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Prod. Draft

PROD. #K2807
10/2/97 (F.R.)



"VIRTUAL SLIDE"

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SLIDERS

"Virtual Slide"

TEASER

FADE IN

1 EXT. WOODS - DAY (D1) 1

THROBBING DRUMS and savage WAR CRIES cut through the inky night. More sounds -- growing louder -- something on the run. SNAPPING TWIGS, POUNDING FOOTFALLS, HEAVY PANTING, then...

2 THE SLIDERS 2

crash through a thicket. They fall to their knees in a clearing. Exhausted, drenched in sweat, they can go no further. Quinn wears a colorful native headdress.

REMBRANDT

(sarcastic)
Join the Sliders! Travel to exotic lands. Meet interesting people...

MAGGIE

And get eaten by them.
(to Quinn)
Next time you decide to go native, count me out.

Maggie pulls out the timer and checks the readout.

MAGGIE

One minute to go.

QUINN

Hey, it's your fault, you offended them.

MAGGIE

Instead of shaking your groove thing with the chief's daughter, maybe you should be focusing on finding your home world.

She bats the headdress off Quinn's head.

QUINN

(defensive)
As long as we're stuck on these worlds, we should learn what we can. Our survival may depend on it some day.

CONTINUED

2 CONTINUED

2

REMBRANDT
Q-Ball, that girl was looking at
you like a rare veal chop.

QUINN
You guys have lost your sense of
adventure.

The blood-thirsty CRIES from the unseen natives build.

REMBRANDT
(his ears perk up)
If we don't get out of here soon,
we're gonna lose more than that.
(to Maggie)
Hit it.

Trees SHAKE, bushes RUSTLE -- the natives near the
clearing...

MAGGIE
Three, two, one...

Maggie keys the timer. The VORTEX forms.

REMBRANDT
(turning back, waving)
Bon appetit.

One by one, our heroes dive into its swirling maw.

3 EXT. CITY - DEMOLITION SITE - DAY

3

More in pieces than intact, these crumbling ruins have not
seen care or occupation for years.

A BLAST OF WIND and THROBBING LIGHTS usher in the appearance
of our heroes.

They land on the pock-marked remains of the city's Main
Street and come to a rolling stop.

REMBRANDT
One of these days we're gonna slide
into a pillow factory.

As they recover, climb to their feet and take stock...

REMBRANDT
Great, it's Public Housing World.

CONTINUED

3 CONTINUED

3

MAGGIE

(reading timer)

And it looks like we're tenants for three days, four hours and six minutes.

QUINN

Should be enough time to find out where we are.

REMBRANDT

If this is your Earth, maybe these ruins are left over from the last time humans and Kromaggs duked it out.

MAGGIE

No, these buildings aren't battle damaged...

Suddenly A HIGH PITCHED SIREN WAIL rips through the air.

They react... what the?

A HUGE EXPLOSION.

4 INT. A HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT (N1)

4

Maggie is lying in a hospital bed, badly bruised, cut and unconscious. Suddenly, her eyes snap open. She bolts upright.

5 MAGGIE'S POINT OF VIEW

5

The action is fuzzy, strobed, dark and almost dreamlike. Two hulking ham-fisted ORDERLIES grab her and slam her back into the rack. Leather straps appear and she is quickly and efficiently lashed down.

A third orderly appears, carrying a strange-looking piece of headgear. It's a VR rig, with wrap around, sunglass-type eye gear and walkman-type headphones.

He firmly plants it on Maggie's head.

A WHITE FLASH.

CUT TO

6 INT. KROMAGG-EARTH OPERATIONS - RECEPTION AREA - DAY (D2) 6

A small featureless room. Maggie is lying on a cot, sleeping. She awakens to see Rembrandt seated in the corner, fighting to keep his eyes open.

Quinn is idly holding up the wall.

What's going on?

REMBRANDT

(looks up)
How long we been here?

QUINN

(checks watch)
Almost an hour.

Before Maggie can speak up, the door swings open and...

7 BRIGADIER GENERAL RANDALL SIMMONS 7

United States Marine Corps, mid-fifties, boisterous, steps in.

SIMMONS

Sorry to keep you waiting. I'm
Brigadier General Randall Simmons.

REMBRANDT

What the hell's going on here?
Where are we?

SIMMONS

(surprised)
Didn't anyone tell you?

QUINN

Nobody's told us a thing.

SIMMONS

I'm sorry. I thought you knew.
(a beat)
You're home.

Quinn and Remmy exchange a confused look.

REMBRANDT

Home? You mean we're back on Earth
Prime?

Simmons nods.

QUINN

What about the Kromaggs? Earth
Prime was overrun.

CONTINUED

7 CONTINUED

7

SIMMONS

(grinning)

Was overrun. About three months ago we cracked the Kromagg communications protocols. We were able to access most of their tactical and defensive systems -- turn their own technology against them.

(then)

Two weeks ago we celebrated VK day.

Quinn and Rembrandt exchange looks of stunned amazement.

SIMMONS

Victory over the Kromaggs.

8 MAGGIE

8

is utterly confused. Off her reaction, we...

FADE OUT

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN

9 INT. KROMAGG-EARTH OPERATIONS - CORRIDOR - DAY 9

Part of the nerve center of Kromagg-Earth military operations. A number of uniformed operatives pass our view as...

10 THE SLIDERS AND SIMMONS 10

make their way down the hall toward us. Maggie is trailing the group. She's disoriented, looking as if she'd just been pulled from a very deep sleep.

QUINN

If you've defeated the Kromaggs,
what was that battle we saw?

REMBRANDT

Yeah. We nearly got our heads
blown off.

SIMMONS

Ninety percent of the planet is
back under human control, but there
are still pockets of Kromagg
resistance. You had the bad luck
to slide into a hot LZ.

They stop at a door and Simmons ushers them into...

11 INT. SIMMONS' OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 11

As they file in...

SIMMONS

In addition to Kromagg weapons
technology, we've also adapted
their sliding capability.

Simmons points to...

12 A HUGE WALL DISPLAY 12

An odd-looking temporal grid showing the location of all known alternate Earths.

