

"GENIUS"

Teaser

FADE IN:

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Quinn, Wade and Rembrandt are seated around a table with an umbrella through the middle. They look out, wistfully at the view. The timer is on the table, counting down.

REMBRANDT

I'm sure gonna miss this world.

QUINN

Tell me about it. How could we ever replace the services of Professor Arturo?

(then, to Wade)

Can't you make him another bet?

WADE

Somehow, I doubt he'd take it.

(then, calling)

Boy! Hurry up with our drinks. We have to leave soon.

ARTURO

Carrying a small tray with four tall drinks on it, trudges carefully across the sand towards them.

WADE

(playfully)

Good. You remembered to bring one for yourself.

ARTURO

Yes, Miss Welles. Thank you. It was most kind of you to include me.

(he distributes the drinks, then to Wade)

May I sit?

Wade waves her arm in a regal gesture. Arturo drops the tray and plops into a seat.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

(eager)

How much time?

QUINN

(checks the timer)

About three minutes

(MORE)

QUINN (CONT'D)

(he stands, raises
his glass)

A toast! To Wade for treating us to
this lovely beach resort complete
with personal manservant.

He indicates Arturo, who curls his lip a bit. Everyone
stands, clinks glasses and drinks.

ARTURO

I may be alone in the sentiment, but
I am quite happy to be departing
this world.

With that, Quinn points the timer and opens the vortex.
Rembrandt finishes his drink, sighs deeply and steps in.

Wade steps up, turns to the professor, and waves a regal
hand.

WADE

You have honored your commitments
well. I declare you free.

She laughs and jumps into the void.

ARTURO

Thank God for that.

He strides up to the void and in. Quinn follows.

CUT TO:

EXT. A RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY - THE SLIDERS

emerge from the vortex, check themselves out first, then the
neighborhood.

REMBRANDT

How much time we have on this one, Q
Ball?

QUINN

A little more than 13 days.

ARTURO

(displeased)
Thirteen days?

WADE

What's wrong with that? Don't tell
me you're superstitious.

ARTURO

It so happens I've made a statistical analysis of the number 13 based on objective empirical data -- and it is unlucky.

QUINN

Well, we're only a block from my house...much closer than usual to our geographical point of origin. I don't think that's unlucky at all.

REMBRANDT

You mean, you think we could be home??!!

QUINN

All we have to do is look in my basement to find out.

The sliders exchange a look. Dare they hope?

They start walking, in a hurry. They soon pass

A TEENAGE HEADBANGER

carrying a BOOM BOX with CLASSICAL MUSIC blasting out of it.

THE SLIDERS

notice this anomaly. They exchange uneasy looks, unwilling to say anything that might break their hope.

EXT. QUINN'S HOUSE - DAY

The sliders arrive, look around. The first thing they notice is a plaque attached to the fence or mailbox.

WADE

(reading)

"Quinn Mallory lived here."

The sliders exchange a look - how to interpret this?

QUINN

My mom might've done that...

He tries the gate. It squeaks... this is very positive.

QUINN (CONT'D)

I still have my back door key.

The hurry around to

THE BACK DOOR

Quinn slides his key into the lock, looks at the others -- turns it.

QUINN
(excited)
It works!

INT. QUINN'S BASEMENT - DARK

The door opens at the top of the stairs -- back lighting the sliders as they hurry down the steps.

REMBRANDT
(fervent)
Oh, please...Please, let me see that
sliding machine!

Click -- a light switches on - revealing the sliders' devastated reaction.

REMBRANDT (CONT'D)
Damn!

REVERSE ANGLE - WHAT THEY SEE - THE BASEMENT

has no sliding machinery. It is filled with trophies of all shapes and sizes.

ARTURO
I told you 13 was unlucky.

Off our sliders' consternation.

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. QUINN'S BASEMENT - DAY

The sliders move through the multitude of trophies reading the plaques at their base.

QUINN

"Most Valuable Player, California High School Physics Championships?"

WADE

"People's Choice Award, College Physicist of the Year."

ARTURO

"T.V. Guide Award, Television's Most Popular Physicist???"

REMBRANDT

Hey!!! This is the Heisman Trophy. But it's for "Best College Academic!" What happened to football?

ARTURO

It would appear that on this world academics are valued in the way that sports are valued on ours. Very sensible, I must say.

Quinn, rummaging in a corner, has found a stack of magazines, all with him on the cover.

QUINN

Look at this. I'm on the cover of Time, Newsweek, Academics Illustrated, Science World...I'm like...really famous!

(then, finding another)

Hey. Wait a minute. Look at this one.

He holds it up for the others to see. It a "Newsweek" featuring a picture of Quinn and Arturo, with a big caption: "MISSING" Quinn starts rifling through it.

WADE

Maybe they slid...

ARTURO

This world certainly would have all the necessary components.

REMBRANDT

I found something.

A videotape recorder and a t.v.. Quinn runs over to it and turns it on. The image winds backwards in preview mode until Quinn releases it. Then

ON THE T.V.

QUINN

...my attempt to create the world's first anti-gravity device has taken a...

The tape is fast forwarded.

QUINN (CONT'D)

(very excited)

Our grant's been approved! It's all top secret, hush-hush, but Professor Arturo and I are gonna get the chance to prove my theory. If it works -- and I know it will -- we're gonna be able to visit other dimensions, parallel earths...There's so much we can learn.

The tape ends. Quinn shuts off the machine.

REMBRANDT

That's it. We've got it made in the shade. The machine's here, all we got to do is find it.

ARTURO

That won't be easy.

(indicates t.v.)

You heard what he said. On this world sliding was a top secret project, paid for by a government grant. The equipment could be anywhere - under lock and key.

WADE

Yeah, but as far as anyone here knows, you guys are the inventors. If you show up and want access, they'd have to give it to you.

QUINN

(leery)

I don't know. We'd have to step into the lives of our doubles here and we don't know anything about them.

WADE

(picks up a magazine)

So, read about yourselves.

(MORE)

WADE (CONT'D)

It's probably all here.

(off their uncertain
looks)

You gotta do this, guys! It's our
best shot yet to get home.

Quinn and Arturo exchange a look. What choice do they have?

CUT TO:

INT. MOTEL 12 ROOM - NIGHT

The sliders are all seated around the table, reading magazine articles. There's a stack of magazines on the floor. Wade tosses hers onto the pile.

WADE

(frustrated)

I can't believe it. Even People
magazine doesn't have any personal
information on you. It's all about
your work and your accomplishments.
Who cares about that?

ARTURO

In an academically oriented society,
that's all they would care about.

QUINN

Well, if we're gonna try to be these
guys, we have precious little to go
on.

REMBRANDT

What're you sayin'? You are these
guys. You know all the stuff they
know.

QUINN

But we don't know any of the personal
things.

REMBRANDT

The professor just said no one cares
about the personal stuff on this
world. You can get away with it.
Hell, if someone doesn't believe
you, let 'em fingerprint you.

Quinn and Arturo exchange a look. They can't get out of
this.

ARTURO

Well, we do know some things... We
know where I teach.

(MORE)

ARTURO (CONT'D)

I'm certainly capable of conducting any of the classes my alter ego taught. And as I was on an indefinite sabbatical, I should still have an office at the school.

QUINN

And I know the guys on my physics team and who the coach is. Maybe if we just go to the campus tomorrow and talk to people... Maybe someone will mention something...

