

Prod. # 70405

SLIDERS

"THE WEAKER SEX"

Written

by

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&

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CAST LIST

ARTURO
QUINN
REMBRANDT
WADE WELLES

BERNIE
PRESIDENT CLINTON
ROSS
LOIS
HOWIE
PETE
SERENA (BEAUTIFUL WOMAN)
KEN
GLENN
ED BRAXTON
AGENT COPELAND

SET LIST

EXTERIORS:

PARK - NEWSPAPER STAND
ENTRANCE TO GOLDEN GATE PARK
FRANKLIN STREET
SAN FRANCISCO SKYSCRAPER
SUPERMARKET
BEACH

INTERIORS:

ELEVATOR
ROSS CAMPAIGN HQ
 /WAITING AREA
ROOM - MOTEL 12
"THE SMETTERLING" RESTAURANT
SERENA'S APARTMENT
 /BEDROOM
 /KITCHEN
 /FRONT HALLWAY
 /LIVING ROOM
ARTURO'S CAMPAIGN WAR ROOM
ARTURO'S CAMPAIGN HQ
MAKE-UP ROOM - TV STUDIO
STUDIO STAGE
BACKSTAGE - TV STUDIO

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. THE VOID - POV SHOT 1

as we race through the now familiar psychedelic tunnel,
heading for ...

2 EXT. ENTRANCE TO GOLDEN GATE PARK - DAY - THE SLIDERS 2

land on a grassy slope and tumble down the hill, coming to a
stop in a tangled heap. They stand and brush themselves
off...

QUINN

(checking timer)

Well, wherever we are, it's roughly
seven weeks to the next window.

REMBRANDT

Man, I'm getting awful tired of
landing on my butt.

(to Quinn)

Can't you do something about that?

QUINN

(grinning, semi-serious)

You know I can't. I think you ask
just to annoy me a little.

REMBRANDT

No, actually it's to annoy you
alot. Little by little, I'm
gettin' even with ya Q-ball - for
dragging me into this cosmic mess.

WADE

Well... maybe our journey's at an
end.

REMBRANDT

(cautious, but hopeful)

How's that?

WADE

Look around.

They all do as she says, scoping out what seems to be good
old Golden Gate Park. No killer wasps or giant sharks here,
just a few park-goers with kids and dogs.

QUINN

This all looks real familiar.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

2

WADE

Of course it does! I'll bet you've passed through here a dozen times!

REMBRANDT

(getting excited)

You really think we're home? How can we be sure?

WADE

Let's take it one step at a time.
(thoughtful)
Seems to me there should be a little snack bar called Bernie's, just over that hill.

CUT TO:

3 EXT. PARK/JUST OVER THE HILL - DAY - THE SLIDERS

3

react joyously to the sight of Bernie's, a quaint little snackbar nestled in a corner of the park.

ARTURO

Yes... yes I know this place! If this is home, they'll be selling the best hot pretzels in the world.

They approach enthusiastically - sure enough, huge hot pretzels are being warmed in a glass hotbox. Bernie, the colorful little proprietor, is absently watching a TV set, where some kind of political speech is about to take place.

Arturo taps the glass where the pretzels are being warmed,

ARTURO (CONT'D)

This is a good sign, a very good sign. Those pretzels look just as they should.

WADE

Fine, let's keep moving - we can head downtown and see if we're really home.

ARTURO

Don't be so hasty, Miss Welles. I say a taste test would be appropriate at this juncture. My discriminating palate can inform us instantly, as to whether these pretzels are identical to the ones back home.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

WADE

I'm not sure that would prove anything!

ARTURO

Perhaps not, but I'm famished and I want one!

The pretzels cost a dollar fifty. Arturo is hurriedly rummaging through his pockets, but he's only able to dredge up 62 cents.

ARTURO

Someone lend me a buck.

QUINN

Don't look at me. I'm flat broke.

REMBRANDT

(emptying pocket)
I got 31 cents.

Arturo is exasperated. He turns to Wade...

WADE

I've got a five dollar bill.

ARTURO

Splendid. Hand it over.

WADE

It's all we've got. What if we're not home?

(coy grin)

I'm not sure we should be wasting it on a pretzel.

ARTURO

WASTING IT?! I haven't eaten since yesterday!

REMBRANDT

None of us have. Why should you get to have a pretzel? I want a pretzel just as much as you!

ARTURO

Oh, this is ridiculous!

He looks at the pretzels lovingly - he wants one bad.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Fine! We'll split it two ways.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED: 2

3

QUINN

Three ways.

WADE

Four ways.

Arturo is becoming decidedly grouchy as we CUT TO:

the dissatisfied Professor being given his 1/4th of a hot pretzel. He eats it in tiny bites, relishing the moment...

WADE

Well?

ARTURO

(irritable)

It would help to have a larger sample to be certain - but I'm reasonably sure this is identical to the pretzels back home.

Wade and Rembrandt happily take a moment to celebrate.

BERNIE

Would you folks mind keepin' it down? The President's about to speak.

The Sliders exchange looks - this presents a real acid test.

WADE

You mean... President Clinton?

BERNIE

Of course I mean Clinton. Who else?

Wade and Rembrandt hug in joy - Quinn and Arturo grin happily, slapping each other on the back.

BERNIE

I feel kinda sorry for The President. When the spouse gets too involved, the Prez always gets burned. I just wish the better half would keep that big mouth shut, before the Republicans take over for good!

QUINN

(another good sign)
You got that right.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED: 3

3

The Sliders gather around the TV - the screen is filled by the seal of the President of the United States...

MOVE IN ON THE SLIDERS as they all have a simultaneous reaction of shock, and deep, deep disappointment.

REMBRANDT

(softly)

Oh no. Oh why... why?

REVERSE ANGLE TO SEE THE TV SCREEN

where the President is addressing the nation, wearing a blue dress...

PRESIDENT CLINTON

My fellow Americans... I speak to you tonight from the White House.

Hillary Clinton is addressing the nation.

Off REACTION SHOTS OF THE SLIDERS, we...

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

4 EXT. FRANKLIN STREET - AFTERNOON

4

The Sliders head down the street. It looks like your average business day in San Francisco. Perhaps a few more women in business suits than normal, but nothing strikingly different.

ARTURO
Unfathomable. Hillary Clinton,
President of the United States?
What's next - Marla Maples,
Secretary of Defense?

WADE
What's so wrong with Hillary?
Who's to say we didn't choose the
wrong Clinton on our world?

REMBRANDT
She may have a point.

ARTURO
Utter nonsense.

WADE
It's not nonsense! Women can run
things just fine - remember
Margaret Thatcher? Indira Ghandi?
Bella Abzug?

ARTURO
A hit, a miss, and a mess. Doesn't
prove a thing.
(Wade is stewing)
Don't get me wrong, Miss Welles -
some women are fully the equal of
men.
(pregnant pause)
I just haven't met one yet.

Arturo winks at the men - clearly he is pulling Wade's chain - but she is infuriated by his underlying chauvinism, and punches his arm to accentuate the point.