SIMMONS

This display shows our tactical
status on all multi-Earth battle
fronts.

CONTINUED

12 CONTINUED

12

Remmy points to some of the Earths, which have blue circles around them.

REMBRANDT

What do those blue circles mean?

SIMMONS

It means those worlds are liberated, Mr. Brown. We've got the Maggots on the run on over two dozen parallel worlds.

Simmons turns to a large armoire and swings open its double doors. A well-stocked liquor cabinet. As he starts to pour...

SIMMONS

I'd say that calls for a drink.

Maggie, looking a little more coherent, finally breaks...

MAGGIE

Will someone please tell me what is going on here?

Quinn moves to Maggie, takes her by the shoulders.

QUINN

It's okay. Just relax and try to remember...

REMBRANDT

You've been having memory lapses since the attack. The docs say it'll pass.

SIMMONS

We've seen this kind of thing before.

QUINN

We slid into the middle of a battlefield...

REMBRANDT

Yeah, and almost bought the farm from a Kromagg plasma cannon.

As she struggles to remember...

MAGGIE

I do remember something... an explosion... a hospital...

QUINN

That was three days ago.

CONTINUED

12 CONTINUED (2)

12

MAGGIE

Three days?

SIMMONS

We've found that this kind of disorientation is common when a person is exposed to certain types of Kromagg energy weapons. You'll recover.

As he passes out the drinks...

SIMMONS

And when you do, we need people who've had experience with the Maggs.

(a grin)

Feel like strapping on a Harrier again, Captain Beckett?

Maggie's interest piques.

SIMMONS

Our campaign is expanding. We're kicking the 'Maggs off more worlds every day, but we're spread thin. We need help. Mr. Brown, there's a naval commission in this for you if you want it.

Maggie struggles to take all this in. Something just doesn't seem right.

REMBRANDT

If it's all the same to you, I just want to go home. Try and find my family. See if they're okay.

QUINN

Can you help us, General? My mother was shipped off-world by the 'Maggs.

REMBRANDT

And our friend Wade was sent to a Kromagg breeder camp.

SIMMONS

We've found thousands of human refugees on other Earths. There's a chance, a good chance, your people are alive.

Quinn and Remmy look relieved. Simmons turns to Maggie.

CONTINUED

12 CONTINUED (3)

12

SIMMONS

What about my offer, Captain? I know You've been wanting to get back in the air for some time.

Still reeling from all this, Maggie takes a slug from her drink.

MAGGIE

I may still be a little fuzzy, but I don't recall ever mentioning that... to anyone.

Simmons flashes a charming smile.

SIMMONS

(smoothly)
You're a pilot. What self-respecting Marine wouldn't want to get back up there and mix it up?

Maggie is struggling to put the pieces of this new and rather odd situation together.

MAGGIE

This is happening too fast.

SIMMONS

I understand. You've been sliding so long, it must be tough to accept the idea that your journey is over. You can start a brand new life on our world... or any world for that matter.

Simmons moves to Maggie and sits down next to her.

SIMMONS

Of course, we need to debrief you. Get the details of your encounters with the Kromaggs. What other worlds you've encountered. Their cultures, natural resources.

He suddenly seems too eager, too curious. Maggie's suspicion grows.

MAGGIE

I have a few questions of my own.

SIMMONS

Such as?

CONTINUED

12 CONTINUED (4)

12

MAGGIE

Such as, what is a one-star general doing in charge of a unified command?

(refers to map)

With all due respect, you seem a bit light on the brass to be running a campaign this size.

Simmons blanks, freezing in place for a second. He blinks once, twice, then the smile returns.

SIMMONS

You're not from our Earth, Captain. Our military may be run differently than yours.

As Maggie continues the offensive...

MAGGIE

Granted. Is it also customary on your world for Marine officers to give naval field commissions? Last time I checked, we worked for the Navy.

Simmons pauses and blinks hard once again. Then, point blank...

SIMMONS

Tell us what you want. I can make it happen.

MAGGIE

That was no battlefield we slid into. I've seen bombed-out buildings. Those structures were being demolished.

13 MAGGIE'S POINT OF VIEW - ON SIMMONS

13

Simmons suddenly SHIMMERS, then GLITCHES. As if he were an image on a faulty video monitor.

Maggie blinks hard -- what's happening? She stands and backs away from Simmons, trying to shake off this weird effect.

MAGGIE

No. No way. This is all some trick.

(sharply)

Quinn. Remmy.

CONTINUED

13 CONTINUED

13

Maggie looks to Quinn and Remmy, but they are standing strangely still, with distant, blank smiles on their faces.

Simmons rises and moves slowly towards her.

SIMMONS
What are you talking about?

MAGGIE
You can stop the charade now.
You're a Kromagg, aren't you.

SIMMONS
What?

MAGGIE
I've seen what you can do.
Twisting our perceptions. Making
us see what you want.

SIMMONS
Calm down.

He reaches for her.

MAGGIE
Stay away from me.

The whole room SHIMMERS and GLITCHES, then...

A WHITE FLASH.

SMASH CUT TO

14 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

14

We learn the truth. Maggie is actually in a hospital bed, jacked into a sophisticated virtual reality device. The preceding scenario was an elaborate simulation orchestrated by...

15 SIMMONS

15

who is seated at her bedside. He has removed the VR headgear from Maggie and is shutting down the machine.

This is a different Simmons -- three-piece suit, a slick, polished bureaucrat...

SIMMONS
Welcome back to reality, Ms.
Beckett.

Maggie is groggy, totally disoriented.

CONTINUED

15 CONTINUED

15

MAGGIE

Who the hell are you?

SIMMONS

I'm not a 'Kromagg.' Whatever that is.

She tries to sit up. She is unsuccessful.

SIMMONS

Take it easy. Coming out of virtual space can be disorienting. You need to get your land legs back.

MAGGIE

Where am I?

SIMMONS

You're in virtual reality recovery at Chandler Federal Hospital. I'm Randall Simmons, your case worker.

MAGGIE

Recovery? Recovery from what?

