

SLIDERS (2013)

A twenty-first century reboot of the 1995 science fiction series.

Episode 1.1: “You Can't Go Home Again”

Draft 1.1 – to be revised

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Based on the TV series created by Tracy Tormé and Robert K. Weiss

Wade Welles is a dreamer who failed to find direction in life. Rembrandt Brown is an R&B singer who failed to hang on to his 15 minutes of fame. Professor Arturo is a scientist who failed to gain recognition for his brilliance. And Quinn Mallory is a genius who just failed to create anti-gravity -- but discovered something else instead...

SLIDERS: a daring adventure through infinity. Sometimes, being lost is the best way to be found.

SLIDERS (2013) is an ebook series that uses script format.

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We fade in on a wide angle of the city of San Francisco. The Golden Gate Bridge is a brilliant orange against the evening sky.

FADE TO:

A RESIDENTIAL AREA IN THE EVENING

We focus on one 2-storey house and move in close to the BASEMENT WINDOWS.

CUT TO:

INT. QUINN MALLORY'S BASEMENT - EVENING

In the basement is an astonishing SCIENTIFIC LABORATORY. There are shelves lining every wall. Each shelf is filled with books and electronic parts.

In the center of the room are four worktables. Three are occupied by a MASSIVE CONTRAPTION of COILS and TUBING, connected to a stereo-sized HELIUM-NEON LASER.

A desktop computer is by the stairs leading out of the basement. (Next to the monitor is a framed photo of an OLDER MAN. This may be important later.)

A tall young man (23) with moppy hair darts back and forth, dressed carelessly in unironed flannel and ragged jeans. This is QUINN MALLORY.

Quinn rushes to a BLACKBOARD. It's covered from top to bottom in chalk-written symbols and numbers for a complex equation.

There is a LAPTOP on the only worktable not dominated by machinery. The laptop has a VIDEO-CHAT WINDOW open. In the window is a scruffy twentysomething in glasses. This is CONRAD BENNISH JR.

BENNISH (VIDEO FEED)

(yawning)

Quinn, are we good to go? 'Cause I'm ready to be gone.

QUINN

One more second, Bennish!

At his desktop computer, Quinn taps in a series of commands. At the other end of the room, the helium-neon laser begins to make a whirring sound. Quinn moves to the laptop, turning it in the same direction the laser's aiming in.

QUINN (CONT'D)
It's started!!

The end of the laser glows -- and a blue beam bursts from the tip. But the beam of light doesn't strike the shelf in front of it -- instead, it stops in mid air.

In the space of a second, the beam resolves to a single-point of light and WIDENS into a RIPPLING, GLOWING HOLE IN THE AIR.

This CIRCULAR VORTEX is 40-feet wide, filled with silver-blue light. It has the texture of a ROUNDED RIPPLING EFFECT like a pond after dropping a stone into it.

A gleeful smile fills Quinn's face. He moves towards the vortex. It crackles like thunder, it creates wind in the basement, scattering papers and blowing Quinn's hair back.

SUDDENLY, there's a GROANING, WHEEZING SOUND from Quinn's contraption. SPARKS burst from inside. The vortex VANISHES. Tiny POPS, like mini-explosions, can be heard from Quinn's machinery. A gray smoke drifts from within.

Quinn spins to the laptop, thrilled and delighted.

QUINN (CONT'D)
That was amazing! We --

The laptop's video chat window shows Bennish lying back in his chair with his eyes closed. He's snoring.

QUINN (CONT'D)
HEY!!

BENNISH (VIDEO FEED)
(snapping awake)
Whuh?! What'd I miss?

QUINN
I mapped a symplectic manifold equation into three dimensional space!

BENNISH (VIDEO FEED)
Uhhhhhhh -- can you do it again?

Quinn looks at his scorched, smoking equipment.

QUINN
Dunno...

And we SMASH CUT TO A BLACK SCREEN showing glowing numbers --

00:00:10

The numbers count down to zero. With a RED FLARE, 00:00:00 becomes:

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CUT TO:

EXT. DOPPLER COMPUTERS - MORNING

Shoppers mill in and out of Doppler Computers, a big box electronics store, its name on a bright red sign up top.