ARTURO
(wincing)
Ow! That is getting to be a very
nasty habit, Miss Welles - this
punching thing!

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

QUINN

Okay, break it up, you two. We've got more important things to worry about here -- like finding a job so we can eat again.

ARTURO

Perhaps some form of employment would be in order. Let's check the classifieds --

A HORN HONKS - A TESTARROSA

pulls up alongside them, driven by a BEAUTIFUL WOMAN in a black Armani suit and trenchcoat. The Sliders look over.

THE BEAUTIFUL WOMAN

smiles and waves.

ALL THE MALE SLIDERS SMILE AND WAVE BACK.

Arturo elbows around the other Sliders, stepping forward suavely.

ARTURO

May I be of assistance, my dear?

BEAUTIFUL WOMAN

Not you. Him.

She indicates Rembrandt.

ARTURO

(miffed)
Him?

BEAUTIFUL WOMAN

(to Rembrandt)
Haven't I seen you somewhere before?

REMBRANDT

(stepping forward)
Well, if you happen to be a connoisseur of fine music, I'm sure you have.

BEAUTIFUL WOMAN

If you're not doing anything right now, sweet thing, I'd love to buy you lunch.

Rembrandt looks guiltily over his shoulder at the

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: 2

4

SLIDERS

standing on the curb, waiting for him.

REMBRANDT

Well... I'd love to... but....

BEAUTIFUL WOMAN

(sexy smile)

Don't tell me you're gonna break my heart?

REMBRANDT

It's just that... we're new in town, and we're kinda desperate for a job.

BEAUTIFUL WOMAN

Maybe I can help.

(to the others)

Know anything about computers?

Quinn and Wade exchange ironic looks, and nod. The beautiful woman pulls out a business card and scribbles an address on the back.

BEAUTIFUL WOMAN

My dear friend Anita Ross -- I'm sure you've heard of her --

(they nod, lying)

has a few openings in her office.

(hands card to Wade)

Tell them Serena Braxton sent you, and they'll treat you right.

REMBRANDT

(smitten)

That's mighty nice of you. Helping out total strangers.

BEAUTIFUL WOMAN/SERENA

Well, why stay strangers. Hop in.

She pats the seat next to hers. Rembrandt hesitates, feeling guilty for abandoning his friends.

QUINN

Go on. Have fun.

(indicating card)

We know how to reach you.

Rembrandt smiles, climbs into the Testarrosa.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: 3

4

REMBRANDT

All right, baby. I'm all yours.

BEAUTIFUL WOMAN/SERENA

(laughing)

Not yet, but you will be.

The woman jams the car into gear and tears off down the street.

CUT TO:

5 EXT. SAN FRAN SKYSCRAPER - DAY - ESTABLISHING

5

6 INT. ELEVATOR - DAY - AS THE SLIDERS STEP IN

6

to an empty elevator, Arturo is irritated with Wade...

ARTURO

I noticed that smirk on your face when you thought that woman was "checking me out".

WADE

Oh please.

The doors shut. Quinn presses the button for the 17th floor.

ARTURO

I suppose you can't imagine such a thing. That is because you underestimate the effect that charm, intelligence and good bearing have on a sophisticated woman.

The elevator stops on the 3rd floor and two women step in: executive assistant LOIS, an African-American, 35, and ANITA ROSS, an attractive, statuesque woman in her late-forties.

Arturo sees an opportunity to prove a point to Wade - as Anita looks at the elevator buttons, Arturo smoothly steps in...

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Allow me Madam. It would be my pleasure to press your button.

ROSS

It's already pressed.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

ARTURO

Ah, I see. Then you are travelling to the seventeenth floor as well?

ROSS

You're a quick learner.

ARTURO

A woman with a sense of humor. How delightful.

ROSS

(dry)

A man who pushes buttons. How interesting.

ARTURO

I can assure you, there is far more to me than chivalrous behavior.

Quinn and Wade exchange raised eyebrows - they are witnessing the Professor busting a move.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Perhaps you could discover this yourself, over dinner.

Ross turns to Lois, amused...

ROSS

Can you believe it? This old guy is actually trying to pick me up!

She steps out, leaving Arturo red faced and indignant, while Quinn and Wade desperately try not to laugh.

7 INT. ROSS CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

7

The Sliders exit the elevator and find themselves face to face with a banner reading: "Re-elect Ross for Mayor!", featuring a huge campaign photo of the woman Arturo struck out with in the elevator.

QUINN

Congratulations Professor. You just hit on the mayor.

Lois has disengaged from the mayor, and reapproaches, flanked by office assistant HOWIE, a hunk with a timid demeanor, who always seems to be carrying a clipboard...

LOIS

Can I help you guys?

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7

WADE

Serena Braxton sent us about the jobs.

LOIS

Oh yes, she just called from her car phone. I'm Lois Ames, executive assistant to the Mayor. Why don't you come with me.

ARTURO

(still stewing)
I'll wait here.

HOWIE

(to Arturo)
Are you here for the secretarial job?

ARTURO

(measured, insulted)
Certainly not.

Howie hesitates for a moment - something about Arturo's answer intrigued him. Then he continues on, stepping OUT OF FRAME.

8 INT. ROSS HEADQUARTERS/WAITING AREA - DAY

8

Arturo is now sitting in a plush waiting area, wearing a somewhat horrified expression as he reads a magazine called Sports, featuring women basketball players on the cover.

Howie re-enters the room and sits down next to him...

HOWIE

(indicating the cover)
Did you see the big game last night?

ARTURO

If you are referring to women playing basketball, I believe I'd rather watch paint dry.

Howie reacts, surprised by the sardonic response, then quickly moves away as the conference room door opens and Lois steps into the waiting area, flanked by Quinn and Wade. *

Wade is all smiles, Quinn's expression is somewhat blank...

WADE

I got the job!

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

ARTURO
Splendid. And you, Mr. Mallory?

QUINN
(stunned)
Uh... yeah.

ARTURO
Good work. Now, I hate to rush us
along, but--

Ross enters the room.

ROSS
(warmly, to Wade)
I understand we've arranged for an
advance, so you can find a place to
stay?

WADE
Yes, thank you. We'll be getting
rooms at the Motel 12.

ROSS
(more business-like)
Now, Quinn, the reception desk is
out front - we'll see you at eight
sharp, with a smile on your face.
If you have any questions, ask
Howie, or any of the other boys.

It's become horrifyingly clear to Arturo what's happened
here.

ARTURO
(pointing to Quinn)
He's the new receptionist?

Wade nods, sheepishly.

QUINN
(chagrinned)
They made me take a typing test.

ARTURO
(to Ross)
This is ludicrous! Do you realize
how dreadfully overqualified he is
for that position?

The office falls silent at the confrontation. Campaign
workers turn and stare as Arturo heatedly addresses Ross...

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED: 2

8

ARTURO (CONT'D)

If you can not recognize which of these two is more qualified for the computer analyst position, then how can you expect to run a city?