SIMMONS

The short version is you were buried alive. Though what you and your friends were doing in the middle of a demolition site is a question only you can answer.

MAGGIE

Where are they? Are they okay?

SIMMONS

They're fine. They're in VR recovery, too.

Maggie looks at the headgear.

MAGGIE

Speak English.

SIMMONS

VR is an effective technique. Though you seem to be resistant to it. I'm curious, do you have an aversion to pleasant thoughts?

Maggie's strength is starting to return. She sits up.

MAGGIE

I don't like people poking around in my head.

CONTINUED

15 CONTINUED (2)

15

SIMMONS

Obviously. I've never seen anyone outsmart VR therapy.

(a charming smile)

Our programmers must be getting lazy.

(then)

You and your friends are quite a mystery. No medicards, no sub-dermal I.D. chips. It's as if you suddenly materialized here.

Simmons pulls out the timer.

SIMMONS

And then there's this.

Something about the timer grabs Maggie's attention. She snatches it from Simmons' hand for a closer look.

16 TIGHT ON THE TIMER

16

reveals that the L.E.D. is ticking upward!

17 MAGGIE

17

Her jaw drops.

18 INCLUDING ALL

18

MAGGIE

I need to see my friends, right now.

Off Maggie's dread, we...

CUT TO

19 INT. ANOTHER HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

19

Quinn and Rembrandt are both wearing the VR headgear, undergoing VR therapy. Above each bed is a television monitor. Two attending NURSES stand at the ready.

Maggie and Simmons enter. As Maggie takes in the scene...

MAGGIE

Get those things off of them.

Simmons nods to the nurses, who begin shutting down Quinn and Remmy's VR units.

CONTINUED

19 CONTINUED

19

SIMMONS

We need to bring them out slowly.
Sudden reality shifts are
dangerous. There can be seizures,
even brain damage.

Maggie glances up at the monitors.

MAGGIE

What are those?

SIMMONS

We use them to monitor the therapy.

MAGGIE

You mean you monitor their minds.
You invade their thoughts.

SIMMONS

No, we monitor their therapy.
In order to stimulate the healing
process, the mind is immersed in
pleasant memories, desires and the
like. The machine reads those
thoughts, enhances them and plays
them back to the patient.

Maggie looks up...

20 ON REMBRANDT'S MONITOR

20

From Remmy's point of view, we see MOTHER BROWN, an old
woman, late sixties. Her back is to us. She turns. She is
carrying a large steaming casserole, which is carefully
placed on a table in the monitor f.g. She smiles warmly.

REMBRANDT (V.O.)

Tuna casserole, my favorite, Mama.

Then to...

21 QUINN'S MONITOR

21

We see a lush green park. A YOUNG WOMAN steps into frame.
She's blonde, dark golden tan, built, wearing a stringy
halter and "painted on" shorts that leave little to the
imagination. She turns and plants a big wet kiss directly
under the monitor's P.O.V.

22 INCLUDING ALL

22

Maggie reacts -- "oh puh-leese."

CONTINUED

22 CONTINUED

22

The two attending nurses now remove Quinn and Rembrandt's headgear.

Our heroes slowly come out of it. They are sluggish, but none the worse for wear.

MAGGIE

(dry)
Rise and shine, lover boy.

QUINN

I was... I was just in a park...

MAGGIE

Welcome to the world of VR
medicine.

Quinn notes the VR headgear, now on the table beside him.

QUINN

Incredible.

SIMMONS

Nurse, perhaps these gentlemen are
hungry.

REMBRANDT

No thanks, I just ate.
(rubbing his stomach;
confused)
I think.

QUINN

How long-have we been under?

MAGGIE

Long enough.

She holds the timer out for Quinn and Remmy to see.

REMBRANDT

The timer's counting up.

Quinn takes the timer and looks at it closely.

MAGGIE

We missed the sliding window.

A beat as this sinks in. Eyes widen in disbelief as our heroes exchange panicked glances, then...

QUINN

We're stranded here.

CONTINUED

22 CONTINUED (2) 22

Off their reactions, we...

FADE OUT

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN

23 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

23

While Simmons looks on...

Quinn and Rembrandt are up and about. The Sliders now quietly confer in the far corner of the room.

REMBRANDT

Are you sure? Maybe you're reading it wrong?

QUINN

No. There's no mistake. We missed the gateway. It's counting up to the next slide window...

MAGGIE

In twenty-nine years.

QUINN

I'm not prepared to accept that. We missed a window once before.

REMBRANDT

(remembering)
On that Egyptian Earth.

QUINN

(to Maggie)
We were able to find another timer and slide out.

MAGGIE

But this Earth doesn't have that kind of technology.

QUINN

Not yet.

MAGGIE

What're you saying? You can build another sliding machine?

QUINN

Maybe. But it's not like I carry the blueprints in my back pocket. I'd be working from memory. I'll need your help.

MAGGIE

Sure. Maybe I'll whip up a time machine while I'm at it.

CONTINUED

23 CONTINUED

23

QUINN

Don't sell yourself short. You know your husband's work.

MAGGIE

No, I politely listened to him talk about it. I also handed him an occasional magnospanner and gave back rubs. That doesn't make me a scientist.

QUINN

Anything you remember could be important.

REMBRANDT

Maybe this Simmons guy can help us.

MAGGIE

We don't know enough about this world to just hand them the secret to sliding.

QUINN

Right. We'll tell him who we are, where we're from, but no more.

24 EXT. A PLEASANT CITY STREET - DAY

24

A street very similar to the demolition site seen earlier, but spotless -- bedecked in flowers, greenery and bright colors.

And Simmons is giving our gloomy-looking Sliders the guided tour.

SIMMONS

I have to admit, when I heard Ms. Beckett's parallel world story, I thought we pulled her out of VR too soon.

REMBRANDT

Sometimes I wish it was just a bad dream.

QUINN

We appreciate you helping us.

SIMMONS

Well, the government here on...
(relishing the novelty)
on my Earth is more than happy to help you get home.

CONTINUED

24 CONTINUED

24

As we follow, we notice that the locals, while going about their daily routine, jobs and recreational activities, are all wearing VR headgear!

