s l i d e r s **reborn**

R E S I S T A N C E (5 . 1)

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Special thanks to **Jeph Loeb, Joe Casey & Greg Rucka** for the comics in which Superman and Batman fought President Lex Luthor

Resistance (5.1): In the aftermath of the 2016 US election, Quinn, Wade, Rembrandt and Arturo must weigh their options as circumstances lead to a confrontation between Quinn and the new president-elect. A 16-page screenplay.

For the full story on how the original sliders were restored, please visit www.earthprime.com/reborn

Feedback can be sent to **ibrahim.ng (at) outlook.com**

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FADE IN:

ON A STATIC BURST:

And then we see a newscaster before an electoral map.

NEWSCASTER #1
And with Trump's victories in Florida, Ohio, Michigan and Pennsylvania, Donald James Trump will be the forty-fifth President of the United States.

There's another STATIC BURST and then another newscaster.

NEWSCASTER #2
This outcome disproved nearly every scientific poll and electoral projection as Donald Trump won every Electoral College vote he needed --

Static burst again. Then:

NEWSCASTER #3
Democratic candidate Hillary Rodham Clinton will deliver her concession speech at ten-thirty in the morning in the aftermath of a surprising and unexpected upset --

Another STATIC BURST. Then we see footage of a Trump rally where a crowd of people in MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN HATS are whooping and cheering. Shouts of **"Build that wall!"** and **"Lock her up!"** can be heard.

Another STATIC BURST followed by footage of a woman in a suit speaking:

WOMAN
Americans voted in a Democrat for eight years and we're still living in poverty while the DNC has cocktail parties. There comes a point when voting's a way to screw over the people running a system that doesn't care about you --

A gentleman suddenly sticks his head into the frame and shrieks into the camera --

CONTINUED:

GENTLEMAN
Grab her by the pussy! Grab her by the pussy!!! Trumpland now, baby, whooooooooooooooo!!!!!

He walks away off camera, laughing madly as he departs. The woman scowls as she continues speaking.

WOMAN
And, of course, there's that.

NEWSCASTER #1
President-elect Trump made his first visit to the White House today followed by passing through Capitol Hill --

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL BAR - NIGHT

A small placard on the bar reads **TRUMP HOTEL - WASHINGTON, DC.** This sedate establishment is the picture of ostentatious luxury. Chandeliers hang from the ceiling. Wide racks of bottles behind the bar reach the ceiling. There's gold-plated lamps on every table.

A small number of male and female patrons in sharply tailored suits are scattered throughout. The sparse number of customers suggest exclusivity.

At the entrance, two suited and sunglasses wearing men enter and look about. They are taken by surprise when a 70-year-old man with an absurd combover and a floppy suit hurtles between them and into the bar.

DONALD
Skip the security sweep, boys! Rifraff never gets into this joint -- you have to own at least one private island to even know about this watering hole.

The Secret Service agents make protesting noises, but Trump waves them off and ambles towards the nearly deserted bar, leaving the agents to take posts by the entrance.

Trump spies a television mounted on a wall showing his press meeting at the White House. His gaze remains fixed upon his image on the screen; he bangs into the bar before he realizes he's arrived, he edges himself onto a seat. Still staring at the TV, he waves for the bartender.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DONALD (cont'd)
Scotch on the rocks.

Trump, watching the TV, doesn't notice when a FLANNEL-WEARING MAN with LONG HAIR takes a seat next to Trump.

Quinn Mallory looks shockingly out of place amidst the sharp suits of the other patrons. The bartender looks at Quinn. Quinn inclines his head in Trump's direction.

QUINN
I'll have what he's having.

SMASH CUT TO:

A BLACK SCREEN and then the words:

12 hours earlier.

CUT TO:

INT. SLIDERS INCORPORATED BOARDROOM - MORNING

We're in a room with a long table and walls made of glass. Portions of the glass appear to be windows looking out at San Francisco, but other parts are display screens. Inside the room are Quinn Mallory, Wade Welles, Rembrandt Brown, Professor Arturo, Maggie Beckett and Dr. Diana Davis.

The display screens show Trump giving his victory speech (muted).

MAGGIE
I say we take him out and end this nightmare now.

Arturo glares at Maggie.

ARTURO
Captain Beckett, we do not deal in assassination --

MAGGIE
He's a bigoted, homophobic, racist, climate-change denying profiteer of poverty who just became leader of the free world --

ARTURO
Killing is not an option.
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

ARTURO (cont'd)
(hopefully)
But we might forcibly relocate him to an alternate Earth with a thriving neo-Nazi regime; we would certainly take every measure for his comfort.

WADE
Do we have a plan for the power vacuum we get then, Professor? Or do you figure it out then like the last time you half-assed your way into politics?