(laughing)

I pity the poor fools who voted for you.

ROSS

(calm, measured)

Howie, call security. Have this buffoon escorted from the premises.

WADE

(trying to keep the peace)

It's okay, Ms. Ross. We'll take care of it.

Wade and Quinn begin to lead Arturo out of the office.

WADE (CONT'D)

(to Ross, over her shoulder)

Sorry... He's just a bear when he's hungry.

Ross watches them go, infuriated. Howie watches them go, wide-eyed... and secretly excited.

9 INT. MOTEL 12 - NIGHT

9

CLOSE ON A CRACKER

As Wade neatly squirt a pile of Cheez Whiz on top, handing it to...

ARTURO

who sits glumly on the tired couch in their motel room. Wade prepares a cracker for Quinn.

ARTURO

What is this?

WADE

Cheese?

ARTURO

This isn't cheese. Camembert is cheese. Brie is cheese. This... this is yellow plastic.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

9

QUINN

I'll take it.

Arturo crams it into his mouth possessively. There's a KNOCK at the door. Wade opens it and finds

HOWIE AND TWO FRIENDS (PETE AND MIKE)

They appear nervous, anxiously looking over their shoulders.

WADE

(surprised)

Howie?

HOWIE

(in a whisper)

We need to speak to Mr. Arturo.

Wade lets them in. They stand hesitantly, just inside the door.

ARTURO

(cranky)

What do you want?

HOWIE

We'd like to take you to dinner. The Smetterling is right down the street - they have an all you can eat buffet.

ARTURO

(perking up)

All you can eat? Well, uh, I'm afraid I'm financially inconvenienced at the moment.

PETE

Don't worry, it's on us.

ARTURO

(already on the move)

I'll get my coat.

10 INT. THE SMETTERLING - NIGHT - MOVING IN ON

10

ARTURO

surrounded by the other gentlemen, at a little table in the corner. They are in the latter stages of a huge meal, and Arturo is holding court in front of a very appreciative audience...

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

ARTURO

How long have you been working for that dreadful politician?

HOWIE

Too long. Nearly ten years.

ARTURO

Why don't you leave?

HOWIE

I guess I'm afraid to. It's hard for a man to be taken seriously in this field - I'm not sure I'd ever find other employment.

Arturo lights up a cigar and speaks to the fellows with a fatherly tone...

ARTURO

Listen to me, gentlemen... I'm the first to admit that most women are an utter delight. The source of love, warmth and comfort. I'm also the first to admit that we couldn't begin to live without them. But to give them power is to invite chaos.

One nebbish (PETE, the attractive one) timidly raises his hand.

ARTURO

(calling on him)
Yes?

PETE

But... aren't women smarter?

ARTURO

Hah! There was only one female in my advanced quantum physics class last semester. What does that tell you? Gentlemen, I don't know who put these ideas in your head, but it's time someone straightened you out.

Howie and the nebbishes exchange a hopeful look. Salvation is at hand.

PETE

Well... to be frank... that's why we're here.

11 INT. MOTEL 12 - NIGHT

11

Quinn sits, shirtless, on the end of the bed, awkwardly attempting to sew a button on his shirt with a motel sewing kit. The TV is on LOW, O.S. A familiar show is running in the background... Familiar, yet unfamiliar...

EDITH BUNKER (O.S.)

Archie... Archie! I'm dying here, Archie! Where's that beer?

ARCHIE (O.S.)

Coming Edith!

GLORIA (O.S.)

Oh, mom. Why do you always have to talk to daddy that way?

EDITH (O.S.)

Because your father's a dingbat. If I don't talk that way, he won't understand me.

Quinn's seen enough. He shuts off the TV as Wade exits the bathroom, in a terrycloth robe, drying her hair.

QUINN

You know, this world is really upside down. I'm surprised we didn't come out in Australia.

WADE

Just because women have opportunities here they don't have back home --

QUINN

-- Hey, I'm not putting it down - all the pressure's on you guys here. I kinda like it.

Wade sits down on the bed, next to him. She takes on a softer, shyer tone...

WADE

I think it'll be fun working together again, Quinn. Kinda like... old times.

Quinn moves a little closer. Just as it looks like something might happen here,

THE DOOR

to the room bursts open and Arturo marches in; Wade and Quinn reluctantly separate.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

QUINN

How was dinner?

ARTURO

Dinner was a veritable feast, my boy. Succulent pork ribs, baked beans, fresh corn --

He sees the longing expression on Quinn's face and cuts short the description...

QUINN

Don't suppose you brought us any leftovers?

ARTURO

I'm uh, afraid I cleaned my plate.
(awkward pause)
Anyway, I have something very important to discuss with you both.
(starts to pace)
I've come to an important conclusion. Sliding... is more than a physical act. It's an opportunity!

Quinn and Wade exchange a confused look.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

We have a unique responsibility to bring knowledge from our world to the other worlds we encounter --

WADE

-- Whoa, whoa... Professor, you're always the one saying don't get involved.

ARTURO

Changing one's mind is a man's prerogative, and I've had an Epiphany!

Quinn and Wade wait with frowns, knowing something's coming.

ARTURO

I, Maximillian Arturo, have decided to throw my proverbial hat into the political hippodrome.

QUINN/WADE

What?

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED: 2

11

ARTURO
Spread the word! I'm running for
mayor!

OFF ARTURO'S BIG GRIN, AND QUINN AND WADE'S DAZED RESPONSE,
WE...

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

12 INT. SERENA'S BEDROOM - MORNING - REMBRANDT

12

awakens alone in Serena's king-size satin-sheeted bed. He's had quite a night. A night to end all nights. He smiles just thinking about it, gets out of bed, on the way to the bathroom --

ANGLE - ARMOIRE

door ajar. he opens it --

SHELVES OF MEN'S ESSENTIALS:

Boxer shorts, still in their packages. Undershirts. Disposable razors. Rembrandt's stomach does a little back-flip.

REMBRANDT

(off the undies)

Armani?

THE PHONE

begins to RING O.S. Rembrandt doesn't know whether or not to answer it. Finally, after a few rings, he picks up.

REMBRANDT

(into phone)

Hello?... Quinn? Speak up, man.
I can't hear you.

CUT TO:

13 INT. ROSS CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - MORNING

13

Quinn, wearing a phone headset, is seated at the reception desk. Howie is seated at a nearby desk.

QUINN

(whispering into headset)

I'm at work. I can't really talk.
How's it going?...

(a little chuckle)

Wow! Well, I'm glad someone's
having a good time. Listen...

CROSS CUT AS NECESSARY:

REMBRANDT

Mayor? Now, why would he do a fool
thing like that?

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

QUINN

He's trying to make a point. You know his ego.

(Lois walks by)

I gotta go...

REMBRANDT

Hold on a second -- what if he wins?

BACK TO:

14 INT. ROSS CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

14

QUINN

(into phone)

Not a chance. It's some kind of splinter party -- last time, they ran some women with a lot of tattoos -- they didn't even get get 2% of the vote --

(the phones are buzzing like mad)

Hold on a second.