As our heroes take it all in...

REMBRANDT

I don't get it. Is everybody here in therapy?

SIMMONS

(chuckles)

Of course not. VR is used for more than just medicinal purposes here. It's a source of recreation, education, entertainment.

They pass a PAINTER, who is laying a fresh coat of white on a nearby building.

SIMMONS

It's part of our way of life.

Simmons pulls out a hand-held video medical monitoring device and punches a numbered sequence into its keypad.

25 ON MONITOR

25

An image of an impressionist painting, a work in progress, appears on the liquid crystal display. A hand, holding an artist's brush, enters the frame and dabs a few highlights on this nearly completed masterpiece.

26 INCLUDING ALL

26

MAGGIE

You mean this man thinks he's painting a portrait?

SIMMONS

No, he knows he's painting a building. The VR unit just makes the job more enjoyable. It has a multi-tasking function. You can perform one task while perceiving another in VR.

REMBRANDT

I took a job on an engine line one year. I coulda used one of those.

As we move on, Simmons points out the LABORATORY BUILDING at the end of the street -- a quaint homey brownstone.

CONTINUED

26 CONTINUED

26

SIMMONS

We've set up a lab with everything
you asked for.

Rembrandt notices...

A VR-visored MUNICIPAL WORKER feeding a large hose down a
manhole.

REMBRANDT

(aside to Quinn)
Man, I don't want to know what he
thinks he's doing.

27 INT. LABORATORY - DAY

27

As our heroes take stock...

SIMMONS

There are cots in the corner and a
kitchen in back. If there is
something that you need that isn't
here, just let us know.

QUINN

Thanks.

SIMMONS

I'll let you get to it then.

Rembrandt crosses to Simmons. There's an edginess about him
and an almost imperceptible case of the shakes.

REMBRANDT

Now that you mention it. Any
chance we can try out those VR
rigs?

SIMMONS

Ah, almost forgot.

Simmons reaches under the lab table and produces three small
suitcases. He opens each in kind, revealing three VR
devices -- one blue, one yellow, one red.

SIMMONS

The latest recreational model, the
Realman XL.

Rembrandt checks them out.

REMBRANDT

Thanks, man.

CONTINUED

27 CONTINUED

27

SIMMONS

Just a few safety tips with these. They feed off a central VR processor so you can enter each other's fantasies. Just don't try to pull anyone out suddenly. That can be dangerous. Enjoy them, but remember...

(with a bat of an eye)
...they can be habit forming.

And Simmons is gone.

Remmy picks out his own set of gear.

MAGGIE

What do you need that for?

REMBRANDT

Like Q-Ball said. When in Rome. Besides, I don't think I'm gonna be much help while you two geniuses work on the sliding machine.

(then; sober)
I got twenty-nine point seven years to kill.

QUINN

We'll get out of here, Remmy. I promise.

REMBRANDT

Just make sure we're gone before I have to change my name to Cryin' Old Man Brown.

Rembrandt moves off. Maggie looks to Quinn, mirroring Remmy's less-than-hopeful sentiment.

Quinn senses this. A hint of doubt escapes him as well, but...

QUINN

We can do this, Maggie.
(scopes out lab)
Looks like they set us up pretty good.

MAGGIE

Maybe too good. Don't you think Simmons has been a little too eager to help us out. Anything we want, no questions asked. I don't trust him.

CONTINUED

27 CONTINUED (2)

27

QUINN
You think I do? Right now we don't
have any choice.

He walks over to an imposing piece of equipment.

QUINN
How many dishes would we have to
wash to afford a computer like
this? We'd be better off just
waiting for the next window.

MAGGIE
Okay, fine. Where do we start?

Quinn seems to tense. He becomes edgy, up tight.

QUINN
Start. Right...

MAGGIE
(sensing, then)
Quinn. There's something you're
not telling me.

Quinn is skittish, as if he were dreading this moment.

QUINN
Remember I told you I'd be working
from memory? Well, the memory
doesn't seem to be working so good.

MAGGIE
What do you mean?

QUINN
I've been racking my brain for
hours hoping it was a temporary
lapse. Just a VR hangover.
(beat, then)
I can't remember how to build a
sliding machine.

Off Maggie's reaction...

TIME DISSOLVE TO

28 INT. LABORATORY - NIGHT (N2)

28

Quinn is at the lab table. The timer is taken apart in front
of him. Maggie is pacing.

CONTINUED

28 CONTINUED

28

QUINN

Nothing looks familiar. For all I know, this is a nuclear-powered cigarette lighter.

He kicks the table in frustration.

QUINN

Dammit.

(to Maggie)

Do you remember anything? A theory? A formula? Maybe if you can just trigger a memory in me...

MAGGIE

I don't know. Our apartment was cluttered with scribbled-out formulas, papers, books. A lot about a man named Tesla.

QUINN

Nikola Tesla?

MAGGIE

My husband was obsessed with him.

QUINN

Tesla died over fifty years ago. He invented something called a Tesla coil. It was a primitive electrical induction device...

MAGGIE

Wait, induction coils... I remember. He once said they were an important part of his machine.

QUINN

Yeah. You'd need to generate a tremendous burst of power to open a sliding vortex.

(then)

Now we've got a place to start.

MAGGIE

There's something else. It seems so silly now, I forgot all about it.

She timidly hums out a repetitious bass line.

QUINN

What's that?

CONTINUED

28 CONTINUED (2)

28

MAGGIE

He made me memorize it. He had me
hum it to him sometimes. He said
it helped him remember.

QUINN

Remember what?

MAGGIE

I haven't a clue. He died before
he could tell me.

QUINN

A musical clue, huh?

QUINN/MAGGIE

(to each other)
Rembrandt.

29 LAB CORNER - BEHIND A CURTAIN PARTITION

29

Quinn and Maggie step through the curtain to find Remmy,
stretched out on a cot, immersed in his VR world.

MAGGIE

I don't like this. If these things
are causing memory loss, we should
pull him out of there now.

QUINN

We can't just shut it down. That
could be even more dangerous. He's
got to come out on his own.