CUT TO:

INT. UNIVERSITY - CORRIDOR - DAY - QUINN AND ARTURO

hurry through the relatively empty halls, but every student or teacher that they pass gapes at them in shock and wonder. Professor Myman, clearly a colleague, can scarcely believe his eyes and comes over to join them.

PROFESSOR MYMAN

Professor Arturo! When did you get back? And Quinn Mallory! I'm surprised your return wasn't on the news.

ARTURO

Yes...Well, we're not quite ready to make a public announcement yet. Actually, I was just hoping to stop in at my office.

The professor is confused. He points down the hall in the direction Quinn and Arturo have just come from.

PROFESSOR MYMAN

But your office is back there...

ARTURO

That's the Chairman's office.

PROFESSOR MYMAN

You're still the chairman.

ARTURO

(shocked, pleased)
I am?

PROFESSOR MYMAN

Of course. Professor Wertz wouldn't dare try to move in there while you were on sabbatical. But now that you're back, you'd better watch your back -- if you know what I mean.

ARTURO

Yes. Yes, thank you. Please excuse us.

He takes Quinn and hurries to

INT. CHAIRMAN ARTURO'S OUTER OFFICE

There's an assistant, Lydia, at a desk in the outer office. She's about 55, and has seen a lot of chairmen come and go. Still, she rises to her feet in shock at the sight of Arturo.

LYDIA

Professor Arturo!

Arturo recognizes her, but had trouble remembering her name on his own world. Can he chance it here?

ARTURO

Yes...Ah...Ah...How are you?

LYDIA

Don't ask. How are you?

ARTURO

The same. Please excuse us...

He goes to turn the handle on his office door. It's locked. He turns to Lydia.

LYDIA

Don't have your key?
(off his look)
Here, I'll get it.

She opens her desk drawer, pulls out a key and opens Arturo's door. Arturo and Quinn go inside and close the door.

INT. CHAIRMAN ARTURO'S INNER OFFICE

It's quite luxurious, befitting a celebrity academic on a world that reveres intellect. Arturo hurries to his desk, begins going through drawers. Quinn looks through file cabinets. Arturo finds a significant piece of paper.

ARTURO

Here's something with my address and phone number.

QUINN

Call it. Make sure it's current.

Arturo dials the phone.

WOMAN'S VOICE/LEONA

(through phone)
Hello?

Arturo reacts, confused.

ARTURO
Is this Maximilian Arturo's residence?

WOMAN'S VOICE/LEONA
Max! Where are you?

Arturo hangs up.

ARTURO
There's a woman in my house!

QUINN
She might know where the sliding
machinery is.

ARTURO
She might also have a lot of questions
that I can't possibly answer. I
think I'd better stay away from her.

The phone rings. Arturo picks it up before thinking.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
Hello?

WOMAN'S VOICE/LEONA
(through phone)
So! You are back!

Arturo slams the phone down. Gets up.

ARTURO
We'd better get out of here. You
should talk to your coach. Maybe he
knows something.

As they walk out the door, they walk right into professor
Myman.

PROFESSOR MYMAN
It's all set.

ARTURO
What's all set?

PROFESSOR MYMAN
You're going to guest lecture in my
quantum physics 214 class in twenty
minutes. You should have seen Wertz'
face when I told him.

ARTURO
I don't want to guest lecture today.

PROFESSOR MYMAN

But you have to. It's already been announced. I know I shouldn't have trapped you like this, but I couldn't resist being the first. And you do owe me one...

Obviously, Arturo has no idea what he owes.

ARTURO

(resigned)

Ah, yes...I suppose I do.

CUT TO:

INT. COLLEGE GYMNASIUM - DAY - COACH ALMQUIST (LOU WAGNER?)

He's small in size, but he's tough -- a red faced hard ass. He watches his team go through warm up calisthenics, then blows his whistle. All activity comes to an abrupt stop.

COACH ALMQUIST

All right, listen up. We're getting close to game day. I want the first team to run the steps, second team to try and hit them.

BENNISH

Whoa, man. Come on. Like what's the point?

COACH ALMQUIST

Sound mind, sound body. Focus Bennish. It's all about focus. You need this more than anyone here. Now get moving!

BENNISH

Wow. I really hate this part...

Bennish starts running up the steps of the stands. The rest of the team follows. When he reaches the top row of seats, he runs across to the next aisle.

As Bennish starts leading the team down the steps, members of the second team start throwing volleyballs at them. They fend them off. As Bennish reaches the bottom of the stairs:

COACH ALMQUIST

Elementary particles. Go!

BENNISH

Repton!

He now runs across the floor and back up the first stairs.

WING

Electron!

He follows Bennish, the line continues in the circle.

CHANEY

Meson!

VICTOR

Muon!

BOYER

Kaon!

Bennish has not yet made it across the top of the stands for the second run.

BENNISH

Neutrino!

The coach blows his whistle. The action stops.

COACH ALMQUIST

Bennish! You see what I mean? Where the hell's your concentration...

ANGLE - A DOOR

It opens and Quinn cautiously enters the gym.

COACH ALMQUIST (O.S.)

...You're supposed to be coming down the steps before you answer. You have to be dodging the balls. That's the whole point!

BENNISH

is having flashback problems.

BENNISH

I saw the balls, man! I still see them...

He watches another (imaginary) one float by as Boyer spots Quinn and reacts, stunned.

COACH ALMQUIST

What's your problem, Boyer? You seeing balls, too?

BOYER

(pointing)

It's Quinn...

Now the other players see him. They all gape, disbelieving.

COACH ALMQUIST

What are you guys trying to pull?
 (he turns, sees Quinn)
 I'll be damned...If you're not a
 sight for sore eyes!

QUINN

doesn't know what to do. He takes an uncertain step towards them.

QUINN

Hi guys.

COACH ALMQUIST

Hi guys? I bend the rules for you
 till they look like a pretzel, then
 you just disappear for three months,
 and all you can say is "Hi guys?" I
 oughta wring your neck!

QUINN

I'm sorry, Coach. Can I maybe talk
 to you in private?

COACH ALMQUIST

You want to come back on the team,
 I'll make all the time you want. If
 not, I need every minute to get these
 lunkheads ready for Stanford.

Quinn reacts - what to do?

QUINN

Yeah. If you really want me, I guess
 I'll come back.

COACH ALMQUIST

(to the team)
 Take five, boys. Your captain's
 back and he wants to have a chat
 with me.

He hurries off towards Quinn.

BENNISH

looks pissed off. Victor notices, elbows Boyer.

VICTOR

Our new ex-captain seems displeased.

BOYER

How would you feel if you could've
 been a first round draft pick and
 Mallory waltzed in and took your

(MORE)

BOYER (CONT'D)
spot? Bennis just saw a few million
bucks go bye-bye.

CUT TO:

INT. LECTURE HALL - ARTURO

stands before a room packed with adoring students who hang
on his every word. This, he quite likes.

ARTURO
Proving that these other dimensions
aren't flat, however, is a daunting
mathematical task, and it may be up
to the Columbus of our time to prove
this theory empirically rather than
mathematically...

ANGLE - A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN

leaning against the classroom wall. She's older than most
of the other students, better dressed. She watches the
professor with catlike inscrutability.

ARTURO

notices her, and she unnerves him. It is a struggle for him
to keep his eyes off her and focus on his lecture.

ARTURO
So...you can see...String Theory has
several faults...Not that it is likely
to fall into complete disrepute...In
fact, it can remain almost
intact...just a few mathematical
revisions here and there...