(pushes a button)

Ross for Mayor -- I'll connect you.

(then; back to Rembrandt)

Rembrandt -- Lemme call you later, okay? I can't wait until we slide out'a this place... Later.

He hangs up. Two male receptionists, KEN and GLENN, have returned from their break, taking their seats on either side of Quinn.

KEN

...And she didn't even call me. I'll be damned if I'm gonna call her -- I'm not gonna play those kind of mind games.

Lois heads toward Quinn carrying a coffee pot, under. She holds it out to him.

LOIS

Coffee.

QUINN

I don't drink coffee, thanks.

Lois puts the half-empty pot on his desk.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

KEN

(helpful)
She's asking you to brew some.

Lois heads back into her office. Quinn sourly picks up the pot.

KEN

Need some help?

QUINN

No. I got it.

GLENN

(conspiratorially)
Did you hear? Someone's running
against Anita.

(pausing for effect)

A man.

Ken thinks this is pretty laughable.

KEN

Pathetic.

QUINN

Why's it pathetic?

KEN

Come on. A man in political
office? Next you'll tell me men
should fly airplanes.

QUINN

Men can fly airplanes.

Unbeknownst to them, Ross starts out of her office, with a very professional-looking Wade in tow. They hear the last part of this conversation.

KEN

Too much testosterone. Look at
women -- they only cycle once a
month. Men cycle every twenty
minutes. Who would put a man in
charge of anything?

Quinn's about to protest, when --

ROSS

Fellas... we have work to do.
Every call is a potential voter.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: 2

14

ROSS (cont'd)
And Quinn, on your first day, I'd
expect you'd be a little more
conscientious.

This is a slap in the face to Quinn.

ROSS
(to the room)
People?... Your attention?
(then)
While I have you all here, I'd like
to introduce you to Ms. Wade
Welles. Ms. Welles will be in
charge of computer analysis...

Smattering of applause from the sisterhood. Wade basks in
the glory, feels Quinn's glare.

HOWIE

blanches

HOWIE
I don't believe it.

Quinn looks at him: "What's the problem?"

HOWIE
Excuse me, Anita. How's that going
to work exactly?

ROSS
What do you mean, Howie?

HOWIE
This makes her my superior, doesn't
it?

REMBRANDT
That's true.

HOWIE
And you don't think that's just a
tiny bit unfair? I know computers
inside and out, and this is my
third campaign with you.

LOIS
(rebuke)
Howie. Not the time!

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: 3

14

HOWIE

No. I need to say this. You talk about equality and everything, but what's it you're really saying?

ROSS

Howie -- you're thinking with your ego again!

HOWIE

(thwarted into incoherence)

Forget it...

(then)

I just think it stinks, that's all!

Ken and Glenn can't believe Howie's taken it this far. Howie is angrily sulking --

HOWIE

(over the edge)

Forget it. Okay?

(then)

I quit!

He exits, slamming the door behind him. After a beat --

ROSS

(ice-breaker)

Men. Can't live with 'em, and you can't shoot em --

Lois chuckles at this ham-fisted witticism

ROSS

Life goes on.

Off Quinn: stranger in a strange land.

CUT TO:

15 EXT. SUPERMARKET - CLOSE ON A CAMPAIGN POSTER

15

A poster of Arturo with the slogan: "A Man For A Change -- Vote Maximillian Arturo For Mayor." Widen --

PARKING LOT - ARTURO

handing out bumper stickers and literature. The busy marketers treat him with mild disdain -- like the Communist Party candidate for LA City Council.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

ARTURO

I'm Maximillian Arturo, and I'm
running for mayor.

(litany)

Maximillian Arturo, I'm running for
mayor...

FEMALE SHOPPER

Ridiculous. You should be ashamed
of yourself.

ARTURO

(under his breath)

Ignorant bovine.

Howie is there, offering tactical advice. Sidles up to
observe --

HOWIE

(sotto)

Hostility isn't going to win us a
lot of votes here, Mr. A.

ARTURO

(flustered)

Well, what am I supposed to do?

HOWIE

Be charming. Kiss a few babies
you know the drill.

PETE

There's one now.

He indicates a young MAN with a small infant. Arturo heads
towards her.

ARTURO

Sir --

The man starts moving away from Arturo nervously. This puts
him in a position of chasing after him as news crew cameras
begin to roll.

ARTURO

Please halt for a moment -- I'd
like to kiss your child...

The man hurries into the market. Arturo throws up his arms,
exasperated. Howie's got his work cut out for them.

CUT TO:

16 INT. SERENA'S KITCHEN - EVENING - REMBRANDT

16

wearing an apron over a silk men's robe, is humming and singing as he whips up Beef Stroganoff in Serena's kitchen. O.S. we hear the sound of KNOCKING on the front door.

Rembrandt checks his watch: it's early for Serena. Goes.

17 INT. SERENA'S FRONT HALLWAY - REMBRANDT

17

opens the door

REMBRANDT

Hey, baby, you're early --

He stops at the sight of

A WELL-BUILT, ATTRACTIVE GUY (ED)

well-dressed, well-moussed. The guy looks like a Baldwin brother.

REMBRANDT

Who're you?

ED

I could ask the same thing.

(then)

Ed Dunleavy. Serena's boyfriend.
And what're you doing in my robe?

REMBRANDT

(taken aback)

Boyfriend? She didn't tell me
about a boyfriend.

ED

I'll bet there's a lot she hasn't
told you...

(entering)

I'm surprised. You're a lot older
than most of her usual pick-ups.

Rembrandt looks down at his bare chest under the robe. He draws the robe tighter, defensively.

REMBRANDT

If I'm the pick-up, how come I'm
cooking dinner and you're the one
dropping by for a visit?

This hits home.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

ED

Okay. I deserved that.

(rueful)

I can read the writing on the wall

(forlorn)

My therapist says I'm still hung up on Mommy -- I want to be taken care of, so I prostrate myself in these abusive relationships.

(then)

Forgive me for dumping all this on you.

REMBRANDT

No problem.

He hugs Rembrandt, who uncomfortably goes along.

ED

Don't let her break your heart.
Like... like... she did mine.

Ed exits. Rembrandt stands there, bewildered.

CUT TO:

18 INT. MOTEL 12 ROOM - NIGHT - ON TV

18

A FEMALE NEWS ANCHOR

FEMALE ANCHOR

(condescending)

... and finally, tonight, under the heading of "believe it or not,"... Jeannie Most with the story of a man who's running for Mayor.

ANGLE WADE, QUINN AND ARTURO

sitting on the end of the bed watching TV. Wade has a herstory (history) book in her hands. As

ON TV - SHOPPERS

snubbing Arturo at the supermarket.

JEANNIE MOST

Maximilian Arturo came to market to sell himself today, but no one seemed to be buying.