MAGGIE

And how long is that going to take?
I don't want him to get hooked on
that thing.

QUINN

I can see how it'd be tempting to
stick one of those things on and
just forget about everything.

Maggie glances at Quinn. She doesn't like what she sees or
hears.

MAGGIE

My point exactly. Who knows how
long he'll stay in there and how
many brain cells he'll fry.

Maggie crosses to the lab table and scoops up the other VR
units.

CONTINUED

29 CONTINUED 29

QUINN
What are you doing?

MAGGIE
Simmons said we could enter each
other's fantasies.

Maggie plugs a second set of headgear into Remmy's belt
pack.

MAGGIE
Be right back.

She pauses, takes a breath, ready or not -- she puts on the
headgear and seems to "zone" out as she enters the VR world.

Quinn looks at Maggie and Remmy, both jacked blissfully into
the VR world. He looks at the remaining RealMan unit. He
reaches for the last set of headgear...

30 INT. OFFICE COMPLEX - A CORRIDOR - FANTASY DAY (REMBRANDT'S 30
FANTASY)

Maggie appears in the hallway of a lavish office complex,
next to a door labeled CRYIN' MAN PRODUCTIONS. She opens the
door...

31 INT. CRYIN' MAN PRODUCTIONS (REMBRANDT'S FANTASY) 31

A busty, gum chomping, black SECRETARY in a tight, low cut
dress looks up from her emery board and freshly filed nails.

SECRETARY
May I help you?

MAGGIE
What is it with these guys?

Maggie makes a beeline past the hired help to a door
labeled, MR. BROWN." A MUFFLED CONVERSATION is heard from
within.

32 INT. REMBRANDT'S OFFICE (REMBRANDT'S FANTASY) 32

Maggie charges in to find Rembrandt seated at a huge desk,
deep in a heated phone deal. He sees her, smiles and waves
her in. The pursuing Secretary gets the idea and scurries
out.

While Maggie waits patiently for Remmy to end his call, she
takes in his self-congratulatory panacea.

CONTINUED

32 CONTINUED

32

The walls are lined with dozens of platinum records and photos of Remmy posing with various celebrities. Featured prominently behind his desk is a movie one-sheet for DEADLY WEAPON starring REMBRANDT BROWN.

His desk top is cluttered with framed family photos. In this fantasy, Remmy is a recording artist, a mogul, an action hero and a family man. In

REMBRANDT

You're my agent, Chester, you tell him twelve mil is as low as I'll go. Plus I do my own stunts, no bare butt shots and I get Tuesdays off for choir practice!

He slams down the phone and looks up...

REMBRANDT

Maggie!
(then a beat, puzzled)
Which part of the program are you?

MAGGIE

I'm not part of your fantasy.

REMBRANDT

You're real? Oh yeah, you can do that.

Rembrandt seems to resent the intrusion.

MAGGIE

We need you to come out, Rembrandt.

REMBRANDT

Sorry. I'm not going back.

MAGGIE

What?

REMBRANDT

Why should I? Look around you. I've got all I ever wanted and more.

(refers to photos)

I got a wife, two kids. I got a dog. For the first time in twenty years, my mother is speaking to me. I've got respect.

CONTINUED

32 CONTINUED (2)

32

MAGGIE

From who?
(nodding toward his outer
office)
A computer generated bimbo? How
can you be happy with love and
success that aren't real?

REMBRANDT

Reality hasn't had a whole lot to
offer me lately.

MAGGIE

So you'd rather be spoon fed some
fantasy? There's a real world
outside here, Remmy. With two real
people who need your help.

As he considers...

She picks up the picture of Mrs. Brown.

MAGGIE

And a real mother lives on a world
under Kromagg rule. She needs you,
too.

Rembrandt looks at his mother's picture as Maggie's words
put his world into perspective.

33 INT. LABORATORY - NIGHT (STILL N2)

33

Remmy and Maggie emerge from the curtained partition. He
looks groggy, disoriented and a little sick. Maggie looks up
to see...

34 QUINN

34

seated at his workbench, hooked up to his VR gear.

MAGGIE

Dammit.

Maggie plugs her RealMan gear into Quinn's belt pack. She
dons the headgear again as we see...

A WHITE FLASH.

SMASH CUT TO

35 INT. A BEDROOM - FANTASY NIGHT (QUINN'S FANTASY) 35

Quinn is sprawled out on a bed next to some nighty-clad, nubile goddess. Her identity is a mystery. He quickly puts the moves on her. In a split second, they are lip-locked and are well on their way to second base.

MAGGIE (O.S.)

Again, Quinn?

Quinn turns, revealing the identity of his lover. It is Maggie! Or rather a VR facsimile of Maggie.

36 MAGGIE 36

Off her astonishment, we...

FADE OUT

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN

37 INT. A BEDROOM - FANTASY NIGHT (QUINN'S FANTASY) 37

The real Maggie is in Quinn's face, and this time it's not by mutual agreement.

MAGGIE

How dare you have sex with me
without my consent!

Quinn stands fast as the innocent violated party.

QUINN

How dare me? How dare YOU! This
is a private fantasy!

MAGGIE

(appalled)
For God's sake, Quinn. You can't
go around using people's likenesses
f o r your own twisted pleasure!

QUINN

How is this any different from an
old fashioned daydream? Minus the
unannounced visitors, of course!

Maggie looks at her doppelganger, then it sinks in. Quinn was fantasizing about her. A beat, then...

MAGGIE

So is this how you think about me?

QUINN

No, it's not like that.

There's a hint of sincerity in his voice that throws Maggie, but she refuses to give in.

MAGGIE

Shut this down now, Quinn.

38 INT. LABORATORY - NIGHT (STILL N2) 38

As Quinn and Maggie come out of VR...

Maggie puts her headgear down, then turns to see...

39 REMBRANDT 39

seated in the corner. He's drenched in a cold sweat.

CONTINUED

39 CONTINUED

39

MAGGIE

Rembrandt. Are you okay?

REMBRANDT

I feel sick. If I could just get back in the VR world for a minute, I'm sure it'll pass.