CUT TO:

INT. DOPPLER COMPUTERS - MORNING

Inside is a constant level of background chatter. Over two aisles of MP3 players, school-skipping teenagers chatter excitedly while pointing at a poster advertising a Doppler-sponsored Coldplay concert. In another aisle, college students between classes fire light-guns at video game terrorists and drag race through streets. Retirement-age shoppers examine television box sets. Over all this, we hear:

QUINN (OFFSCREEN)

Theoretical physics is all about using mathematical abstractions to come up with theories for why things happen the way they do. And that's the key word. Theory.

We speed past shoppers examining toasters and blenders and grills in the housewares section.

QUINN (OFFSCREEN) (CONT'D)

Theory is a sketch of a thousand snowflakes; an approximation in abstraction.

We move towards the center of the store: we see a large sign hanging from the ceiling: DOPPLER REPAIR DESK. We shift down from the sign to Quinn Mallory, behind the desk, wearing a white shirt and red tie and a nametag. He's talking to somebody in front of him.

QUINN (CONT'D)

And that's why mapping mathematical concepts to 3D space is so important: it bridges theory and reality!

We see the person Quinn is talking to: a mid-forties, glasses wearing man in a red vest and dress shirt. A nametag on his vest identifies him as the MANAGER of Doppler Computers.

HURLEY

Mallory -- why the hell are you telling me this?

QUINN

You asked me why I was late --

HURLEY

I shouldn't have to ask at all, you moron! You're here to fix computers from ten to two and if you can't show up on time, you won't need to show up at all! Now get to work and make sure white Bob Marley down there stays on task!

From beneath the Doppler Computers Repair Desk, Conrad Bennish Jr. (24) emerges. We get our first good look at him: he's wearing tinted glasses and a childishly gleeful expression framed in his long, uncombed hair. He looks like a skinny teenager playing a hippie for Hallowe'en.

He's holding a packet of Twizzlers.

BENNISH

Evening shift must've stashed these here. Score!

HURLEY

(over his shoulder)

Get to work!

(muttering)

Used to work with professionals.

Now I work with kids...

Passing schoolchildren laugh at Quinn as he stands behind the Repair Desk, embarrassed and shaken. Behind him, Bennish indifferently chomps down on the red candy.

CUT TO:

INT. DOPPLER STORAGE BAY

We're in a back area of the store, filled with computers to be repaired. We see a worktable holding ten laptops. Slender fingers snap one USB key into each laptop.

On a WIDER ANGLE: We see Quinn pacing back and forth down the line of ten laptops, hitting an enter key on each laptop. On the other side of the room, Bennish is seated in front of a laptop. The screen shows the words, RECOVERY PROCESS BEGINNING. Bennish looks critically at Quinn.

BENNISH

You gotta work slower. We don't want Hurley to cut our hours. This is the best job in the world.

On Quinn's disbelieving face, we

CUT TO:

Another angle in the STORAGE BAY. Quinn and Bennish are at the worktables. They have opened up several mini-towers and are now snapping RAM-chips into the motherboards.

QUINN

This job is mindless!

CUT TO:

Quinn and Bennish are now tagging a rack of laptops with REPAIR COMPLETE labels from label guns.

BENNISH

Treasure our time here -- we'll never find any other jobs that give our big brains a paid vacation.

CUT TO:

Quinn and Bennish are back at the Doppler Computers Repair Desk. Quinn is filling out a form on a clipboard about his repair work while Bennish is eating Twizzlers.

QUINN

I'd actually like to be doing some real work right now. The only reason I'm not a teaching assistant is because of Brady Oaks.

BENNISH

I don't know how anyone believes the stuff he says about you.

(MORE)

BENNISH (CONT'D)

You'd never need anyone to do your homework for you -- and no offense, but the only way you'd ever put someone in a wheelchair would be if you were working at a nursing home.

QUINN

Everyone else believes him.

(sighs)

I can't get approval on projects, I can't lab resources -- it's a miracle they let me into classes. Honestly, maybe last night was a dream. Maybe I've been spending too much time in the basement and --

BENNISH

(almost angry)

Hey!!

(beat)

I don't know what happened last night. But if you say you did something amazing? Something that puts your dad's anti-gravity plans and your quantum engineering and my calculations into results that make it all worth something?

(beat)

Then I believe you and I know you can do it again.

Quinn looks grateful.