ANOTHER SHOT of shoppers laughing at Arturo and his ragged band of campaigners.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

18

JEANNIE MOST

San Francisco is known for lots of weird happenings; from hippies to earthquakes to trolley cars; but nothing has so titillated the public's fancy than the curiosity of a man who dared to buck the system....

Arturo snaps off the TV.

ARTURO

They used to laugh at Ronald Reagan, too.

WADE

They still do.

Arturo gives her a look.

WADE

(holding up her book)

Of course they're gonna laugh at you. Look at the history of this place. Hundreds of years ago, women got sick and tired of watching men go off to war and kill each other. So they took over. And things have been running pretty smoothly ever since. No war, no violent crime

She waits for an argument. Quinn has none. Arturo doesn't really either, but --

ARTURO

That is not the point.

WADE

What is?

(off Arturo; he's stumped)

Face it. It works.

19 INT. SERENA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - REMBRANDT

19

is pouting.

REMRANDT

...I am a serious musician, you dig? I got Gold Records hanging on my wall at home!

(frustrated)

If I could only show 'em to you.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

SERENA

Rembrandt, you don't have anything to prove.

REMBRANDT

I don't?

SERENA

Of course not.

(then)

You're special. I knew it the minute I first saw you -- looking so fine on that street corner.

Rembrandt feels a little better. Serena takes his hand.

SERENA

(purring)

Now, instead of all this pouting and unpleasantness, why don't you come over here and give me some of that Beef Stroganoff of yours?

(pulling him closer)

I can tell you put a lot of effort into it.

REMBRANDT

Damned straight. I slaved for hours.

SERENA

Baby, there's nothing I love more than a man who can cook. In the kitchen and the bedroom.

Serena pins Rembrandt against the living room wall, kissing him passionately. They slide to the floor.

20 INT. STOREFRONT - ARTURO'S HQ - HOWIE AND PETE

20

huddled around the fax machine --

HOWIE

-- if half these people are voting for the novelty factor, fine -- add that to a hundred thousand Limousine Liberals and disenfranchized masculinists we've got a horse race.

PETE

Let me see those numbers.

Arturo enters

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

HOWIE

Professor! Good news -- on several fronts.

(then)

Best of all, Anita Ross has agreed to the debate.

ARTURO

What?

HOWIE

It just came in over the fax -- head-to-head, single moderator, League of Men voters, just the way we asked for --

(then)

This woman's won three successive elections without debating a single opponent --

(then)

You're a real-live Rocky, Professor.

Pete looks on, decidedly non-plussed --

ARTURO

I don't get it. We're at 17%. Why is she taking me so seriously?

HOWIE

She can read the trends as clearly as we can -- you've hit a nerve no one knew existed, except for us.

ARTURO

You really think we can win?

HOWIE

It'd be one of the biggest upsets in the history of American politics -- but I'm starting to believe it.

Suddenly -- CRASH!

THE PLATE GLASS WINDOW

shatters --

ATRUTO, PETE, HOWIE

duck, glass raining down on them A car roars away, O.S. --
In the aftermath --

(CONTINUED)

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

21 INT. ARTURO'S CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - DAY

21

A woman FBI agent, COPELAND, talks to Arturo. Two other female agents stand in the B.G.

COPELAND
What was the voice like?

ARTURO
Chilling. With just a touch of irony.

COPELAND
Was it recognizable?

ARTURO
If it was recognizable, I wouldn't need the FBI now, would I?

COPELAND
Isn't it possible you're being a little oversensitive, Mr. Arturo?

ARTURO
(insulted)
About a threat on my life? Hardly.

COPELAND
Perhaps this is what happens when men get into politics.
(closing her notebook)
Perhaps it's a valuable lesson, for all of us.

ARTURO
Perhaps you should do your job. Are you a Fed or a philosopher?

COPELAND
Little of both, I suppose.
(sighing)
Okay. We've got a tap on the phone line. Let us know if anything else unusual happens.

The agents exit, remaining largely unsympathetic. Alone for the moment, a troubled Arturo begins to pace, wondering how he got himself into this mess.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON A TV SCREEN

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

A COMMERCIAL plays, featuring Arturo at his worst.

WOMAN ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Who is Max Arturo, and what do we
really know about him?

SHOTS of Arturo laughing with a group of men. Lots of
back-slapping, cigar-smoking a devious look on the
Professor's face.

WOMAN ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Can we trust this man in a position
of power?

A SHOT of Arturo scarfing a double-cheeseburger, surrounded
by burly construction workers.

WOMAN ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Have we forgotten the lessons of
history? Bombastic ego, loud
reckless behavior, and naked
aggression.

A MONTAGE OF CLIPS from movies showing gladiators battling
each other to the death, dinosaurs clashing, two rhinos
butting heads...

WOMAN ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Arturo wants to hold our future in
his hands. Can we afford to take
that chance?

SLOWLY MOVE IN on a frozen still of a seemingly predatory
Arturo chasing after the frightened woman with the baby.

WOMAN ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Re-elect Anita Ross. Because the
alternative is... dangerous.

As the commercial ends, PULL BACK TO REVEAL Arturo, Howie,
and Pete seated around a conference table, watching the
screen and munching peanut M&Ms.

ARTURO
That is outrageous slander!

HOWIE
True, but I think it's a very good
sign.
(off Arturo's look)
They're scared. And when they get
scared, they resort to scare
tactics.

22 INT. ROSS CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - DAY

22

Anita Ross charges down a hallway, followed by her entourage of Quinn (taking notes), Wade, Lois, and a few OTHERS.

WADE

If the election were held today,
he'd get thirty-one percent of the
vote.

ROSS

That's a tragedy. Quinn, could you
see if my red pumps are back from
the dyer?

Wearily, Quinn makes a note. They turn a corner, heading
down another hallway.

WADE

(looking at notes)

My analysis shows a combination of
factors. Primarily, we're dealing
with a strong anti-encumbancy mood,
as well as the extreme novelty of a
man running for office.

LOIS

Not to mention, voter apathy.
Everyone assumes you're going to
win, so they may not all go to the
polls. And that's dangerous.

ROSS

Hopefully we'll turn that around
with our new ad blasting that
pompous ass.

LOIS

Thanks to you, Wade. Your
knowledge of Arturo's
vulnerabilities was invaluable.

Quinn gives Wade a shocked look. Wade blushes. They come
to a stop in front of the ladies room. All the women go in,
except for Ross and Wade. Ross turns to Quinn.

ROSS

Quinn, why don't you pick up my
lunch, then meet us back in the
conference room by two.

She opens the door to the restroom. Quinn makes a decision.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

QUINN

Sorry, Anita, but you're gonna have to get it yourself.

(off her shocked look)

I've had it with this job.

ROSS

(not skipping a beat)

Fine. You're replaceable.

Trying not to show how irked she is, Ross heads inside. Quinn turns on Wade....

QUINN

Arturo is our friend.

WADE

(defensively)

I have a job to do. A job I believe in.

QUINN

Well, maybe you need to get your priorities straight.

WADE

Maybe you do.