ON THE BEAUTIFUL WOMAN'S CLEAVAGE - ARTURO'S POV

ARTURO (O.S.)
...to explain why certain dimensions
are larger than others...

The woman doesn't seem to mind. She smiles at him.

ARTURO

has forgotten where he is, what he's doing. He's on automatic
pilot.

ARTURO
Next class, I will discuss why real
time is actually imaginary time, and
imaginary time is really real time.

The BELL RINGS, scaring him. And the class gives him a standing ovation.

THE BEAUTIFUL WOMAN

takes some papers out of her briefcase and approaches Arturo. She waits politely for the applause to die down and the rest of the class to start to leave. Arturo, utterly enchanted with the response to his lecture, turns to the woman, eager to see what new delight she will present.

ARTURO

Can I help you?

BEAUTIFUL WOMAN

Very much.

She hands Arturo her papers. He looks at them, confused.

ARTURO

What's this?

BEAUTIFUL WOMAN

I'm a process server. Your wife's suing you for divorce.

Off Arturo's shattered reaction

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. MOTEL 12 - SLIDERS ROOM - MORNING

Wade, in her "nightgown" -- an oversized "California University" T-shirt -- pounds on the bathroom door.

WADE

Hey! If you use up all the hot water again I'm gonna kill you! You hear me, Mr. Superstar?

No response from behind the door except the continuing SOUND of a SHOWER. Wade steams.

Arturo is rushing to get dressed. He's looking for his pants, which happen to be on the chair that Rembrandt is sitting in.

ARTURO

Life is cruel! The moment I learn I have a wife I'm being sued for divorce. I can't believe I have to go through this again.

REMBRANDT

(surprised)

You were married?

ARTURO

(dripping loathing)

To Atilla the Hun-ess. She pillaged my life, laying waste to everything she touched.

WADE

(playful)

Including you?

ARTURO

(deadly earnest)

Especially me.

(beat)

And now this! It's so typical.

Rembrandt and Wade exchange a confused look.

WADE

What's so typical?

ARTURO

It's typical that this parasite, this millstone around my neck, would have the gall to claim she co-authored my textbooks!

REMBRANDT

They're not your textbooks, Professor.
And it's not your fight. I don't
know why you're taking it so
seriously.

ARTURO

It's my fight now! I cannot allow
such an absurd allegation to go
unchallenged. This woman will not
do to me -- or whoever -- what my
wife did.

WADE

How do you know she didn't help write
the books?

ARTURO

Because no Maximilian Arturo would
need help.

Rembrandt gets up, revealing the pants. Wade gets them and
hands them to Arturo during:

REMBRANDT

So what? Professor, you gotta let
go of your ego here and concentrate
on finding the sliding machine.
That's all that matters.

Arturo reacts to his horribly wrinkled pants.

ARTURO

Good Lord! They look like a
rhinoceros hide.

He puts them on a hanger and opens the bathroom door. A
huge CLOUD OF STEAM escapes. Wade reacts, steamed.

WADE

(calling into bathroom)
You're history, Mallory!

Arturo hangs the pants on a hook just inside the bathroom,
then closes the door again.

ARTURO

(to Rembrandt)
Perhaps you're right. If possible,
I'll get them to delay the legal
proceedings until after we slide.

WADE

(pounds on the bathroom
door again)
Quinn!

ARTURO

Let him be. The opening round of the NCAA Championship in physics is today. He's probably trying to concentrate on his game.

Rembrandt reacts, intrigued.

WADE

Easy for you to say. You've already had your shower.

REMBRANDT

This NCAA Championship...Would that be anything like the March Madness back home?

ARTURO

I've not noticed any more insanity in March than in the other months.

REMBRANDT

The college basketball tournament. The Final Four. What Quinn's doing is probably this world's version of that...

ARTURO

Probably.

REMBRANDT

Wade, how much money you got left from your fancy job on bossy female world?

WADE

(doesn't like the sound of this)

Why?

REMBRANDT

'Cause Quinn's like the Shaquille O'Neal of his team and he's been missing. If they have bookies here, and the bookies don't know Quinn's back yet, we could get some killer odds on the game today.

WADE

You want to bet my money?

REMBRANDT

Hey, so far the professor doesn't have a clue where the sliding machine is. If we win enough money, maybe we can buy the stuff Q-ball needs to build another one.

Wade and Arturo exchange a look. It seems like a good idea.

WADE

I still have about twelve hundred dollars. I guess we could risk a thousand of it--so long as we win.

REMBRANDT

We should bet it all. This is the only chance we'll get at the big odds.

WADE

How big?

CUT TO:

BIG AL MOOLERI

Eleven to one.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL - WADE AND REMBRANDT IN

INT. BIG AL'S BOOKIE PARLOR - DAY

It's like any "sports book" establishment, with numerous t.v. monitors, comfortable seating, waitress service, and a collection of gambler types hanging out.

Rembrandt forks over a wad of bills.

REMBRANDT

Twelve hundred and forty one dollars on Cal U.

Big Al takes the money and writes them a marker.

BIG AL MOOLERI

Nil desperandum.

REMBRANDT

(taking the marker)
What's that mean?

BIG AL MOOLERI

Never say die.

As they move away from Big Al, towards the seating area.

WADE

He's in for a surprise, isn't he?

Rembrandt shushes her, but it's too late. Big Al reacts. He's overheard her, and he's suspicious.

REMBRANDT
 (pointing to one of
 the t.v. monitors)
Chess matches in a bookie joint.
 Never thought I'd see that.

They have a seat and look at

ANOTHER (BIG SCREEN) T.V. MONITOR - ON THE N.C.A.A. LOGO

for the National Collegiate Academic Association. It's followed by several STILLS of the 1994 Cal. U. team to the accompaniment of NFL FILMS MUSIC and a deep-toned overly important NARRATOR.

NARRATOR

The California University Physics Team of 1994 marched to their second consecutive National Championship through some of the strongest teams ever to grace the hardwood in a single year. Harvard, Stanford, M.I.T., and the upstart Alcorn State. Yet it was not enough for California University to simply beat their opposition, they literally obliterated it under wave upon wave of genius. Wing, Boyer, Federowski and three time most valuable physicist, Quinn Mallory. These were the stallions of the 1994 mindscape; destined to be legends in the history of Mindgame.

The IMAGE on the T.V. CUTS TO A COMMERCIAL:

A TITLE ON BLACK: "TODAY'S GAME IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY:"

A SEPARATE TITLE: The Nike logo.

FADE IN:

INT. A RICHLY APPOINTED OFFICE (ARTURO OFFICE REDRESS)

Lee Iococca leans back in a chair, a thoughtful expression on his face and his Nike-clad feet on the desk.

FADE UP TITLE: "Just think it."

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. BROADCAST BOOTH - OVERLOOKING A HARDWOOD FLOOR

with a 36 foot square "court" laid out on it. The court is divided into 4 quarter sections, 18 feet by 18 feet each.

The "quarters" are each divided into nine smaller squares, 6 foot by 6 foot -- these are numbered 1-36. Finally, a 6' foot in diameter circle is drawn in the center of the court.

Seated in the broadcast booth are two famous announcers. For the sake of fondest wishes, we'll call them Terry Bradshaw and John Madden. Behind them, the PLAYERS come out on the floor and start to stretch and warm up. As the FANS start to notice Quinn, the NOISE LEVEL RISES.