As Arturo scowls --

REMBRANDT
Hey -- don't we have a robot in the basement that we could shape up to look like anybody? How about we replace Donald with D.E.R.I.C. the robot?

ARTURO
You propose to have a defective piece of artificial intelligence replace that defective human being?

WADE
Who'd know the difference? And we could program D.E.R.I.C. to do what's best --

MAGGIE
Are we sure we can make the robot mimic that ridiculous hair?

ARTURO
And in terms of relocating the president, an option is that Earth where reality television replaced all government surveillance programs --

But then a voice that has been silent thus far cuts into the chatter.

QUINN
No. We're not doing any of that.

The sliders fall silent and all of them stare at Quinn Mallory with sheer astonishment.

CONTINUED:

QUINN (cont'd)
He won the electoral votes. The law is the law. We're not involving this organization in partisan politics.

And then the sliders' astonishment is replaced with outrage as the room is filled with angry shouts in Quinn's direction.

WADE
Partisan politics? This has gone way beyond whose side gets the White House, Quinn!

ARTURO
Our president-elect has declared his sheer contempt for the rules of war, for anyone with origins that differ from his, for the female-half of the population, for civil liberties -- this man's rise to power cannot be permitted!

MAGGIE
He wants a nuclear arms race! He wants soldiers to commit war crimes!

DIANA
Under his administration, we're looking at even more of the country starving to death or dying from treatable illnesses, he's going to put a Creationist in charge of education and staff the EPA with climate change deniers --

REMBRANDT
What's the deal, Q-Ball? I thought you went to freakin' Berkeley! And you got no right telling us how to react to this looney tune that just got the keys to the kingdom!

Quinn remains absolutely calm in these frenzied verbal assaults. He allows each snipe and shout until they finally run short of breath. A silent moment passes.

QUINN
I'm not telling you what to feel. I'm saying that whatever you decide to do -- whatever we decide to do -- we do it without Sliders Incorporated. No slidetech. No gadgets. No gear.

CONTINUED:

Quinn looks at each of his friends for a moment as he speaks with an earnest and gentle sense of caution.

QUINN (cont'd)
We're a relief organization. We don't interfere with a democratic political process.

Maggie gets an alert on her smartwatch. She focuses entirely on her watch as the discussion continues.

WADE
Quinn, we interfere every single day.

REMBRANDT
We used sliding to turn poison into water, we've brought the dead back to life, sort of --

DIANA
We've turned ink into food and waste into fuel --

QUINN
Within San Francisco. We can't even begin to calculate the results of using Sliders Incorporated on a global scale.

ARTURO
How can we withhold our ability to influence global events when this new president will have no such scruples?

QUINN
Professor, our civilization's been designed to extract resources for the benefit of a few at the expense of the rest, and that's the case whether the figurehead for that system's a career politician or a reality show star.

WADE
That figurehead could've been the first female US President in history! Instead, we got a psycho!

ARTURO
This election is a travesty!

CONTINUED:

QUINN
Or it's an opportunity. This country's pretended for too long that racism's in the past -- or that crumbling infrastructure and rampant poverty can be ignored -- or that politicians can call themselves Democrats when they only serve corporations.

REMBRANDT
So -- this public service announcement is worth us living through four years an administration that's completely insane?

QUINN
Administrations come and go. One status quo's been replaced with another, the only difference being the previous one paid lip service to civil liberties and environmental issues while the new one won't pretend to try. But our work here continues.

The sliders hear him. But they don't feel what he's saying. Quinn keeps talking anyway.

QUINN (cont'd)
We keep looking for ways to feed the hungry, treat the sick, inform the ignorant, protect the weak; we develop our methods in this city and then we share them with the world.

Quinn gestures to the screens of post-electoral news coverage.

QUINN (cont'd)
And we stay far away from all of that.

But then Maggie looks up from her smartwatch.

MAGGIE
What if we can't? What if you can't?

QUINN
What're you talking about?

MAGGIE
I just got something from a contact.

CONTINUED:

She taps several times on her smartwatch. And then ONE OF THE GLASS DISPLAY SCREENS flickers and shows an image. An image of an aged Motorola phone from the 90s.

MAGGIE (cont'd)
What's that look like to you?

ARTURO
A timer -- an example of Mr. Mallory's gifts for aesthetic design, such as they are. What of it?

Maggie taps on her smartwatch. The image ZOOMS OUT to reveal that the timer is ONE OBJECT sitting on a cabinet in a LAVISHLY DECORATED OFFICE that has DONALD JAMES TRUMP sitting on his desk, smirking smugly at the camera.

ARTURO (cont'd)
My God.

REMBRANDT
What the heck is a timer doing in the Donald's office?!