CUT TO:

23 INT. ARTURO'S CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - DAY

23

CLOSE ON TV SCREEN

Darkness, then FADE IN on Arturo pushing some kid in a swing in SLO-MO. He's laughing, joyous.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

A man. A dream. A vision.

SHOTS of Arturo standing in front of a class of schoolchildren, talking.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

A new kind of leader.

SHOTS of Arturo in a hardhat, shaking hands with smiling men and a few women on an assembly line.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

A sensitivity to the needs of all people, regardless of gender, or race.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

SHOTS of Arturo wearing an apron, ladling soup in a soup kitchen.

ARTURO (V.O.)
I'm running because I care. I
favor the good things in life...
And I oppose the bad things.

BACK TO THE SHOT of the kid on the swing being pushed in SLOW MOTION...

ARTURO
A vote for Arturo is your way of
saying you care too. Together, we
can make a difference.

As the commercial FADES TO BLACK we PULL BACK TO REVEAL:

Arturo, Howie, and the nebbishes all watching the screen. Arturo wipes away a tear.

ARTURO
(to Howie)
I don't believe anyone has ever
captured my essence so beautifully.
(looks to others,
quivering lip)
That scene where I'm pushing that
little brat on the swing...

He waves his hands, lowers his head, all choked up, can't go on... until the sound of A FAMILIAR VOICE makes him turn...

QUINN (O.S.)
You oppose the bad things, and
support the good things?

...to see Quinn standing in the doorway.

QUINN (CONT'D)
Really going out on a limb, I see.

ARTURO ---
Keeping one's message simple is a
basic tenet of good politics.
(Quinn chuckles)
Have you come on your own to mock
me, Mr. Mallory? Or were you sent
on a spy mission by that... woman?

QUINN
I quit her campaign, Professor.
I'm here to offer my services to
you.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: 2

23

ARTURO
(moving to him, pleased)
And a bit of inside knowledge as well? That's fine, my boy, just fine. I uh, don't suppose Ms. Welles has come to her senses yet?

Quinn can only shake his head.

24 INT. SERENA'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING

24

Serena sits at a computer terminal, talking mutual funds when Rembrandt wanders in, wearing boxers and Serena's silk robe.

SERENA
(into phone)
Yeah, the market is 'one way to go. Depends on inflation. Look, let me think about it.
(she hangs up)
Hi, honey.

She gives Rembrandt a kiss.

REMBRANDT
The market, huh? I take a certain interest in the market. Maybe I can help...

SERENA
Baby, you can help by rubbing my neck so I can think.

He sighs and starts to rub her neck.

REMBRANDT
(towards living room)
I'm going to head over to the club early, get a feel for the room. You show up around eight-thirty -- and how about wearing that red dress of yours?

SERENA
Club? What club?

REMBRANDT
The Sugar Momma. Remember? Open mike night. You're finally gonna get a chance to hear the Cryin' Man in person. What a treat.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

24

SERENA

You say... that's tonight?

REMBRANDT

I told you about it a week ago.

SERENA

No can do honey - I've got a business dinner.

REMBRANDT

Baby, you can have dinner anytime!
How often do you get to see the
Cryin' Man? Live.

SERENA

(cooing)

Don't get your boxers in a bunch.
If you want to sing, do it right
now. I'm all ears.

She sits back, waiting.

REMBRANDT

No, no, that's not the point. You
just don't take my career
seriously.

SERENA

Sure I do.

REMBRANDT

You're too damn busy with your own
career, and when you're here,
you're too tired to do anything.
Don't you think I have needs?

SERENA

Needs? That's all you've got is
needs! It's cramping my style.
(beat, calmer)
It's over Remmy. This just isn't
working for me any more.

OFF REMBRANDT'S STUNNED REACTION

25 INT. TV STUDIO MAKE-UP ROOM - NIGHT

25

A make-up artist applies foundation to Arturo's face as
Quinn and Howie hover nearby.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

25

QUINN

Don't let her get your goat. She wants the voters to see your male/aggressive side.

HOWIE

And be sure to smile a lot.

REMBRANDT (O.S.)

That's right, always keep smiling, no matter what!

ARTURO

Rembrandt! Good to see you old man - uh, where's your girl?

REMBRANDT

Oh you know how it is. They start to get too possessive - it's time to move on. A man's gotta keep moving.

QUINN

A man's gotta do what a man's gotta do!

ARTURO

One man's pleasure is another man's poison, eh?

The three Sliders crack up and Quinn and Rembrandt high five - their cliches didn't make much sense but it was still a moment of male bonding in its best/worst form.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Are you back to stay?

REMBRANDT

Damn right I am. If there's one thing this world needs, it's a man in charge.

(solemn nod)

Give her hell tonight, Professor.

ARTURO

(solemn nod)

I shall endeavor to do just that.

CUT TO:

26 INT. STUDIO STAGE - NIGHT

26

ROSS AND ARTURO

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

are standing at two separate podiums, debating each other on live TV.

ROSS

(to Arturo)

...If men like you start running for and - dare I say? - holding office, who's going to be home guarding the castle, and fixing things around the house? You're threatening the social fabric of our society!

ARTURO

Men are not the only ones who can perform such tasks, madam. It's time women started pulling their weight in those areas. Now, let me ask you a question -- if you females are so pacifistic, why am I getting death threats, from a woman?

A SLOW PULL BACK TO REVEAL:

the debate is on a video monitor being watched by

QUINN AND WADE

backstage at the TV studio.

ROSS

I don't know, Mr. Arturo. But candidates have been known to trump up death threats to win voter support.

ARTURO

That is scurrious and unfounded.

ROSS

It's a question of ethics, Professor, and I think the public has the right to know --

ARTURO

-- Ethics! And what do you know of ethics, Mayor Ross? Unlike you, I don't believe in using government employees to perform my personal errands.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED: 2

26

ROSS

(flustered)
I don't know what you're talking
about.

ANGLE WADE

who turns to Quinn, shocked.

WADE

(a heated whisper)
You told him that!

QUINN

(also whispering)
It's no worse than what you did.
Just balancing the scales.

The DEBATE continues in the B.G., but Wade and Quinn square
off, nose-to-nose.

WADE

You know what's really bugging you,
Quinn Mallory? You hate this world
because you're undervalued and
taken for granted. Well, guess
what -- that's the world I lived in
every day.

She walks away, leaving him to consider her point.

27 INT. THE SMETTERLING - NIGHT

27

ARTURO, QUINN, AND REMBRANDT

are seated at a booth by the window, surrounded by Howie and
the nebbishes, all hoisting beers, looking a little soused.

ARTURO

Well, gentlemen, we're about to
make history.

They clink mugs vociferously, take swigs.

HOWIE

I never thought I'd see it in my
lifetime.

REMBRANDT

Hey, man, just one thing... what
if you win?

Arturo is thoughtful for a beat.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

ARTURO

If I win, I stay. After all, I
have a responsibility to these men.