BRADSHAW

Well, this is it. The game we've been waiting for. The first real test of how Cal. U. can hold up in this tournament without their all star team leader, Quinn Mallory.

MADDEN

Wow. The crowd's sure into this. It sounds like the finals down there already - and this is just the quarter finals.

(then, looking at his monitor, stunned)

Holy cow! Do you see what I see?

SWITCH TO - LONG SHOT - THE PLAYERS

Madden's "tele-strator" draws a circle around Quinn.

MADDEN (O.S.)

That's Quinn Mallory down there!

INTERCUT - WADE JUMPING UP AND DOWN AND CLAPPING - BIG AL PUTTING TWO AND TWO TOGETHER

MADDEN (O.S.)

How the heck did that happen. And look there...This is incredible...

(he draws a circle around Bennish)

That's Conrad Bennish wearing a Stanford uniform...

ANGLE T.V. - BRADSHAW AND MADDEN

BRADSHAW

(holding his earpiece)

I'm just getting it now. Bennish transferred back to Stanford when Mallory returned and took his spot.

MADDEN

Can he do that? Something seems wrong there. When did he transfer from Stanford to Cal?

BRADSHAW

Eighty nine days ago.

MADDEN

Oh. Okay, that's it, then. Boy, coach Almquist took a big chance cutting Bennish before the 90 day limit. Bennish knows the whole California game plan.

BRADSHAW

It just goes to show you how valuable a player Quinn Mallory is. No matter what the cost, coach Almquist wanted him on the floor. Carl Sagan is down there, let's see if he can get a word with the coach.

SWITCH TO - THE SIDELINES

Carl Sagan approaches Coach Almquist.

CARL SAGAN

Coach, I know it's just before game time, but everyone wants to know - Where was Quinn Mallory for the last three months?

COACH ALMQUIST

I won't be talking about that. Mallory didn't tell me, and it's not my business to go poking into the personal affairs of my players. He said he had a good reason and I took him at his word.

SWITCH TO - THE PLAYERS - TAKING OFF THEIR WARM-UP SUITS

Cal.'s jerseys are WHITE, Stanford's are RED. We may notice that each Cal. player wears a BRIGHT RED FLOWER and each Stanford player wears a WHITE FLOWER protruding from a thin pocket on their jerseys that is clearly designed to hold the stem. While the players undress:

MADDEN (O.S.)

I think the coach is right. It's in bad taste to ask that kind of question, no matter how curious we may be.

(beat)

Here comes the ref for the tip off.

SWITCH TO - CENTER COURT - THE REF - EIGHT PLAYERS

Quinn, Wing, Boyer and Victor (for Cal) take their positions along one side of the center circle.

Bennish and Stanford Players 2, 3 and 4 line up on the opposite side of the mid-line. Each player now carries a small REMOTE CONTROL BOX. The ref could well be Richard Dawson.

MADDEN (O.S.)

Look at this! Mallory's lined up on the inside! Either Coach Alquist is doing a little psych of his own or Mallory must still be a little rusty. Here's the drop!

A LONG TUBE lowers down from above the very center of the court. At the end of the tube is a FEATHER, which is DROPPED when it's about 8 feet high. The players frantically try to blow the feather into the opposing team's court while:

THE REF

Name a characteristic of Relativity.

The players all hit buttons on their remote controls, but only Quinn's lights up, so presumably he was fastest. Meanwhile, they're all still blowing and the feather is getting lower.

THE REF (CONT'D)

Mr. Mallory.

As Quinn speaks, Bennish jumps up in the air and blows the feather down right at Quinn. His teammates dive to their knees trying to blow it back across the line, but they can't get to it fast enough. It touches down on the Cal side.

QUINN

No absolute time.

THE REF

Survey of top 100 physicists said:

ON THE SCOREBOARD - A DISPLAY LIGHTS UP THAT READS:

"No Absolute Time - 71" A BELL RINGS as the Cal score goes from 0 to 7.1

BACK TO THE GAME

The ref uses football-like officiating signals to punctuate:

THE REF

"White" gets the points. "Red" wins the drop and has "first run."

The Stanford players high five exuberantly.

MADDEN (O.S.)

It's too early for that kind of celebrating. Cal's defense is just too strong...

Stanford player #2, Weiss, who shares square 22 with Bennish, moves into square 17. Quinn, confused, looks to coach Almquist, who gets pissed off and points emphatically to Boyer. Quinn taps his remote and Boyer's remote lights up.

MADDEN (O.S.)

Boy! Mallory looks like he doesn't know what he's doing down there. It's obvious Boyer has to defend 17.

BRADSHAW

It looks like they want to set Mallory up for an early one on one with Bennish, but I don't know if Quinn's ready for that.

Boyer works his remote control while:

THE REF

Remember, you must lock in your hazard before you psych.

BOYER

Locked.

THE REF

Your psych, please.

BOYER

(to Weiss)

It's a butterfly tattoo, and there's only one way I could have seen it.

Weiss reacts, tries to shrug it off. At the same time Boyer hits a button on his remote. A puff of smoke and a BEE are released. The bee goes right for Weiss' flower, buzzing around Weiss' head as:

THE REF

Properties of a perfect reflector:

WEISS

(distracted)

Non-visible radiation.

THE REF

Survey said:

INSERT - SCOREBOARD

A BUZZER SOUNDS as a big "X" goes over the words "Non-visible Radiation." The Stanford score remains zero.

A GRAPHIC shows the "square possessions" still evenly divided. Squares 1 through 18 are shown in white, 19 through 36 in red.

BRADSHAW

Great defense! So California holds on to square 17 for now.

MADDEN (O.S.)

You know, I always liked to use the bee thing early. Later on, when they crank up the air conditioning, that smoke dissipates so fast -- half the time the bee turns around and goes after your own flower.

BACK TO THE GAME

The ref uses the football signal for "first down."

THE REF

"White" runs.

BRADSHAW (O.S.)

How about Boyer's psych? Terrific research!

MADDEN (O.S.)

It's great coaching. That's what makes this Cal team so tough.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BOOKIE PARLOR - LATER - WADE AND REMBRANDT

are cringing in horror as they watch, while over:

MADDEN (O.S.)

See, now I think that was a real mistake from the start. You got the guy all sticky from the Jello drop, why go for the high pressure hose? I mean, you're just washing him off.

BRADSHAW (O.S.)

He was probably trying to short out Bennish's controller.

MADDEN (O.S.)

Well, sure. But Bennish's hands are way too fast for that.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BOOKIE PARLOR - LATER - TRACK PAST WADE AND REMBRANDT

and all the patrons in the joint. They're all on the edge of their seats, while:

BRADSHAW (O.S.)

So it all comes down to the last square. Mallory trying to pull off the miracle against Bennish.

MADDEN (O.S.)

It really would be a miracle, too, because so far today Bennish has totally dominated this match up...

ANGLE - THE BIG SCREEN T.V. - SPLIT SCREEN DISPLAY

On one side, Quinn is in square 31, Bennish is in square 32, about to face off against each other.

On the other (smaller) side is the GRAPHIC, showing the current "Square possessions." The red squares now significantly outnumber the whites -- but white controls the corner squares 6 and 36, as well as edge square 7. The scoreboard shows Stanford leading by 20.7 points.

BRADSHAW (O.S.)

(hushed)

It's Quinn's serve...