MAGGIE

Forget it. Can't you see what's going on here?

She snatches up Remmy's belt pack, then Quinn's...

QUINN

Hey.

MAGGIE

These things are like a drug. Just jack in and make the pain go away. Well, I don't plan on spending the next twenty-nine years in a VR coma. If we're going to get out of here, we have to work together. And that means going cold turkey.

She places the belt packs on the lab table -- grabs a hammer...

She raises it high...

QUINN

No !

REMBRANDT

Maggie, stop!

40 ON LAB TABLE

40

Down it comes... KEEERUNCH! Bits of multi-colored plastic and pulverized circuit boards spiral through the air. Maggie swings again and again, a fourth time. Then silence.

MAGGIE

Now let's get to work.

41 QUINN AND REMBRANDT

41

upon seeing the destruction of their "stash" are horrified. Off their reactions, we...

DISSOLVE TO

42 INT. LABORATORY - THE NEXT DAY (D3)

42

Quinn is at the bench, working on the induction coil. Merely lifting his soldering iron is a major effort, but he continues to tough it out.

Rembrandt is seated across the room. He's no better, but he continues his work, plunking away on a PORTABLE KEYBOARD, trying to puzzle out Maggie's tune.

Maggie steps in from the kitchen carrying two cups of soup. She takes in the carnage, then moves to Remmy and hands him a cup.

MAGGIE

How'S it coming?

REMBRANDT

Your tune sounds a lot like a standard twelve bar bass riff.

MAGGIE

My husband loved The Rolling Who.

REMBRANDT

The who?

MAGGIE

No, The Rolling Who. You know, they wrote that rock opera, 'Angie.'

REMBRANDT

(then, chuckling)
Now that's a show I'd like to see.
(shows her notes)
I've written it all out here.

MAGGIE

(reading)
E , A , B , E , A . . .

REMBRANDT

The sliding formula might be hidden somewhere in those letters.

MAGGIE

Great work.

Rembrandt appreciates the sentiment. He takes a sip of soup.

MAGGIE

It's from a can and certainly not up to the standards of a superstar...

CONTINUED

42 CONTINUED

42

REMBRANDT
Chicken soup... just like my
mother's.

MAGGIE
Somehow I doubt that.

Now on to matters a little more delicate.

MAGGIE
I, uh, got the impression that you
aren't on speaking terms with her.

REMBRANDT
No...
(a beat, pained)
I haven't seen Mama in over twenty
years.

MAGGIE
I've always wondered why you never
mentioned her.

REMBRANDT
Alisa Brown is one stubborn woman.
She's also a devout Baptist and one
of the finest gospel singers you
ever heard.

MAGGIE
She wanted you to follow in her
footsteps.

REMBRANDT
She felt show biz was the devil's
work. The last time we spoke was
just before I boarded the bus for
Detroit. She never returned my
calls after that.
(a beat, then)
You see, it's not really about
money or career. It's about
respect. Respect and making my
mother proud.

MAGGIE
Everything I saw in your fantasy?

REMBRANDT
Oh, you know how things can take
off on you. I never had a family.
Mama always wanted me to have one.
If you can have family and success,
you have it all.

CONTINUED

42 CONTINUED (2)

42

MAGGIE

A perfect life.

REMBRANDT

Hard to walk away from.

(beat, then)

What about you? You've been in.
You know how real VR can be.
Aren't you just a little tempted to
try a fantasy, maybe relive a
memory?

A moment as she recalls, then...

MAGGIE

I once spent a year lamenting the
loss of a boyfriend. I would sit
for hours at a time reliving old
memories, wondering what went
wrong. The next thing I knew, I
had wasted a year of my life.
There are things you can't fix.

REMBRANDT

But wouldn't you like to see your
husband again, for just a little
while?

MAGGIE

Oh course, I would. But whatever
I'd find in there wouldn't be him.

She crosses to Quinn and hands him his soup and Remy's
notes.

MAGGIE

Any of this look familiar?

QUINN

Yeah. Could be Part of the
initialization sequence. I'll need
some time.

MAGGIE

Time is one thing we do have for a
change.

QUINN

Will you accept the apology of a
crazy man?

Maybe. Testosterone can do funny
things to your mind.

CONTINUED

42 CONTINUED (3)

42

QUINN
What you saw. It's not what you
think.

MAGGIE
(dubious)
Really?

Quinn struggles to explain...

QUINN
You miss out on a lot when the sole
focus of your existence is making
the grade. I never had that period
in life when there's no future to
plan, no pressure to perform.
Nothing to think about but just
being young. I guess I felt I had
some catching up to do.

MAGGIE
Sowing your virtual oats?

QUINN
At first. But with you it was
different. You're more to me than
that. I kinda hoped you'd have
figured that out by now.

Maggie reacts -- she's not prepared for this revelation,
then...

MAGGIE
Then why a fantasy when I'm right
here?

QUINN
I guess we never had the time for
anything more.

MAGGIE
We do now.

Their eyes lock for a beat. They move in for a kiss...

Quinn's image SHIMMERS then GLITCHES.

Stunned, Maggie pulls back.

A WHITE FLASH takes us to...

43 INT. A HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT (N3)

43

FROM BLACK into...

44 MAGGIE'S POINT OF VIEW - A DARK, DREARY BARE-BULBED ROOM 44

furnished with the latest in water-stained wallpaper and economy-sized cockroaches. It's the hospital room from hell.

QUINN (O.S.)

Maggie, come on, snap out of it.

Wider to include...

45 MAGGIE 45

strapped to a hospital bed. Quinn is removing a set of VR gear from her head. He then releases the restraints.

An orderly is out cold at his feet.

Quinn drags Maggie from the bed. She's disoriented, can barely stand. She starts to cough.

QUINN

I don't mean to be insensitive, but..

He grabs a bedpan and thrusts it into her hands.

QUINN

We gotta run. If you're going to be sick, better do it on the way.

Quinn looks down. The orderly is starting to stir. Quinn grabs the headgear and plants it on his head.

QUINN

Sweet dreams.

Quinn takes Maggie by the arm and they are gone.