QUINN

The underlying principles yielded something. Mapping equations to 3D space is --

BENNISH

Whoa whoa whoa! Time and place!

QUINN

And your place -- that's in your bedroom giving ideas through Skype while I do the heavy lifting?

BENNISH

We all have our natural habitats. Like this place. This place is our kingdom! In a world of crappy consumer hardware, the tech support kings reign supreme.

A rolled-up DOPPLER COMPUTERS FLIER hits Bennish in the side of the head. He spins about to see an angry customer, a man in his sixties with a seething scowl.

CUSTOMER

You reinstalled everything on my computer in Spanish!

Bennish steps away to help the customer, leaving Quinn alone. Quinn looks around for a moment, spying Hurley in the TV section. Satisfied no one's watching, Quinn sits down at the Repair Desk computer. He double-clicks on something. Onscreen text appears, reading:

MESSENGER LOGGING IN >> becomes **MESSENGER ONLINE >>** and then becomes **WADE491 IS ONLINE.**

Quinn smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. WADE WELLES' BEDROOM. NOON

The bedsheets are rumbled and you can't quite see the floor due to a makeshift carpet of computer magazines and manuals.

A desk next to the bed is covered in TOUCHSCREEN CELL PHONES of various makes and models, some disassembled in separate trays. A desktop workstation rests in one corner of the room. Before it is a petite young woman (24). She's got short, pixie-ish hair and a pleased expression on a pale face. She types something on her computer.

WADE (VOICEOVER)

Should you be instant messaging on company hours?

And then we go to a split-screen: Quinn in Doppler on the right side, Wade in her room on the left. Quinn types his response.

QUINN (VOICEOVER)

(typing)

We can't all be self-employed software designers.

Wade raises a hand to her mouth to shield her smile.

QUINN (VOICEOVER) (CONT'D)

Your subway guide app's better than the official version. You must've ridden the rails and buses for days to get all these details...

Wade's grin practically splits her face. She types.

WADE (VOICEOVER)
 (in a calm voice that
 doesn't reflect her glee)
 How kind of you to say. Thank you.

Wade peers curiously into the camera at Quinn. She types.

WADE (VOICEOVER) (CONT'D)
 No bedhead. And you never shower in
 the mornings. Do you sleep anymore?

QUINN (VOICEOVER)
 (typing)
 Napped on the bus to work. But I'm
 close to a breakthrough.

WADE (VOICEOVER)
 (typing)
 Or a breakdown! Would you be
 working 20-hour-days if you were in
 a real lab?

Quinn looks wounded.

WADE (VOICEOVER) (CONT'D)
 (typing urgently)
 I didn't mean your basement isn't a
 real lab! I meant like, a lab with
 hours and people to help out.
 (as Quinn looks pained)
 I'm sorry. You should be proud that
 you're doing so much alone. Well,
 mostly -- you've got Bennish, too.

Behind Quinn, we see Bennish waving good-bye to the angry customer who is now a calm customer. Bennish leans back in his chair, which topples backwards and leaves Bennish in a heap on the floor.

Quinn gets up in alarm, but Bennish waves him off and Quinn sits back down.

WADE (VOICEOVER) (CONT'D)
 You're lucky to have him. And he's
 lucky to have you.
 (hesitant)
 You're the sweetest guy I've never
 met.

QUINN (VOICEOVER)
I'm sure we walked past each other
at the trade show. Shame we didn't
talk.

WADE (VOICEOVER)
(coyly)
Well, I type faster than I talk.
I'm sure we talked more about
probability calculation than we
ever would in person.

Abruptly, we hear a banging sound from Wade's video feed.
Wade looks over her shoulder. The door to Wade's bedroom
opens. A tall, trim woman (28) with red hair and a confident
smile appears.

WADE (CONT'D)
Kelly!! I'm in the middle of --

KELLY
-- what should be your afternoon
run. C'mon, Sis. This is why you
gave me keys.

She marches to Wade's chair and peers at the screen.

KELLY (CONT'D)
This is the guy? The one you never
shut up about?

Quinn waves awkwardly at the screen. Kelly looks skeptical.

KELLY (VIDEO FEED) (CONT'D)
I say this with absolute sincerity
and the utmost compassion -- you
really need a haircut. Get one
while I take Kathleen out for some
cardio.

Kelly can be seen yanking a resistant Wade from the chair.