WIPE TO FULL SCREEN - TIGHT ON QUINN AND BENNISH

sweating profusely, each looking worn and battle scarred. Their jerseys are filthy. The floor is barely recognizable. It looks like a war zone, strewn with a variety of slime and debris.

Quinn punches in the hazard on his controller.

QUINN

Locked.

THE REF

Psych and serve, please.

Quinn starts humming "MANDY" by Barry Manilow. Bennish struggles to maintain focus but it's driving him nuts. He looks over to the ref.

BENNISH

It's too long, man...Call the foul...Call the foul!

Quinn pushes the final button on his controller just as:

QUINN

Name the Big Bang's consequent!

Bennish turns from the ref to Quinn, disoriented. He tries to focus.

BENNISH

The big...

A huge "heavy bag" like those used by boxers, comes bearing down on Bennish at high speed from the side. He just sees it out of the corner of his eye and at the last second, sidesteps out of it's path. His foot, however, hits a boundary line of the box as:

BENNISH (CONT'D)

...Crunch!

THE REF

(pointing emphatically
to the foot)

Out of bounds!!! Out of bounds!!!
Possession "White!"

Bennish goes wild with rage, protesting the call while

MADDEN (O.S.)

Holy cow! I think that'll do it!
Let's see...

THE GRAPHIC - SQUARE 31 (IN THE LOWER LEFT CORNER) TURNS FROM RED TO WHITE. THEN, SQUARES 13, 19, AND 25 (ALONG THE LEFT EDGE) TURN FROM RED TO WHITE, AS DO 11, 16, 21 AND 26 (CENTER DIAGONAL) AND 32 THROUGH 35 (ALONG THE BOTTOM). ALL TOLD, 11 SQUARES CHANGE COLOR AS 11 POINTS ARE DEDUCTED FROM THE STANFORD TOTAL AND ADDED TO THE CAL. TOTAL.

MADDEN (O.S.)

...Eleven squares change color!
That's a 22 point swing! Cal wins!
Cal wins!!

ANGLE WADE AND REMBRANDT

leaping up and down, hugging and screaming with joy.

BRADSHAW (O.S.)

Conrad Bennish is absolutely beside himself. He's going after Mallory, the ref, even his own teammates...

MADDEN (O.S.)

That's just bad sportsmanship. You hate to see that kind of thing. It was obvious Mallory had him totally psyched out on that play.

Wade and Rembrandt run to the counter to collect their money.

BRADSHAW (O.S.)
Mallory's always had that ability to
come through in the clutch...

AT THE COUNTER - BIG AL

counts the money into Rembrandt's hand. Wade suppresses
squeals of delight.

BIG AL MOOLERI
Fourteen thousand, eight hundred and
92 dollars.

REMBRANDT
Yes!!!!

He and Wade hurry away. Big Al leans over to a nearby
lieutenant.

BIG AL MOOLERI
(sotto)
Follow them.

The lieutenant nods as we

CUT TO:

INT. MOTEL 12 - LATER - WADE AND REMBRANDT

are still giddy as the door opens and Arturo enters, immersed
in misery.

ARTURO
What a positively appalling day! My
lawyer informed me that we cannot
delay the arbitration because I am
considered a flight risk, so I had
to spend the entire day boning up on
how drastically overextended my
finances are.

WADE
Don't you want to know how our bet
went?

Arturo reacts.

ARTURO
I'm sorry, I'd completely forgotten...

Before he can finish, the door opens again. It's Quinn,
cleaned up, but still flushed with victory. There are several
different colors of lip stick adorning his face. Wade reacts
with displeasure.

WADE

Let me be the last woman in the city
to congratulate you.

QUINN

(guilty, wipes his
face)

I couldn't keep them away...

WADE

(lying)

It's no big deal...

The door opens behind Quinn as he asks

QUINN

How much did we win?

Big Al and his even bigger lieutenant let themselves in.

BIG AL MOOLERI

Fourteen thousand eight hundred and
92 dollars. I would have thought
you were smarter than this, Mr.
Mallory -- but I suppose desperate
men do desperate deeds.

His lieutenant draws a gun from a shoulder holster as Big Al
gently closes the door. Off the sliders deeply concerned
look

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. MOTEL 12 - SLIDERS ROOM - AS BEFORE

Big Al's lieutenant holds a gun on the sliders while

BIG AL MOOLERI

(to Quinn)

While I found it personally offensive that you chose to disappear rather than pay what you owed me, I did have to acknowledge that it was an efficacious decision from your perspective. On the other hand, this penny ante swindle of yours defies credulity.

Rembrandt reacts - "Huh?"

QUINN

You're saying I owe you money?

BIG AL MOOLERI

You thought I'd forget in a scant 3 months?

WADE

(holds up the cash)

We'll pay you out of our winnings.

Big Al takes the money, quickly counts some off the top.

BIG AL MOOLERI

My dear, you stole this money from me -- inasmuch as you knew Quinn would be playing today. Besides, 14 thousand makes a very small dent in a debt of over half a million.

The sliders react with complete dismay. Quinn falls into a chair.

QUINN

I owe you half a million dollars?

BIG AL MOOLERI

What on earth has happened to your memory? You're supposed to have a good head for numbers. In any case, I am prepared to excuse the debt - provided that in the upcoming semi-final game you see to it that your team fails to cover the point spread {nitor in adversum}...

(MORE)

BIG AL MOOLERI (CONT'D)
 (off Quinn's blank
 look)
 In defiance of the odds...

QUINN
 You expect me to shave points?

BIG AL MOOLERI
 Only if you want to remain alive.
 You do, don't you?
 (off Quinn's dazed
 nod)
 Good. Then we have a deal. As a
 show of good faith, here's your
 original wager. If you want to bet
 on the semi finals, I'd suggest you
 bet against Cal.

He drops Wade's \$1241 on the table. The two mobsters leave.

ARTURO
 Good Lord! How much worse can things
 get? No wonder our counterparts
 haven't returned from their slide.
 Their lives here are utter hell!

QUINN
 And we have to live them for another
 8 days.

REMBRANDT
 Are you gonna shave the points?

QUINN
 I'm not responsible for the mess I'm
 in, and I'm certainly not responsible
 for my double's reputation.

WADE
 (surprised)
 So, you're gonna do it?

QUINN
 Only if I have to.

CUT TO:

INT. A CONFERENCE ROOM - TWO DAYS LATER

Arturo and his lawyer sit on one side of the conference table. Leona Arturo, a good looking woman of about 40, and her lawyer sit on the other. Both teams are bolstered by reams of paperwork before them. It appears they've been at this for some time. Only Leona looks fresh, fueled by revenge and greed.

LEONA

Once again, Max, feel free to contest this. I'm ready. I had a private eye following you for the last year. I have pictures to substantiate a dozen "liaisons" with buxom co-eds. I'd love your adoring public to know about them.

ARTURO

(weary)

Very well, forget it... I waive my interest in the Manhattan condo and the beach house in Bimini. Are we done with the real estate now?

LEONA

All except for the townhouse on Polk Street.

Arturo reacts in confusion, sorts through his paperwork.

ARTURO

I don't have a townhouse on Polk Street.

LEONA

You think I don't know about the little gift from Uncle Sam where you spent all your time before you disappeared? Where you and Quinn Mallory built your precious gizmo?

Arturo reacts with the realization that she means the location of the slider machinery. He tries to grab the piece of paper she's referencing, but she's too fast and pulls it away.