46 INT. A HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - NIGHT 46

More of the same decor. This place hasn't seen a paintbrush in about twenty years.

Our heroes stumble their way through the dark, down what seems to be an endless hallway.

As we follow them to an intersection, they turn the corner and are spotted by another one of our hulking orderlies.

QUINN

Get back.

Quinn drags Maggie back around the corner. Too late! The orderly has spotted them and is on the move.

CONTINUED

46 CONTINUED 46

Quinn pulls Maggie tight up against the wall and grabs the bedpan. As the orderly rounds the corner he WHAMMIES him with the flat side. Two down. They continue to...

47 ANOTHER PART OF THE CORRIDOR 47

The exit is in sight.

They pass a body, the third orderly, unconscious and sprawled out in the middle of the floor. Quinn eyes him suspiciously.

REMBRANDT (O.S.)

Step over the mess.

Rembrandt steps out of the shadows.

REMBRANDT

Come on, the exit is clear.

Rembrandt wraps a coat around Maggie and they are gone.

48 EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT 48

As our heroes head into the night, we now see the city on this world as it really is...

It's an Orwellian hellhole. A poisoned cancerous society teetering on the brink of death. Buildings lie in decay. Pollution is rampant. Workers, dressed in rags, wander the street behind the controlling blinders of their VR gear.

49 THE SLIDERS 49

make their way through the darkness. Maggie is shaking badly, a victim of the VR withdrawal.

QUINN

Thank God we finally found you.

MAGGIE

We were in the lab... Found me where?

REMBRANDT

Simmons' virtual reality opium den.

QUINN

We slid into a demolition site in some kind of slave labor zone. Remmy and I were thrown clear of the blast, but Simmons got you and the timer.

CONTINUED

49 CONTINUED

49

REMBRANDT

(takes the lead)
This way to miss the patrols.

QUINN

He's been using VR to trick you into telling him how to build a sliding machine.

MAGGIE

I told you, I don't know how to build a sliding machine.

QUINN

Well, you've given him a pretty good head start.

REMBRANDT

Plus he's still got the timer. The window opens in less than three hours.

MAGGIE

No. We missed the window.

QUINN

Maggie, you've been in VR for three days. Everything that happened to you was a virtual fabrication, a lie.

Maggie is finally starting to comprehend...

MAGGIE

You mean building the machine, the addictions, none of it was real?

QUINN

No.

As this finally sinks in, Maggie sadly looks to Quinn -- a sense of loss. She buries her disappointment and struggles to put on her game face.

MAGGIE

So what's the plan?

REMBRANDT

Same as always -- get the timer back...

They come to the end of the alley. Quinn points...

50 ACROSS THE STREET - THE LABORATORY EXTERIOR

50

as seen before. Only this one is surrounded by barriers,
razor wire and armed guards.

QUINN

...only I'm afraid it won't be as
easy as breaking into a hospital.

As the others take in this site, we...

FADE OUT

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN

51 EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT 51

Rembrandt leads while Quinn helps Maggie to...

52 A SHED 52

behind a store.

53 INT. SHED - NIGHT 53

Quinn and Rembrandt have set up house in this old broken-down workshop. Signs that they have been here awhile include scavenged food, bedding, a laptop computer and a truckload of electronic gadgets strewn about with bachelor pad-like abandon.

REMBRANDT

Welcome to the Brown/Mallory Arms.

QUINN

The maid doesn't come till Tuesday.

REMBRANDT

Just to move the filth around.

Quinn helps Maggie to an old overstuffed chair, then crosses to the laptop and fires it up. Rembrandt wraps Maggie in a blanket.

REMBRANDT

How you feeling?

MAGGIE

Like someone took my brain out and used it to play handball.

QUINN

I've been able to tap into the VR mainframe, which is how we figured out what Simmons was up to. It's also how we eventually found you.

(points to screen)

I've tapped into their surveillance system. Look familiar?

54 ON THE LAPTOP SCREEN 54

we see an almost identical copy of the lab Maggie and the VR Sliders were working in.

CONTINUED

54 CONTINUED

54

MAGGIE

The lab.

In the b.g. is a large chalkboard with the letters E,A,B, etc. written on it -- the initiation formula. A lab-coated TECHNICIAN stares intently at the figures.

QUINN

Your husband was a brilliant man. Putting the structure of the wormhole initiation formula in a tune was clever.

Remmy touches Maggie's head.

REMBRANDT

And he found a pretty cute place to hide it.

QUINN

The point is, Simmons's got the basics. He could crack the secret to sliding.

MAGGIE

And I just handed it to him like one of his weak-minded zombies.

REMBRANDT

Not for a minute. Hell, he had to try twice before he could even come close to getting inside your head.

QUINN

You didn't know what he was doing to you, Maggie. You thought you were trying to help us get out of here.

But she is not convinced. Moreover, she feels humiliated.

MAGGIE

What does it matter what I thought. None of it was real.
(bitterly)
The only way I know I'm out of it now is all I can think about is jacking back in.

Quinn picks up a set of headgear. Maggie shudders when she sees the device -- a deep seated hunger in her eyes.

QUINN

Yeah, these things oughta come with a warning label.

CONTINUED

54 CONTINUED (2)

54

REMBRANDT

It started out as another high-tech toy. But once people started getting hooked on 'em, the government figured it'd be a good way to keep people in line.

MAGGIE

So, who is Simmons really?

QUINN

Just some middle management overseer. A bureaucrat doing his job.

55 INT. LABORATORY - NIGHT

55

The Technician is looking over the chalkboard, adding mathematical symbols where possible and straining to decipher the formula.

Simmons steps up behind him. The real Simmons is more oily than his smooth-talking virtual self.

SIMMONS

Any progress?

TECHNICIAN

This is a kind of mass to energy formula. Without the girl's help, it would have taken us years to come up with the proper initiation sequence.

SIMMONS

And this will open the dimensional doorway?

TECHNICIAN

Now it's just a question of adjusting the power flow rates for the induction coils. Designing the rest of the machine should be easy.

A GUARD charges in and urgently crosses to Simmons.