QUINN
(looking over his monitor
and whispering)
Wade, I'll see you later.

WADE (VIDEO FEED)
Oh -- jeez -- did Hurley see you?

QUINN
No -- it's my Mom!

We get an angle on the front entrance of Doppler Computers. A woman, about 50 with a quirky smile, is walking in.

In the webcam window, Kelly reaches past Wade and hits the keyboard. Wade's video feed vanishes immediately.

As Quinn's mother gets to the Repair Desk --

BENNISH
Good eveniiiiiiing, miss!

Bennish steps past Quinn.

BENNISH (CONT'D)
(overenunciating like a
child trying to be suave)
Please -- allow me to offer you --
the best our hospitality has to
offer --
(he offers a half-eaten
Twizzler)
Tell me whatever has brought your
ravishing self to our humble
workshop of electronic repair.

AMANDA
Conrad. I'm Quinn's mother. You had
dinner at with us last week. Get
the candy out of my face and let me
talk to my son.

Conrad Bennish Jr. snaps his fingers and taps his temple, indicating that, oh, yes, now he remembers. However, he shrugs blankly at Quinn as he walks away.

QUINN
Mom! Hi! What are you doing here?

AMANDA
Right now, I'm trying to remind
myself that drug-addled idiot is
your best friends.

QUINN
Thin line between best and only.

AMANDA
Well, your basement's not a
single's bar. I'm just bringing you
some things you forgot at home --

She drops a knapsack on the Repair Desk.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
Laptop, books, school supplies,
lunch money, and a heavy hint that
you take Friday night off.

QUINN
Can't. I'm taking my mother out on
her birthday to a really nice
Japanese restaurant. Bennish helped
me find this place called Ryuko's.

Amanda does her very best not to look horrified.

QUINN (CONT'D)
We accumulated all 57 reviews. He
assigned each menu and each review
a numerical value and averaged the
aggregates across --

AMANDA
Alright, alright. See you at home.

She awkwardly leans over the Repair Desk to hug him, and then
leaves. Bennish returns to watch her go.

QUINN
Listen, sign me out?
(grabbing his knapsack)
I need to get to class.

Bennish gives Quinn a thumbs up as Quinn leaves the desk. As
Quinn approaches the front entrance/exit, Bennish's voice can
be heard over the store's sound system.

BENNISH (OFFSCREEN)
Mallory has left the building! I
repeat, Quinn is out! If anyone
remembers where the sign-in sheet
is, be a pal and sign him out!

CUT TO:

EXT. UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - DAY

The Berkeley campus grounds are a beehive of activity. We cut
through a rapid series of shots, showing student protestors
holding signs reading "STOP CAMPUS INTERNET SURVEILLANCE!" A
group of older gentlemen walking down a path are sprayed with
condoms by twentysomethings wielding air cannons.

Students rush about between trees firing foam darts in fierce combat at each other. A banner over one faculty building reads: "BERKELEY CAMPUS: THE MOST EXCITING PLACE ON EARTH!"

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. PROFESSOR ARTURO'S CLASS - DAY

Six dead-eyed students sit in the first and second row of seats in the classroom. They endure what is for them a brain-blastingly dull lecture. Before them, a massively built man in his fifties stands before the blackboard, delivering his lecture in an English accent with a powerful tone. His beard and sharp suit give him a stern air of authority.

ARTURO

Our space-time event, within the Steinhardt-Turok model, creates an expansion or contraction in the context of a four-dimensional system.

We see Quinn, the seventh student, in the third row, isolated. The six other students are grimly taking notes. Quinn is doing the same, but his demeanor indicates impassioned enthusiasm instead of boredom.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

But what if this mathematical construct were to function in a Baum-Frampton system running in a parallel model? For conceptual validity, we must apply each alternate system separately by adjusting the exponents --

One student in front, Wing, raises a hand.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Yes, Mr. Wing?

WING

So -- what you're saying is -- it's like -- like a house! In two parallel universes. In one, the wallpaper's green, in the other, it's red, but we gotta pick the furniture based on colour or it won't look right --

ARTURO

Mr. Wing, if you're hoping to apply cosmology and string theory to human decision, the philosophy wing is across the quad and next door is the coffee shop where philosophy graduates labor.

The five other students surrounding Wing roll their eyes; they're clearly used to Arturo.