ARTURO

Let me see that!

LEONA

Does it matter?

ARTURO

I want that townhouse!

LEONA

What will you give me for it?

ARTURO

I don't have anything. You've taken it all.

LEONA

You have sole authorship of all those textbooks...

Arturo reacts - he had sole authorship.

CUT TO:

INT. "MINDGAME" ARENA - LATER - WADE AND REMBRANDT

stand up and stretch at their court side seats as cheerleaders run out on the floor and go through their routine.

P.A. ANNOUNCER
The halftime score is California
University 281.3, Alcorn State 52.

REMBRANDT
(already an expert)
Not much of a game.

WADE
(worried)
California's already beating the
spread by over a hundred points!

Quinn jogs away from his team's bench and joins Wade and Rembrandt. He's deeply troubled.

QUINN
Alcorn State is totally tanking.
It's like we can't lose a point.
(sotto)
I couldn't blow this lead if I wanted
to.

ANGLE ARTURO

showing his ticket to an usher at the end of the row and being allowed to pass. He joins the other sliders.

ARTURO
Impressive seats.

QUINN
(matter of fact)
Yeah, the alumni association makes
sure I get the best seats in the
house.
(then)
How'd the arbitration go?

ARTURO
The good news is that I found out
where the sliding machinery is and
we can have access to it...

All the sliders react with enthusiasm.

QUINN
 (very excited)
 That's great! I don't have to worry
 about the score... We can slide out
 right after the game!

Arturo is about to interrupt, but coach Almquist beats him
 to it, calling from across the floor.

COACH ALMQUIST
 Hey Mallory! Get your butt over
 here! We still have a second half
 to play!

QUINN
 (moving off)
 Gotta go...

He hurries back across the floor and joins his teammates.
 Arturo, concerned, looks at Rembrandt.

ARTURO
 What is the score?

REMBRANDT
 California's leading by 231 points.

ARTURO
 That's a problem.

WADE
 Why? If we can slide...?

ARTURO
 We can't slide. We can't get into
 the townhouse where the machinery is
 until the divorce agreement is signed,
 and the papers won't even be drawn
 up until tomorrow.

REMBRANDT
 Maybe we could, you know, break in?

ARTURO
 I don't know the address yet -- And
 I can't ask what it is without
 revealing I'm not really that fiendish
 harpy's husband.

WADE
 Oh, my God. They're gonna kill Quinn!

ARTURO
 No they won't!
 (MORE)

ARTURO (CONT'D)

We'll hide in this building until late tonight, then we'll take it on the lam until we can slide. We'll stay in a different motel. They won't find us.

CUT TO:

EXT. ARENA EXIT - NIGHT - ANGLE A DOOR

It cracks open and Quinn sticks his head out, looks around quickly. He comes out further, more confident, and turns back to the others, inside.

QUINN

The coast is clear. Let's go!

The sliders come out the door and start running across the open space of the empty parking lot. They get about halfway before a stretch limo, slowly circling the building, appears and accelerates sharply to cut them off.

Big Al and his lieutenant get out of the vehicle.

BIG AL MOOLERI

If I was prone to paranoia, I'd think you were trying to avoid me.

QUINN

There was nothing I could do. It was just a rout.

BIG AL MOOLERI

(soothing)

I know.

(then, a bit disgusted)

The truth is, an eastern syndicate got to your rivals. Their whole team was in on it.

ARTURO

Is this entire planet corrupt?

BIG AL MOOLERI

(sighs)

I know. It's getting to the point where it's not fun anymore.

(brighter, to Quinn)

But your opponent in the finals, M.I.T., will play to win. So you can make things right on Saturday.

REMBRANDT

M.I.T. is an honest team?

BIG AL MOOLERI

Don't be absurd. Their alumni just pay the players more than we can afford to bribe them.

(to Quinn)

Until Saturday, then.

Big Al and his lieutenant get back in the limo and it drives off.

ARTURO

(delighted)

We're safe. The day after tomorrow we'll get into the townhouse, and by Saturday we'll be long gone.

WADE

Home -- with any luck at all.

The sliders exchange a look - how they would all love to be home.

CUT TO:

EXT. POLK STREET - TWO DAYS LATER - THE SLIDERS

walk up the steps of an inconspicuous brownstone. Arturo removes a key from his pocket, hesitates before trying it.

ARTURO

It would be just like that woman to sell me a key that didn't fit.

WADE

Just try it, professor.

He inserts the key, turns it.

ARTURO

(pleased)

It works!

He opens the door and the sliders hurry inside.

INT. BROWNSTONE TOWNHOUSE - WITH THE SLIDERS

They're in a hall, with a stairway going to a second floor and an entry into a perfectly normal looking living room. Arturo starts to get nervous.

ARTURO

The witch tricked me!

REMBRANDT

Now hold on, I'll check upstairs.

He runs up the stairs, looks in the rooms.

REMBRANDT (O.S.)
 (calling down)
 Bedroom... Bedroom... Bathroom...
 Bedroom... Closet. That's it.

He reappears and comes down the stairs with a lot less bounce than he went up.

REMBRANDT (CONT'D)
 If it's any consolation, the master
 bedroom's very nice.

Arturo is not consoled. The sliders proceed down the hallway. It opens into a dining room next.

WADE
 Pretty curtains.

Quinn opens a door in the hall.

QUINN
 (disappointed)
 Closet.

He spots another door ahead, hurries and gets there first, opens it.

QUINN (CONT'D)
 (relishing it)
 Basement!

The other sliders race for the door.

INT. BASEMENT - DARK

as the sliders clamber down the steps - back lit as in the teaser.

WADE
 Where's the light switch?
 (then)
 Ouch!

ARTURO
 Sorry.

Suddenly, a CLICK, and the lights come on to reveal

THE SLIDING EQUIPMENT

looking just as it does in Quinn's real home. The sliders let out a jubilant yelp. They jump up and down dancing with each other. They're ecstatic. Finally

ARTURO
 All right. Let's start reconfiguring
 it to take us home.

Quinn moves to one of the control panels, is about to punch some buttons and stops, horrified.

QUINN

We can't!

WADE

What do you mean, "We can't?"
Everything's here!

QUINN

But it's in use! If I change any of these settings, the Quinn and Arturo who built this will be stranded wherever they are.

REMBRANDT

With all the trouble they're in, they're not gonna want to come back here anyway.

ARTURO

(grim)

But we don't know where they are. We could strand them on a world about to have a nuclear war, or one with computerized monsters running loose -- Who knows? We can't do that to them. It is their device.

REMBRANDT

This is too cruel!

WADE

(disgusted)

So, we're still stuck here.

QUINN

And I've still got to throw the game on Saturday.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

CLOSE ANGLE - A TELEVISION SET - A RAP VIDEO

in progress, featuring FOUR AFRICAN AMERICAN YOUTHS standing under a lamp post in the mean streets of the city.

The leader is a thin, birdlike youth wearing a backwards baseball cap and round glasses -- the other three guys are considerably bigger and tougher looking. The video is shot in BLACK AND WHITE -- the guys have the look and attitude of classic gangster rappers...

RAPPER #2

Yo homes, what's up?

LEADER

What's up with you?

RAPPER #2

What we gonna say, what we gonna do?
Where we gonna go, what we gonna
see?

LEADER

We're goin' to the LI-BRAR-REE!

SMASHCUT to the four rappers coming straight at us down the aisle of the public library, still possessing a menacing attitude...