GUARD

Mr. Simmons, someone's broken into the VR rehab unit.

SIMMONS

The Beckett woman?

CONTINUED

55 CONTINUED

55

GUARD

Gone.

SIMMONS

Get her back. Double security and find me her companions.

(to Technician)

This could be a fortunate turn. If we get our hands on Mallory, that formula could be finished in hours.

56 INT. SHED - NIGHT

56

Our heroes are watching the lab activity on the laptop monitor.

QUINN

I think things just got a little more complicated.

REMBRANDT

How are we going to get in there now? Those goons are armed with more than bedpans.

MAGGIE

There may be a way.

Quinn and Remmy turn to Maggie.

MAGGIE

If the real lab is anything like the virtual one, security is actually pretty light once you get inside.

She points to Quinn's computer screen, where we see several lab workers wearing VR rigs.

MAGGIE

Most of the workers are zoned-out on VR. Simmons doesn't have much use for armed guards.

QUINN

I'm still tamed into the VR mainframe. If I can power down some of the units...

REMBRANDT

... those guards will have their hands full with a bunch of unhappy campers.

CONTINUED

56 CONTINUED

56

MAGGIE

That's not enough. Just pull the plug and those workers'll go through the same VR withdrawal I did. A bunch of sick, hung-over zombies aren't going to make much of a diversion for us.

QUINN

What other choice do we have?

MAGGIE

The VR keeps the workers passive by feeding them pleasant thoughts, right?

Quinn nods.

MAGGIE

What if you made their phony worlds a little less pleasant? Adjust the central computer to feed them back their worst fears.

QUINN

Give them all a nightmare.

REMBRANDT

(nodding)

A lab full of screaming, terrified people might provide a pretty good diversion.

Quinn smiles.

QUINN

Good to have you back on the team, Maggie.

As Quinn starts punching away at the keyboard...

57 INT. LABORATORY - NIGHT

57

Three workers are lugging boxes into the laboratory. Suddenly, they CRY OUT. Clutching at their skulls, they begin to convulse as the new VR program kicks in.

TECHNICIAN

What's going on?

The workers one-by-one tear off their headgear.

SIMMONS

(calling out)

We need some help in here!

CONTINUED

57 CONTINUED

57

Three guards quickly intervene. They try to subdue the workers as they slip into grand mal-like seizures.

SIMMONS

Get them out of here. Take them to the infirmary.

The workers continue to seize as the guards round them up.

58 EXT. LABORATORY - NIGHT

58

The guards have their hands full as they struggle to load the spastic workers into an ambulance.

The Sliders are able to slip past the hectic scene. Just as they reach the door, however, another GUARD emerges carrying an automatic machine pistol.

Before he can raise the pistol, Rembrandt grabs him and pulls him down the steps. As the guard falls, Maggie pops him with an elbow to the face. He drops unconscious.

QUINN

Like I said, good to have you back on the team.

Maggie smiles. She grabs the guard's gun and leads the Sliders into the building...

59 INT. LABORATORY - NIGHT

59

The Sliders rush in and come face-to-face with Simmons. Maggie raises the gun. Simmons and the Technician freeze in their tracks.

MAGGIE

(to Simmons)
I told you I didn't like people inside my head.

Quinn spots the timer on a lab table and scoops it up.

SIMMONS

(to Maggie)
You could have had anything you wanted.

MAGGIE

What do you have that I could possibly want. A life built on lies? Look what you've done to your world, blinding people with a fantasy.

CONTINUED

59 CONTINUED

59

SIMMONS

Then help me find another world. A better one. Give me the sliding technology.

She cocks the gun and aims it toward Simmons.

MAGGIE

Sliding doesn't work that way.

QUINN

Maggie, what are you doing?

MAGGIE

Putting an end to this right now.

Simmons stares in horror, but...

Maggie turns the gun on the chalkboard and OPENS FIRE. It is instantly OBLITERATED. She does the same to a partially assembled induction coil.

She releases the spent magazine. It clatters to the floor. Maggie then defiantly tosses the gun at Simmons' feet.

MAGGIE

(to Quinn)

Can we send the nightmare program out on a global level.

Quinn turns to a terminal and punches in a few commands.

QUINN

Let's see... yes, I think so.

MAGGIE

Do it.

SIMMONS

You can't do that. These people have lived with VR their whole lives. What are they going to do if you just take that away from them?

MAGGIE

That'll be your job. You made this mess, Simmons. You can clean it up.

QUINN

Accessing worldwide VR net.
(then)
Program is up and running.

CONTINUED

59 CONTINUED (2)

59

MAGGIE

We've just given your world a wake up call. I don't think anyone will be interested in using your virtual reality toys for some time.

Maggie picks up the timer. It's time. She keys it.

The VORTEX OPENS and our heroes are gone.

DISSOLVE TO

60 INT. LAST CHANCE BAR - DAY (D4)

60

Maggie and Quinn sit at the bar. She's fighting off the last vestiges of the VR withdrawal. Behind the bar, Remmy is making a vile brew in a blender -- Tabasco sauce, eggs, etc.

QUINN

How are you feeling?

MAGGIE

Well, the little men stopped playing handball with my brain.

QUINN

That's good.

MAGGIE

They've settled into a friendly round of squash.

Remmy fires up the blender and it whips his concoction into a foul-looking soup. Maggie winces from the sound.

REMBRANDT

Spend enough time on the road and you learn how to mix up a hangover cure.

He pours a glass of the brown gunk and slides it to Maggie.

REMBRANDT

The Cryin' Man's patented morning after moose juice. Guaranteed to clear your sinuses, strip furniture and kill a hangover. VR or otherwise.

Maggie looks at it dubiously.

REMBRANDT

Drink up.

CONTINUED

60 CONTINUED

60

She swills it down. Barely.

MAGGIE

(nearly gagging)

One thing's for sure.

(off their questioning
looks)

I know I'm not in a VR fantasy
anymore. Cause only the real
Rembrandt could come up with
something that nasty.

REMBRANDT

(a smile)

Welcome back, Maggie.

And as our heroes settle back for the long haul, we...

FADE OUT

THE END