WING

Hey! I didn't mean --

ARTURO

I am fully aware that you lack the intellectual ability to assimilate the concept of virtual particles within the theoretical propagators of the Feynman diagram. That you hoped to reduce the matter to something within your cranial capacity.

WING

I was just asking for some clearer definition --

ARTURO

Then you're in the wrong building! This is not a place for test tubes and psych exams -- this is a place where we examine the universe within the purity of mathematics!

WING

You brought up parallel models, parallel universes --

ARTURO

A turn of phrase! Kindly withhold your childish thoughts for a comic book convention and we will continue to deal in sound mathematical principles.

At this point, we get a look at Quinn's notes: within scribbled facts and figures, he's drawn circles within circles -- just like the rippling hole in his basement.

CUT TO:

It's after the lecture. Professor Arturo is packing his briefcase. The students begin to exit, Wing sneering at Arturo behind his back. Quinn approaches the Professor.

QUINN
Professor Arturo?

Arturo doesn't look up from his briefcase.

QUINN (CONT'D)
I wanted to ask you about --

ARTURO
Bear in mind, Mr. Mallory, that I'm well-aware of your reputation for using other people's answers when lacking your own.

QUINN
Professor, that's not fair! If this is about Brady Oaks --

ARTURO
This is not about Mr. Oaks, this is about Mr. Conrad Bennish Jr.

QUINN
What?

ARTURO
Mr. Bennish is a talented young man with some unfortunate past-times that dominate his life. A socially awkward scientist who is perfect prey for vultures.

QUINN
I don't know what you're talking about.

ARTURO
I'm sure Bennish was grateful for a friend. Perhaps so grateful he's doing your assignments for you.

QUINN
That's not true.

ARTURO
I have nothing but pity for poor Bennish, once you have no further use for him and discard him.

(a glower)
(MORE)

ARTURO (CONT'D)
Your father was a brilliant man.
You do his memory no favors.

QUINN
(incoherently upset)
Why are you -- ? I just wanted to
ask you about --

ARTURO
Mr. Mallory, when Mr. Bennish finds
the coherence and sobriety to ask
for my advice, I will happily grant
it to him and not to you. Good day.

Professor Arturo picks up his briefcase and walks out.

CUT TO:

EXT. UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - DAY

Quinn is outside the physics faculty building. A gust of wind
sends a piece of paper straight into his face.

He peels it off and peers at it. It's a flier for a
basketball game. "CALIFORNIA GOLDEN BEARS ROAR FOR VICTORY!"
it declares. On the poster, a smiling teddy bear says in a
word-balloon, "TICKETS ON SALE AT HAAS PAVILION!" In tiny
print on the lower-right corner are the words, "Rembrandt
Brown, THE CRYING MAN, will be performing the National
Anthem."

Quinn drops the flier in the first recycling bin he sees. He
walks off and we stay on the discarded flier.

REMBRANDT (OFFSCREEN)
Why am I in size eight font?

CUT TO:

INT. ARTIE FIELD'S OFFICE - DAY

The office door has a glass pane with vinyl letters reading,
FIELDS TALENT AGENCY. The door is open. Standing by it is a
very unhappy man (41) in a casual suit. His trimmed mustache
frames an aggravated expression and his dark skin looks
flushed.

This is Rembrandt Brown and he's holding a copy of the same
flier Quinn recycled. Rembrandt presses into the office and
slams the flier down on a desk.

REMBRANDT

Why is THE CRYING MAN bigger than
my god-damn name?

The man behind the desk, Artie Fields, looks at the flier
with a resigned face.

ARTIE

Rembrandt --

REMBRANDT

Artie, the poster has to get people
excited to know I'm going to be
there -- me, not some crybaby --

ARTIE

No one wants to hire Rembrandt
Brown. No one knows who he is. They
will hire the Crying Man for a
laugh, though.

Rembrandt opens his mouth to form a retort, but all that
emerges is a strangled, choking noise.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

Oh for God's sake!

A frustrated Artie rises from his chair and storms to a wall
of framed tributes to clients. At one end is a magazine cover
showing Rembrandt's face, about 15 years ago. Stagelights
illuminate the tears streaming from his eyes.

The cover has the headline: REMBRANDT BROWN: THE CRYING MAN.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

(banging on the frame)

You act like this was ten minutes
ago instead of ten years ago. You
had your shot at the big time,
Remmy, and you threw it all away.