LEADER (CONT'D)

I'm moving down the aisle with my
homeys in tow... We're goovin in the
home of the librarian ho.

(passing bookish
librarian)

She checks us out from behind thick
glasses... We walk right past and we
wiggle our (censored beep)

Cut to the rappers moving between the bookshelves...

LEADER (CONT'D)

Hemingway... Lawrence... Chekov and
Miller... Fitzgerald was a freak,
Mailer is a killer.

LIBRARIAN

Quiet pleeease!
Quiet pleeease!

NEW ANGLE as the rappers are all sitting around a table, reading books -- Tolstoy, Dostoyevski, William Buckley and Gore Vidal...

LEADER

The silence is golden
 To books I am beholden
 I know I'm bad 'cus of the
 knowledge that I'm holdin'
 (aggressive, into
 camera)
 And I give you one warnin'
 there will be no repeats
 get out of my face
 while I'm readin' my Keats

The last shot is of the leader and his three man crew nodding to the beat as they exit the library, each holding a stack of books they've just checked out.

The name of the song and the group appear as the BEAT SLOWLY
 FADES: **Library Rapp... by MC Poindexter and The Study Crew**

QUINN (O.S.)

Rembrandt, turn that off, I think
 I'm on to something.

As the set clicks off, PULL BACK TO REVEAL

INT. TOWNHOUSE BASEMENT (QUINN BASEMENT REDRESS) - DAY

Quinn is at the workbench, soldering on a tiny circuit board.

REMBRANDT

What're you doing?

QUINN

Sssh. Please. It's a very delicate
 job. If the connection's not perfect,
 next time we slide we could be trapped
 in the void.

Rembrandt reacts -- silently -- not about to disturb Quinn.

Quinn concentrates on his work, completes it and breathes a sigh of relief. Just then, Wade and Arturo come down the basement steps.

WADE

We checked us out of the motel.

ARTURO

(indicating the house)
 Considering what this place cost, we
 may as well make use of it until we
 slide.

WADE

I don't care what it cost. It's not
 your money anyhow.

(MORE)

WADE (CONT'D)

And it's great just to be living in a house again -- even if it's only for a few days.

QUINN

(indicates the timer)

If what I just did works, you may be back in your own house again sooner than you think.

WADE

(excited)

You fixed it?

QUINN

Not exactly. I couldn't touch the fused circuits without breaking the last contact with my sliding machinery. And if I did that, we'd be stranded forever.

ARTURO

So what did you do?

QUINN

I added a bypass circuit that can use this sliding machine as a kind of a inter dimensional mirror. If we leave from the same spot where we arrived, it should reflect us back the way we came. Hopefully, we can retrace our steps all the way home.

REMBRANDT

Oh, no. You mean we'll have to go back though plague world and ice world and tidal wave world and all those other horrible worlds you dragged me through since you snatched my Cadillac off the street?

WADE

(remembering)

They haven't all been horrible.

QUINN

But we would have to pass through all of them again. The thing is, if we went back, at least we'd know we'd get home again. The way it is now, it could be a million to one shot -- or worse.

WADE

(to Arturo, frightened)

Is that true?...

ARTURO

Judging by what we've seen so far,
I'm afraid it is. There could be
nearly an infinite number of parallel
earths. Unless we try this, or find
some other way to build or access
another sliding machine, I doubt
we'll ever get home.

QUINN

So is everyone agreed? We use the
bypass and try to retrace our steps?

The sliders solemnly nod. Quinn closes the case on the timer.
The DOORBELL RINGS. The sliders exchange a look - "Who could
that be?" They start up the basement stairs.

AT THE FRONT DOOR

ARTURO

Who is it?

BIG AL MOOLERI (O.S.)

It's your friend Big Al.

The sliders consider - should they open it?

BIG AL MOOLERI (O.S.)

(off their silence)

You've already spoken. It's too
late to convince me you're not there --
besides, my companion has excellent
lock-picking skills.

Arturo opens the door. Big Al and his lieutenant stroll in.

BIG AL MOOLERI (CONT'D)

Thank you so much.

Big Al wanders into the LIVING ROOM, looks around.

BIG AL MOOLERI (CONT'D)

Nice place.

(touching the fabric)

Nice curtains.

Wade reacts, validated.

QUINN

How did you find us?

BIG AL MOOLERI

I never lost you. Inasmuch as you'd
already skipped out on me in the
past, I thought it prudent to keep
you under surveillance.

(MORE)

BIG AL MOOLERI (CONT'D)

As it turned out, that was a very wise decision on my part. Nonetheless, I have to be concerned. You know why?

QUINN

Why?

BIG AL MOOLERI

California is favored by three points, which means I've promised to kill you if you win by more than two. The trouble is, in all the excitement and confusion of the finals, you might be able to get away again.

He picks up a remote control, points it at the television, presses a button. The t.v. comes on.

BIG AL MOOLERI (CONT'D)

Big screen. Good reception. Cable.
(turns off set,
satisfied)

So here's what I'm gonna do.

(indicates lieutenant)

Lenny and I are going to watch the big game here on Saturday. With you three...

(indicates Arturo,
Wade and Rembrandt,
then turns back to
Quinn)

They can't get away. You beat the spread, they die.

QUINN

But they didn't do anything to you!

REMBRANDT

Yeah! We're totally innocent! It's not fair.

BIG AL MOOLERI

This is an unjust world. But you guarantee their safety with your cooperation.

QUINN

But if something goes wrong -- and we beat the spread -- if I came back here, would you let them go?

BIG AL MOOLERI

My goodness! How noble of you. Yes.

(MORE)

BIG AL MOOLERI (CONT'D)

A gesture like that must be worth something. If you beat the spread and arrive back here within an hour after the game, I will take your life instead of theirs.

QUINN

Thank you.

Big Al heads for the door. His lieutenant opens it for him.

BIG AL MOOLERI

You're welcome. Till Saturday, then.
(at the door, an
afterthought)
And just to be safe, we'll continue
the surveillance.

They leave. The sliders look at each other, concerned.

WADE

(to Quinn)

What are you gonna do?

QUINN

Are you crazy? What do you think
I'm gonna do? I'm gonna play to
lose.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. "MINDGAME ARENA" - NIGHT

CLOSE UP - SLOW MOTION - A FEATHER - FALLING, FALLING

then RISING and falling again in pure silence. It seems to
take forever to come down. FADE UP CROWD NOISE.

Suddenly the crowd noise is raucous, deafening, and the
feather starts to free fall in real time.

TILT DOWN AND PULL BACK QUICKLY TO REVEAL the PLAYERS, blowing
at it like mad. CAMERA should be hand held and erratic --
moving from player to player.

THE REF

Mr. Boyer.

BOYER

Gravitation!

The feather is still in the air, all eight players frantically
blowing, in danger of hyperventilating.

THE REF
 Survey of 100 top physicists said!
 (a BELL rings)
 Feather still aloft. Name a basic
 unit of force.

One of the MIT players controllers lights up and buzzes.

THE REF (CONT'D)
 Mr. Wilkes.

WILKES
 A dyne.

The feather lands on the California side.

THE REF
 Survey said!
 (a BELL rings)
 Points - "Blue" "Blue" wins the
 drop.
 (hand signals)
 First run!

The MIT coach signals in a play. Then an MIT player (Powers)
 fakes and dodges past a diving Quinn to reach square 7.
 Quinn has to defend from square 15.