MAGGIE
He bought it. Bought it years ago off an FBI auction. They had it in evidence that was taking up space; they sold it in a clearance sale with this Order of St. George medal that Trump seemed to want.

WADE
But -- the timer and the FBI's evidence -- I thought that would've been erased after the reset --

DIANA
From what you've told me, the erasures weren't perfect. Quinn being here's proof of that.

MAGGIE
Now -- here's a message from last week sent between Trump's private server and the Kremlin's scientific division.

The photograph is replaced with a white screen showing the text: **MICRO-TAC UNIT EN ROUTE. REVERSE ENGINEERING TEAM PREPPED.**

CONTINUED:

MAGGIE (cont'd)
We've been making waves. And our new president's buddies in Russia have been looking into us. They haven't found a thing except for that loose end that's been in Trump's office for awhile and just got shipped off to some black-ops lab in Moscow.

WADE
Wait wait wait wait wait -- so what you're telling me is that Russia and Donald Trump could get their fingers on sliding?

ARTURO
Then the situation has changed. Partisan politics or not, sliding and its applications are open to misuse and abuse, especially by this man.

REMBRANDT
This just went beyond global. This went interdimensional.

MAGGIE
(to Quinn)
You still really think you're above all this?

And on Quinn's grim expression --

FLASHCUT TO:

QUINN AT THE BAR

Sitting next to Donald Trump as the bartender brings their scotches to them. Donald raises his glass for a taste. Quinn rotates the glass, never lifting it.

A few patrons mill in the background or sit at tables, but the bar is so vacant that Quinn and Donald are essentially alone. Quinn sets his jaw, preparing for a confrontation.

But then Trump lowers his glass and says to Quinn --

DONALD
I was wondering when you'd be popping in for a visit, whiz kid.

CONTINUED:

Quinn's jaw drops. He keeps staring at his glass, but he visibly shrinks, seeming almost tiny next to Trump's overbearing presence.

DONALD (cont'd)
Don't look so shocked, boy. I've got friends you've visited in the dead of the night. Warning them off or offering some help. What brings you here? Because I'm not needing anyone's help -- in case you missed it, I just won the whole country and everything that's in it!

QUINN
I came here to tell you what the deal's going to be.

Donald's mouth puckers with momentary outrage at this flannel-wearing man-child dictating to him. On Quinn's end, we can suddenly see the outrage and disgust that Quinn has for Trump. The contempt and loathing. Blazing in his eyes.

QUINN (cont'd)
You can have sliding. Or you can have the presidency. Not both.

Donald's eyes widen with fury.

QUINN (cont'd)
Where's the timer, Donald?

Donald's eyes start sweeping to the side. Looking at the reflection of the mirror behind the bar. Looking for his Secret Service agents.

And Quinn's voice drops to a cold and terrifying whisper as he speaks in the most matter-of-fact fashion.

QUINN (cont'd)
You really think they can stop me? You gave the Kremlin the timer. You know what I am. You know what I can do. You're a reality TV star who bluffed through an election. I'm a slider. I can erase you from reality before your minders take two steps.

Quinn uses two fingers to push his glass back and forth between his hands.

CONTINUED:

QUINN (cont'd)
I could put this glass where your heart should be. I could send you to the bottom of the Atlantic. Or forty feet to the left and just outside the building. You think your helpers over there can save you from falling thirty stories to the ground?

And then Quinn finally turns to look at Donald Trump.

QUINN (cont'd)
The timer. Tell me where it is.

Donald shakily rotates in his seat to look towards Quinn, hesitating to meet Quinn's eyes. But eventually he does -- and then Donald Trump bursts into a lengthy ROAR OF LAUGHTER.

His eyes shut as he chortles uncontrollably, spraying spit and gesticulating madly. His red tie flies into the air. His Secret Service agents each take a step towards the bar, but Trump waves several times to hold them back as he finally finishes his burst of hilarity.

Quinn's once grave expression is now blankly confused like he's an actor who's stumbled onto the wrong stage.

QUINN (cont'd)
This is not a joke.

DONALD
You're right, you're absolutely right, believe me, I know you're being serious. But here's the thing: you are a joke, a total joke.

There isn't an ounce of fear in Donald, just mockery.

DONALD (cont'd)
And it's funny how you want a piece of hardware over in the Kremlin's backyard, but you'd come looking to me to give you directions instead of, I don't know, someone who's actually in that country! So here's what I think, here's what I really think.

Quinn can't get a word in as Donald lectures Quinn in a Trumpian trade.

CONTINUED:

DONALD (cont'd)
I think you're a dickless nerd leading an army of dickless nerds over at Hamburgers Consolidated or whatever you call yourselves. I think you probably got your timer back already and you didn't come here for an address or even my best Jim Bean.