REMBRANDT

Threw what away? Violet told me we
were done five minutes before I
went out onstage and I looked like
a crybaby in front of my audience.

Rembrandt jabs a finger at the magazine cover.

REMBRANDT (CONT'D)

This is an insult! This is me being
mocked!

ARTIE

The 90s were full of pretty boys trying to look preppy and twerps trying to look like thugs. You crying on stage made you look like the real deal -- like a sincere artist with something worth saying.

REMBRANDT

People would laugh at me in the street, people would give me boxes of Kleenex --

ARTIE

And if you'd let me spin it, they would've been giving you boxes of gold records in the end as opposed to just the one --

REMBRANDT

The only reason "I'm Crying For You Girl" took off was because people bought it for the joke. And it's not like I gave up, I tried to keep my name out there --

ARTIE

What, with Rapping Remmy?

At that, Rembrandt cringes.

REMBRANDT

The market would never have wanted a Crying Man long term.

ARTIE

Well, right now, the Crying Man name's the only thing getting you any work at all.

REMBRANDT

It's a novelty act!

ARTIE

That's what you are. A novelty act at weddings and funerals and college games. You could've been something special, but you aimed for mediocrity, and now the best you can hope for is to keep busy.

Rembrandt seethes at Artie's words.

REMBRANDT

Tomorrow's going to be the first time in four years I've had an audience under retirement age. It's a chance for a fresh start --

ARTIE

Yes -- great! Maybe a basketball game will be your big comeback, maybe that'll get people interested in you again. People really care who sings the anthem. Follow the dream, Crying Man!

A flash of defiance shows in Rembrandt.

REMBRANDT

I made people care about me once -- I can do it again. You just wait -- I'm going to make tomorrow the show of a lifetime, and people will want to know who I am!

ARTIE

Whatever gets you there, pal.

Artie returns to his desk, dismissing Rembrandt from his attention. Rembrandt gives the framed magazine cover one last look before walking out the door.

CUT TO:

INT. QUINN MALLORY'S BASEMENT - EVENING

Quinn is rewriting his blackboard equations in chalk. Bennish is on the laptop in a video chat window. He's displeased.

BENNISH (VIDEO FEED)

Why would you even go to him? That pompous windbag's a washed up nobody. He was laughed out of Harvard in the 90s.

QUINN

When we mapped the equation to three-dimensional space --

BENNISH (VIDEO FEED)

You can call it a vortex.

QUINN

The vortex kept expanding, drawing more on the exotic matter.

(MORE)

QUINN (CONT'D)

It was trying to balance the matter-energy ratio to keep itself open and it burnt out the transformers.

BENNISH (VIDEO FEED)

This is when I was asleep, right?

QUINN

Professor Arturo's a genius. I've read all his papers. I thought he could balance the equations without altering the models that let the construct appear as a vortex --

BENNISH (VIDEO FEED)

I'm working on it. Just 'cause I'm not talking about it doesn't mean it's not on my mind.

Quinn continues to study his numbers. On the laptop screen, Bennish continues to tap his chin.

BENNISH (VIDEO FEED)(CONT'D)

Could you try replacing line 5, segment 3 with Xr12 Alpha over Variable X!

Dropping into a crouch, Quinn wipes away a section of the calculations and writes in Bennish's new set of numbers and symbols. He blinks.

QUINN

Yes -- yes! You balanced it! We just need to rework the zero-point inductives, convert vectors K through --

BENNISH (VIDEO FEED)

That sounds seriously dull. Good thing you're on the job.

Quinn gleefully begins rewriting the board. As he keeps erasing and writing, we

FADE TO:

LATER: The blackboard has been extensively rewritten and Quinn is now working on a piece of hand-sized hardware at his worktable, using tweezers and a tiny screwdriver set.

QUINN

(to the laptop)

This is fantastic! You've got to get over here!

No response. Quinn snaps a component into place.

QUINN (CONT'D)
I'm reassembling the mapping apparatus, but in miniature. If the hardware burns out again, it'll only be this smaller device.

Quinn puts the pieces of the device back together.

QUINN (CONT'D)
Here, take a look at -- !