He indicates the drunken nebbishes. This possibility hadn't
even occurred to Quinn and Rembrandt.

Suddenly, there is a loud CRACKING SOUND, and the window
explodes. The men instinctively duck as a gunshot narrowly
misses Arturo's head.

REMBRANDT

A drive-by shooting? I thought
they didn't have random violence in
this world!

ARTURO

It wasn't random, Mr. Brown.
(grim pause)
That bullet was meant for me.

OFF THEIR ALARMED REACTIONS, WE...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

28 INT. ANITA ROSS CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - DAY

28

Anita and Lois have their noses in newspapers. Wade has more newspapers spread out on the table in front of her.

LOIS
He's up 6 more points - public sympathy over the assassination attempt.

ROSS
(disgusted)
Bleeding heart liberals...
(throws down her paper)
Suddenly the press loves him...I'll bet he staged the whole thing.

WADE
The Professor would never do that!

ROSS
(skeptical)
Really? Well, he's certainly been quick to insinuate that my people were behind it.

WADE
(hesitant)
But you're not, right?... I mean, you couldn't be.

ROSS
(put off by the question)
If I didn't resort to skullduggery against more serious candidates in the past, why would I do so to that big ape now?

Wade, realizing she's in hot water, says nothing - returns to her newspaper.

LOIS
Well, he's a serious candidate now. He's very skillfully managed...
(pointed, at Wade)
...It's as though he's anticipating our every move.

Ross and Lois look at Wade, who feels accused and defensive.

WADE
Howie worked here a long time.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

28

LOIS
But he was never privy to our
strategy.

Wade has no answer. Ross studies her, evaluating.

CUT TO:

29 INT. MOTEL 12 - NIGHT

29

REMBRANDT

is passed out on the couch, snoring heavily.

QUINN

reads a newspaper. The door opens and Wade enters. She
seems troubled and sits, deep in thought.

QUINN
(considerate)
Tough day at the office?

WADE
It's a jungle. Lois is protecting
her job by turning Anita against
me.

QUINN
Forget about it. We Slide in less
than two days - I'll be glad to put
this world behind us.

Wade reacts, annoyed.

WADE
Maybe I don't want to Slide. Maybe
I like it here.

QUINN
Sure, that's why you look so happy.

WADE
I don't expect to be happy all the
time. I have a job with a lot of
responsibility. I like that. This
is a good world for me.

QUINN
But it's not home! Wade, we need
to stick together. This has gotten
crazy - first Arturo, now you.
You're taking this place way too
seriously.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

WADE

That's interesting, Quinn. It's okay for Arturo - who doesn't know a damn thing about managing a city - to run for Mayor. And it's okay for you to advise him on his campaign. But if I want to help a woman who's been a great mayor for twelve years, I'm taking this place too seriously. Typical male double standard!

Off Quinn's stymied reaction

CUT TO:

30 INT. TELEVISION STUDIO - BACKSTAGE - DAY

30

Howie, Mike and Pete try to keep up with Arturo, who paces with deep agitation.

Quinn and Rembrandt are off to the side but Quinn, very resolute, keeps his eye on Arturo at all times.

PETE

Don't be nervous. There's nothing to be nervous about.

ARTURO

Other than the odd assassin at large.

HOWIE

She'll be caught, and you have to put that out of your mind. Your speech is vital. We've spent every last dime on these 5 minutes of prime time.

ARTURO

(troubled, guilty)
Yes, yes, I know. And stop following me around like a mother hen! I can't think straight!

HOWIE

Okay. We'll meet you backstage. Good luck.

He gestures to Pete and Mike. The three of them depart. Now Quinn and Rembrandt descend on Arturo...

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

QUINN

They don't know you're about to sabotage yourself, do they?

(off Arturo's look)

You are doing the right thing.

ARTURO

But I'm abandoning them.

REMBRANDT

You've done your bit, professor. Let them elect one of their own.

ARTURO

It could be decades before they find another candidate with my charisma.

QUINN

It's not worth risking your life over!

Arturo certainly hears that... he SIGHS and nods.

REMBRANDT

How you planning on doing it? Just gonna say, sorry to let you all down, but I'm chickening out?

(off Arturo's glare)

Just kidding.

ARTURO

(thoughtful)

Of course I can't just come out and quit. My boys have worked too hard and it would give my opponent too much satisfaction. So I've decided to pull a Muskie.

REMBRANDT

You're going fishing at a time like this?

ARTURO

Don't be an imbecile. I'm referring to Edmund Muskie, former front runner for President, back in '72. He made the mistake of crying when someone asked a tough question about his wife, and bang, he was perceived as being weak. Dropped like a rock in the polls.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED: 2

30

PETE (O.S.)

One minute, Mister A.

Arturo straightens his tie and takes a deep breath.

ARTURO

I'm eight points behind - too close for comfort with one day to go. I need to perform a similar gaffe, something that will shoot my approval rating downward, making it impossible for me to win.

REMBRANDT

Why not just moon 'em? That'd do it for sure.

ARTURO

Thank you for that horrifying suggestion... but I have something a little more dignified in mind.

CUT TO ARTURO SEEN ON A TV MONITOR BACKSTAGE

he is weeping softly, dabbing his eyes with a handkerchief as a horrified Howie watches alongside of Quinn, Pete and Rembrandt...

ARTURO

I admit that my nerves are shot. All the pressure of this campaign... the expectations people have of me... it's too much, it's all too much.

HOWIE

What the hell is he doing? Oh God... it's gone, it's all gone...

Arturo is looking directly into the camera now, really milking it, quivering lip and all - Quinn can barely keep from bursting out laughing.

ARTURO

I was thinking of quitting, getting out of the race... but my shrink advised against it... Keep going, he said, you'll still have time to see me five days a week. And even if you win, we'll lick that Oedipus complex yet!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED: 3

30

ARTURO (cont'd)
(camera moving in,
concluding)
And so, dear friends, I ask for
your vote in tomorrow's election.
(quivering voice)
If I don't win... I just don't know
what will become of me.
(bows his head)
Thank you... and good night.

31 INT. BACKSTAGE ROOM - NIGHT

31

Arturo is momentarily alone with Quinn and Rembrandt.

REMBRANDT
That was quite a performance,
Professor.

ARTURO
Well, I suppose I've learned how to
cry over nothing from watching you.

REMBRANDT
(touched)
Thanks man... that means alot.

QUINN
Uh-oh. Here come your advisors. I
don't think they're very happy.

Arturo braces himself for their criticism as Howie, Pete and
Mike enter the room. A stone-faced Howie is holding date
sheets they have just received by fax.

HOWIE
Insta-poll results. You've
alienated some of your mainstream
constituents, no doubt about it.

ARTURO
Well, that's it then. I'm sorry
gentlemen... I guess I lost my
head.

HOWIE
(big grin)
Sorry? You're a political genius!
You've captured an entirely new
section of the electorate!

ARTURO
What?

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED:

31

HOWIE

The sympathy vote! People now see you as sensitive and needy, open and honest - they love that! You've jumped nine points in the polls - we're in the lead!