Quinn exhales scornfully at Donald's liquor while finding no other point of contradiction.

DONALD (cont'd)
You came here to try to put me in my place, put the fear of God into me with your teleportation and all the things you can do with it -- like sending me into the tiger cage at the zoo or somewhere in New Jersey. And you can do all that, but I also know that you never would, never will.

Quinn gapes at Donald's understanding of him. Donald sneers at Quinn's dismay.

DONALD (cont'd)
Seen your work, big boy. Seen what you do -- sliding condoms into Africa, sliding meds into Something Cross, giving away wifi with weather balloons, stealing all the copper cabling outta Iran's launch sites --

He raises his glass almost respectfully to Quinn.

DONALD (cont'd)
But here's what I don't ever see -- I don't see you ever taking anyone out. I don't ever see you gunning for anyone and I don't see you starting with me, but hey, prove me wrong.

Donald takes another swig of scotch like it's his last.

DONALD (cont'd)
Send me outside, little man! Go on, go ahead, send me outside!

And Quinn sits still and unmoving. Trump rotates in his barstool once, waiting. Nothing happens.

And Trump nods in a nearly prim fashion.

CONTINUED:

DONALD (cont'd)
You know the difference between me and you? Guys like you always want to do the math on every decision, run the numbers. And if the decision is too big, you never ever make your move.

Quinn is rigid and frozen in his seat.

DONALD (cont'd)
So, now that we've run through what you can do, let's run through what I can do. You ever heard of PRISM? You know PRISM?

Silence.

DONALD (cont'd)
How about XKeyscore? Know that one? DISHFIRE? STORMBREW? Dropmire? MYSTIC? They all stand for something, I don't know what, but they're great surveillance programs that do great work and then there's the NSA, FBI, CIA, DHS and more three-letter combos and they're mine now.

Quinn examines his unconsumed drink. Donald leans over, now speaking into Quinn's ear.

DONALD (cont'd)
I could have you, that little dyke the black one and Pavarotti -- eating rat shit in Guantanamo by the end of the day. I could have my boys track down anyone you've ever said two words to and lock 'em up as a person of interest for national security.

QUINN
I'd stop you.

DONALD
Oh you would, how could you not? Except then you'd have to make the moves that you can't bring yourself to make because if you were going do anything to me, you'd've done it by now. So let me tell you what the deal's going to be.

Quinn waits.

CONTINUED:

DONALD (cont'd)
You're going to go back to your little city. You're going to stay out of my face which means I'll never have any reason to get into yours.

Quinn says nothing.

DONALD (cont'd)
That is the deal you came to make. So let's just be clear that I'm the one making it.

And Quinn finally lets out a breath.

DONALD (cont'd)
Your scotch is on me, now get out of my bar. Stick to handing out hamburgers to the homeless. Because what can you really do to me or about me? What can you really, actually do?

Quinn takes a moment to contemplate the question.

QUINN
(politely)
Thank you for the drink.

He stands and walks off. There's a sudden BURST OF LIGHT AND WIND. A crackling vortex that sends Trump's combover into a fluttered mess and vanishes instantly. Donald jumps at the sight. Then the light fades away.

And Quinn is gone.

FADE TO:

INT. SLIDERS INCORPORATED OFFICE - MORNING

We're in a lounge-area of Sliders Incorporated. There's a kitchenette in the back and some TVs on the wall. On one of them, we see one of San Francisco's rainbow-painted street crossings graffitied with the words TRUMPLAND! Another television has an image of a sign that says TRUMP DIGS COAL. Another has an image of Mike Pence next to a sign reading: CURE THE GAYS.

Quinn's at a counter. Pouring coffee into six travel mugs.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - MORNING

We see Wade, Rembrandt, Arturo, Maggie and Diana walk down the streets of San Francisco, drinking coffee, talking inaudibly, laughing and smiling. And in a RAPID SERIES OF SHOTS:

They pass by a peach-coloured building with a sign reading **PLANNED PARENTHOOD.** Diana cheerily waves the sliders good-bye as she enters the building.

In a subsequent shot, the sliders pass a building with a sign reading **THE SF LGBTQ CENTER.** Wade and Maggie separate from the sliders to enter this facility and the other sliders continue along.

Farther along is a stone and glass building with a **GREENPEACE** sign in one of the windows. Rembrandt and Arturo nod to each other in mutual affirmation and walk inside. Quinn watches them go with a smile.

FADE TO:

INT. OFFICE - MORNING

A receptionist is working on her computer when a figure approaches the counter.

RECEPTIONIST
Morning. And you are?

Quinn is standing at the counter. Behind him there's a banner on the wall. It reads **AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA.**

QUINN
I'm here to volunteer.

FIN.