THE REF (CONT'D)
 (to Quinn)
 You must lock in your hazard before
 you psych.

As Quinn works his remote controller, QUICK CUTS of a HIGH
 PRESSURE FIRE HOSE, a person with a bowling ball, a
 "hurricane" fan, and someone holding back a SNARLING DOG --
 each of these is pointing at the MIT player.

QUINN
 Locked.

THE REF
 Psych and serve.

QUINN
 I heard you're allergic to bee stings --
 (pushes hazard button)
 Favorite flavor of Quark?

The snarling dog is released. It charges the MIT player,
 who holds his ground.

POWERS
 Charmed.
 (then, to the dog,
 big)
NO!

The dog stops in it's tracks and is quickly caught and removed.

THE REF

Survey said!

(BELL, then, hand
signaling)

Points and square to "blue." "White"
runs.

Coach Almquist signals in a play. Quinn reacts, he doesn't like the call. His team huddles, when they break the huddle, Wing fakes a run at square 14 and Quinn runs a delay to square 1, past an almost nonchalant Powers (in square 7).

QUICK CUTS -- THE HAZARDS: the heavy bag; a large bin with a trap door - hovering over Quinn's head; a giant slingshot, loaded with a medicine ball; and a guy with something that looks like a bazooka.

POWERS

Locked.

THE REF

Psych and serve.

Powers looks at Quinn with total disdain.

POWERS

You're not the real Quinn Mallory.
You're a slider.

Quinn is totally stunned, slack-jawed, as Powers pushes his hazard button.

POWERS (CONT'D)

Name an arrow of time.

QUINN

How'd you know...?

Quinn never even sees the heavy bag coming. It slams into him like a freight train and he goes out like a light. The CROWD GASPS. Powers smiles and looks over to a courtside seat at

LEONA ARTURO

she smiles back at him - "I told you so"

As Cal's trainers, coaches and players rush to Quinn's side

CUT TO:

INT. TOWNHOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Wade, Arturo and Rembrandt are on the edge of the couch, leaning towards the t.v. set, worried.

Big Al and his lieutenant sit in easy chairs.

MADDEN (O.S.)

Wow! I don't think I've ever seen a hit like that one before. He was like an animal, frozen by a car's headlights.

BRADSHAW (O.S.)

I don't know what it meant, but obviously it was a brilliant psych job by Vito Powers of MIT.

BIG AL MOOLERI

(ebullient)

What a great move by Mallory! He's out of the game on his first offensive play and no one's the wiser. The kid came through for us.

MADDEN (O.S.)

That's good. They're finally getting him to his feet. Boy, his legs look like rubber bands. Let's go down to Carl Sagan on the sidelines.

ANGLE THE T.V. - SAGAN

SAGAN

I doubt Mallory can come back, John. They're asking him questions now and he's pretty incoherent. Can't even remember his own name.

ARTURO, WADE AND REMBRANDT

are thunderstruck. They don't know what to do.

WADE

(softly, to Arturo)

We slide less than an hour after the game. What if he doesn't remember to meet us?

ARTURO

Excuse me, but it seems clear that Mr. Mallory has done his part to ensure that you win your bet. We would like to go to him now and make sure he's all right.

BIG AL MOOLERI

(suspicious)

What if he's faking, and five minutes after you leave he comes back in the game? You could have had this set up.

REMBRANDT

Give me a break! The man has a concussion!

BIG AL MOOLERI

Perhaps. But you're not going anywhere until I'm sure.

DISSOLVE TO:

LATER - BRADSHAW AND MADDEN ON THE T.V.

BRADSHAW

It's amazing that California is only down by 6 at halftime, with Mallory sitting on the bench.

ANGLE - REMBRANDT, WADE AND ARTURO

utterly frustrated.

MADDEN (O.S.)

Sometimes when your star goes down, the other guys rally and rise to the occasion. That's what's happening, but we'll see whether Cal can sustain it after the half.

ARTURO

Please. Let us go. Mr. Mallory's pupils are so dilated, you can see it from here.

BIG AL MOOLERI

Look, if he's really as incapacitated as you say, he should be in bed, not out with you.

ARTURO

Big Al, I know you can't possibly understand this, but my friends and I, including Mr. Mallory, are not from this world. We arrived here through an artificially generated inter dimensional wormhole and we are scheduled to leave the same way in less than two hours. We must get him so he can leave with us.

BIG AL MOOLERI

You're saying you're from a parallel earth?

WADE

Yes! Exactly!

BIG AL MOOLERI

Why would you think I couldn't understand that? It's a simple enough concept. I don't believe you, but I understand it.

REMBRANDT

The machine your Quinn Mallory used to escape is in the basement. There's a videotape. You can watch him go -- an' he sure wouldn't have been stupid enough to come back and do what our Quinn did.

BIG AL MOOLERI

(stands, intrigued)

Show me.

FLIP TO:

EXT. TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT - BIG AL, HIS LIEUTENANT, WADE,

Arturo and Rembrandt exit and run down the stairs to Big Al's limo. Big Al calls to the DRIVER as he gets in.

BIG AL MOOLERI

Take us to the Sports Arena, hurry!

CUT TO:

INT. THE LIMO - STUCK IN TRAFFIC

BIG AL MOOLERI

There's nothing we can do, it's the post game traffic.

Arturo checks the timer.

ARTURO

Forty-six minutes. We can't just sit here.

(hands Wade the timer)

It'll be faster on foot.

He gets out.

EXT. ARENA PARKING LOT - NIGHT - FAST MOTION - LONG SHOT

Arturo (stand-in? second unit?) weaves his way through the morass of cars towards the Arena.

A moment later he weaves his way back to the limo.

INT. THE LIMO - ARTURO

gets in, huffing and puffing.

ARTURO

They took him to the University
Hospital!

EXT. UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL - NIGHT - REMBRANDT

dressed as an orderly, pushes Quinn out the door in a
wheelchair. Wade is with them, running to keep up. The
limo is waiting. They shove Quinn into it, jump in
themselves. The limo peels rubber.

INT. THE LIMO - HAULING ASS

Quinn looks at the other sliders, trying to place them.

WADE

How much time?

ARTURO

Six minutes.

WADE

We can't make it.

BIG AL MOOLERI

We can try. I owe you that much.

EXT. STREET - THE LIMO STREAKS BY - A POLICE CAR

turns on lights and sirens and follows.

ANOTHER STREET - LIMO AND POLICE CAR RACE BY

INT. THE LIMO

Arturo is watching the timer, the others are watching him.
He shakes his head. Out of time.

ARTURO

Stop the car!

BIG AL MOOLERI

We can't stop the car, there's a cop
chasing us.

Arturo doesn't know what to do, but his options are limited.
He points the timer and hopes for the best. The gate forms
right there in the stretch limo.

REMBRANDT

We're not at the place where we
arrived! Does that mean we're not
going back the way we came?

ARTURO

I'm afraid so.

QUINN

(childlike)

What's in there?

ARTURO

A whole new world. Come on.

He supports Quinn and the two go through the gate together.
Big Al watches in amazement.

WADE

(to Big Al)

Thanks.

He nods. She goes. Rembrandt follows.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT - AN OPEN TRASH DUMPSTER

as our sliders fall out of the void, into the trash.

QUINN

(still punchy)

Who won the game, coach?

The others exchange a look. They don't know.

FADE OUT.

THE END