The room erupts as the nebbishes hug the Sliders. A hapless, worried Arturo glances at Quinn and Rembrandt in stunned disbelief, knowing now that his plan has terribly backfired.

The celebration is interrupted by Agent Copeland and her two lieutenants, who enter the room with grim conviction.

Copeland moves straight to Pete, pulling out a pair of handcuffs... He offers no resistance...

AGENT COPELAND

Peter Greene, I'm placing you under arrest.

ARTURO

sees this and reacts, indignant.

ARTURO

What do you think you're doing? He's one of my staff!

AGENT COPELAND

He's the one who tried to kill you. We found the gun, matched his fingerprints.

Arturo looks to Pete, utterly stunned.

PETE

You have to believe me, Professor. We never intended to hurt you. We just... just wanted to scare you out of the race.

ARTURO

But why? You were one of the people who talked me into it!

PETE

As a statement of protest. That's all it was meant to be.

(hanging his head)

Once we saw you had a chance to win... we knew we had to try and stop you.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED: 2

31

HOWIE

Who's "we"?

AGENT COPELAND

His wife. She's the one who placed the threatening call.

PETE

(agitated, emotional)

We did it for our son!

(to Arturo)

If you win, more men may eventually come to power! And then it's only a matter of time before warfare resumes. My son and boys like him will have to fight those wars...

AND I WON'T HAVE THAT BLOOD ON MY HANDS!!

Pete is out of control now, struggling to free himself and looking at Arturo with murderous eyes.

AGENT COPELAND

Take him away.

Pete is led from the room by the other agents.

PETE (O.S.)

Vote for Ross! Vote for Ross, it's our only hope!

The room falls still, Arturo is doubly troubled...

ARTURO

He may be right, you know.

AGENT COPELAND

Ah, he's a wacko, don't let it get you down.

HOWIE

Shake it off, Mr. A. We made great strides tonight.

Arturo is crestfallen to hear it. Copeland is looking at him with a newfound interest and respect...

AGENT COPELAND

I know I'm gonna vote for you.

ARTURO

You are?

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED: 3

31

AGENT COPELAND
(gentle, profound)
Uh-huh. That Opedipus thing really
touched me.

Arturo looks at the Sliders and GROANS as we DISSOLVE TO:

32 INT. ARTURO FOR MAYOR HEADQUARTERS - ELECTION NIGHT

32

It's pretty late and only the diehard supporters are in evidence. Many balloon have lost enough of their helium to be hovering closer to floor than ceiling. A couple or two dance.

Howie, Mike and other inner circle people cluster around t.v.'s watching the returns.

WITH HOWIE

as he breaks away from them and goes to a door at the back and knocks, then enters

THE BACK ROOM - ARTURO

Pacing back and forth in front of a lone t.v.. Rembrandt and Quinn are in a corner, nervously eying the timer.

HOWIE
All the networks are still saying
it's too close to call.

ARTURO
(nods, dismissing him)
Thank you.

Howie leaves.

QUINN
Five minutes, Professor. You're
gonna have to make a decision soon.

ARTURO
(irritated)
I can't make a decision until I
know who's won!

REMBRANDT
Chances are you won't know when the
gate opens. Then what're you gonna
do?

Arturo can't bear the thought. There's another knock at the door. Rembrandt opens it for

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

32

WADE

who enters carrying a bag. She smiles at Quinn, then reaches into the bag and starts handing out sandwiches.

WADE

I always like to slide on a full stomach.

Quinn goes to her, gives her a hug.

QUINN

You cut it awfully close...

WADE

I wouldn't have missed it for the world.

(off Quinn's confused look - indicates Arturo)

I wanted to see his face when he loses.

ARTURO

Dream on, Ms. Welles.

WADE

You don't still think you're gonna win?

ARTURO

Call it male intuition.

WADE

Wanna bet?

ARTURO

Name your stakes.

WADE

If you win... I'll give you a neck rub that'll put hair back on your pointed head.

ARTURO

Well, I've tried everything else...and if you win?

WADE

(thinks a beat)

If we don't make it home... you're my slave for the whole next Slide.

ARTURO

That's hardly fair.

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: 2

32

WADE

Just how confident are you?

The right button. Arturo holds out his hand, she shakes it.

QUINN

One minute.

(to Arturo)

You better make up your mind.

Arturo reacts, utterly torn. He paces, trying to sort himself out.

There's a KNOCK at the door. Rembrandt opens it for a devastated Howie.

HOWIE

Based on exit polls; CNN just called it -- for Ross.

WADE

(triumphantly)

Ha-hah!

HOWIE

I'm sorry, Mr. A., but at least we gave it the good fight.

ARTURO

As someone once said, "What is defeat? Nothing but education, nothing but the first step towards something better."

Howie nods, hugs Arturo - who awkwardly endures the gesture.

HOWIE

I'll go write a dignified concession speech for you.

He exits.

QUINN

Ten seconds.

Arturo heads across the room, rummages through the desk frantically.

QUINN

(urgently)

Professor!

THE GATE OPENS

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: 3

32

right there in the middle of the room. Arturo finds what he was looking for -- an ARTURO FOR MAYOR campaign button. He pins it on his lapel.

ARTURO

Let's go.

They Slide. Wade goes first, followed by Rembrandt, Quinn, and finally... Arturo. The gate closes.

Seconds later, Howie burst back in - suddenly ebullient!

HOWIE

Professor, Professor, Fox and ABC
have just declared you the winner!
We won, we won!!
(pause, looking around)
Professor?

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE IN ON:

a CLOSE-UP of a somber, thoughtful ARTURO...

ARTURO

You know, I've learned alot over the past few weeks. I've learned what it is to be dismissed, undervalued, disrespected and patronized - simply because of gender.

(ultra-sincere)

I suppose it took coming face to face with my own backward chauvinism to make me realize how terribly wrong any form of sexism is. I'm a new man. I really am.

PULL BACK TO SEE

that Arturo is holding standing on a beautiful beach, holding a tray, skinny white legs sticking out of rolled up trousers, an ARTURO FOR MAYOR button still pinned to his lapel.

ANGLE TO INCLUDE WADE

who is lying on the beach before him, finishing a drink.

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: 4

32

WADE

Nice try Professor. I'm glad to see how enlightened you've become, but a bet's a bet and I'm still thirsty.

(giggles happily)

Refill, if you please!

Arturo mutters unmentionable things under his breath, takes the empty glass from her, and trudges up the sand.

He passes QUINN AND REMBRANDT

sitting under a beach umbrella, laughing at his plight.

ARTURO

How much longer before we slide?

QUINN

(wincing)

Nine days, five hours, and thirty-two minutes.

Arturo grimaces, keeps going.

Rembrandt turns to Quinn...

REMBRANDT

So, tell me the truth... You vote for him?

Quinn pauses, then shakes his head.

REMBRANDT

Me neither.

They howl with laughter and clink tropical glasses as we....

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR