WW to sip.

She pushes the wine aside to passionately tongue and grope the SLAVE -

- before slapping him aside and sending him off.

SORCERESS-WADE at ARTURO'S side, the woman holding up another pendant. Similar to hers, it is slightly more "masculine" in design, WW recognizes ARTURO'S resentment, and sees a dark seed that he'll that she'll get a kick out of cultivating. ARTURO has a cunning in his own eyes as he watches the dangling pendant, and listens to WW's promise that the Satanist way (which doesn't require any pendant of power, but it's a nice visual focus!), "makes you feel alive!"

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EXT. STREET, steamy and gritty and thick with shadow. The SLIDERS are running, an intense and excited A2 leading the way. He carries a thick sheaf of papers in his hand, covered in complex formulae. The other SLIDERS are telling him he's crazy for the plan he's got in mind.

CLOSE ON A2, brandishing the formulae-covered papers as he runs, telling his new friends this is the way to save his world...and this one...from being undone by the breakdown of the dimensional walls.

The SLIDERS come to a thick, wooden door set back in smoky alley. There's a HUGE muscled SATANIST guarding the door, his robe open to expose his chest. Metal studs and hoops are pierced through all parts of his face, his nipples, his fingers. He's got an upside down cross scarred into his forehead, and he's not letting our group past.

REMBRANDT wants off of this world, and he's got no patience. The singer head butts the big SATANIST in the gut, the devil worshipper keeling over as REM reminds him, "Do What Thou Will!"

The SLIDERS race in through the door as the writhing SATANIST waves them by from his position sprawled in the alley. "Hail Satan!" he croaks weakly.

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INT. STONE CORRIDOR, similar to the one the SLIDERS escaped from earlier. WADE and REM are crowding QUINN, demanding to know the layman's explanation for what A2's planning.

A dismayed QUINN holds up a torn scrap of the professor's formula. In addition to complex math, there's a diagram showing several arrows running from left to right through a crosshatched mesh. (The rapture-earth's abductee sucked through the multi-hole gateway.) On the right side of the mesh is a large X. As several of the arrows hit the X, they curve back toward the mesh to end in a universal naught symbol (slash through a circle.)

QUINN explains that the professor's theory is that these two Earths are strongly linked. The "ritual" the Satanists use is not magic (although they think it is) but a crude way of collecting energy that's coming through the wall between worlds. Up until now, all that's come through the gate has been the distorted energy forms of the lost rapture earth inhabitants. He (A2) is the first corporeal visitor. It's conceivable (in psuedo-science speak) that he can act as a boomerang, his very body a "lens" that ricochets the phase-energy back to the tattered wall and "melt" it back into one piece. It's also unlikely he'll survive the process.

As the SLIDERS and A2 try to find their way in the darkness, REM and WADE voice their opposition to the idea for A2's sake. "And why should we expect these self-serving s.o.b.'s to help us anyway?" REM wants to know.

ANGLE ON A SHADOWY ARTURO, coming out of the darkness. He's back in his suit, and is slightly chilling as he says, "For the oldest reason, Mr. Brown. Power."

The SLIDERS and A2 are delighted to see the PROFESSOR. He is cordial, but cool, as he explains that the Satanists can be convinced to help them if they feel they will benefit from the ritual. The feedback from the re-fusing of the wall will be a considerable boon to the Satanist involved.

SORCERESS-WADE steps out from the shadows behind ARTURO, the woman smiling and happy to be that Satanist.

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INT. RITUAL CHAMBER. Similar in style to the one we saw earlier, but here the pentagram is ringed by several boulder-sized geodes, all pulsing with blue power. A2 is lying on a stone altar, tense but committed to the course of action. QUINN, ARTURO, and REM are praising his courage, as WADE faces off with her counterpart.

WADE and SORCERESS-WADE face off, WW smiling and gesturing at her body, visible beneath the still open robe she's just put on. "See something you like, honey?" WADE only shakes her head, condemning her double's power trip.

WIDE SHOT ON THE RITUAL CHAMBER as several distorted ghostly figures swirl into existence above the pentagram, more remnants of the Rapture Earth's abductees. Everyone looks up in anticipation.

Still a wide shot, as we see the ghostly figures searing down into the geodes, and from there firing as focused beams into the jittering A2.

ANGLE ON OUR SLIDERS, QUINN firing the timer beam and opening a portal. The clock from the rapture world is up. they're ready to slide, WADE, REM, and ARTURO already diving into the portal.

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CLOSE ON A2, blue energy infuses his body. He's literally dissolving away under the forces searing through him, but as it's going toward saving his world his expression is as if he has seen the rapture.

CUT TO: The SLIDER LAB on the Rapture Earth. BROTHER MILTON is pounding his fists against the wall where the dimensional tears were earlier, the zealot seeing that the rapture has come to an end. Q2 is behind him, dropped to his knees and praying/wailing his own grief.

CUT TO: RITUAL CHAMBER, where SORCERESS-WADE is dropping to her knees, raising one hand in a tortured "Wicked Witch of the West" pose. She's shot through with waves of blue energy, and it's dissolving her away. There's such a thing as too much power, and it's in the form of too much feedback that's pulling her apart. "I'm melting..." she howls.

CUT TO: EXT. PARK. A new earth, green and seemingly peaceful. The SLIDERS are standing in front of a portal as it spirals away. Each of them look understandably worn by the ordeal, but also invigorated by having experienced the self-sacrifice of A2. "I hope you've learned something, professor!" WADE chides, referring to ARTURO'S too often self-aggrandizing and me-me-me tirades.

ANGLE ON A SMILING ARTURO, admitting he has indeed learned a great deal. His hand is up to his chest, as if he's adjusting his vest. But just underneath his shirt we can see the bulge and light blue glow of the pendant he was offered by SORCERESS-WADE.

Continuity Cop Alert: This thematically sets up darker stuff for ARTURO in "The Darkest Hour" but it's not the pendant "making" him darker in nature. It's just a symbol, for the most part, of his embracing his needs ("Do What Thou Will!") Although the flicker of dimensional energy the pendant holds might *be something we play with later. Gotta figure that out yet.*