Quinn look at the laptop. Bennish is no longer in the webcam video: a note has been left in view of the webcam lens. It reads: "GONE FOR MUNCHIES. SEE YOU AT WORK."

Quinn is hurt, but tries to focus on his work. He takes a long look at the device in his hands: it looks like a large, clunky flip-phone from the mid-90s (specifically, an Ultra-Lite Motorola MicroTAC flip phone with the antenna removed).

CUT TO:

Quinn at his computer, typing. He picks up the flip-phone and adjusts it. There's an audible chime from Quinn's computer. Onscreen text reads: **WADE491 IS ONLINE.**

We stay in Quinn's basement. Wade's webcam window appears in the lower-right corner of our shot.

WADE (VIDEO FEED)
What's with the 90s cell phone?

QUINN
Don't judge hardware by the outer shell.

He flips it open. The phone's keypad has been replaced with a touchscreen from a more modern phone. The speaker and seven-segment-display that should be up top have ALSO been replaced by a (smaller) touchscreen.

Quinn taps the top touchscreen: it displays 00:00:00. The lower touchscreen shows a keypad, but a thumb-swipe changes the display into a set of calculations.

Quinn picks up another part for the device: it looks like a metallic cylinder with rings of copper wire coiled around it. He snaps it into the front of the casing. It briefly glows.

WADE (VIDEO FEED)
90s phone with a flashlight?

QUINN
 Miniature laser emitter! It
 converts all this --
 (aims the desktop's webcam
 at the blackboard)
 -- into a light signature siphoned
 through an exotic matter matrix.

WADE (VIDEO FEED)
A mathematical laser show, huh?

QUINN
 Something like that. My dad
 would've loved this.

WADE (VIDEO FEED)
You really miss him.

QUINN
 He had so many friends who couldn't
 talk about mathematical theory
 without fighting, and Dad thought
 he could come up with something to
 get them all on the same page.

WADE (VIDEO FEED)
Anti-gravity?

QUINN
 Yeah... I couldn't get it to work,
 but the underlying concept, a
 unified field theory...
 (typing)
 Oh, did you and your sister have a
 good time?

WADE (VIDEO FEED)
*After the run, Kelly and I went to
 a movie and... y'know, it's all on
 Facebook.*

We stay on Quinn, but we hear several mouse-clicks. Wade's webcam feed is temporarily replaced with a series of photos. In the photos, we see:

A grinning Kelly Welles on a barstool with several male and female friends around her. And then there's Wade, sitting sullenly at the left end of the photo.

The next photo: a grinning Kelly Welles holding a dart and aiming off-camera. Kelly's friends look entertained. And then there's Wade, standing sullenly at the left.

The next photo: a grinning Kelly Welles and her friends all holding glasses of beer and toasting. And then there's Wade, standing sullenly at the left, looking longingly at the exit.

The next photo: a grinning Kelly Welles and her friends are seated around a large platter of chicken wings. Wade is nowhere to be seen.

The photos vanish and Wade's webcam feed returns.

QUINN

I'm sure Kelly just wanted to show you a good time?

WADE (VIDEO FEED)

I know. It's just not my scene. I have my work. I'm sure you understand; you've taken up permanent residence in your basement.

Quinn types calculations. The same calculations flash across the touchscreen of the timing mechanism.

QUINN

I'm hoping that what Bennish and I accomplish down here will get us into a properly funded lab. We're working on our futures.

WADE (VIDEO FEED)

And I'm working on mine. The self-employed software designer here has only made two hundred dollars in profit at this point. But I think there's a future here...

QUINN

(still typing)

Well, I appreciate you taking time now and then to keep me company.

Wade begins to study one of the phones in her hands intently.

WADE (VIDEO FEED)

I could find some time now and then for us to hang out.

QUINN

(focused on his calculations)

Don't we already?

WADE (VIDEO FEED)
(still not looking up)
I mean in person.

QUINN
 Yes!!

Quinn picks up the timing mechanism.

QUINN (CONT'D)
 Bennish's revisions work! And the
 timer's software's running!

WADE (VIDEO FEED)
Quinn!!

QUINN
 Huh?

WADE (VIDEO FEED)
*(looking directly into the
 webcam lens)*
Do you want to meet?

Quinn loses his grip on the timer. It clatters to the desk.

QUINN
 I do. It's just, I'm kind of at a
 crucial stage here. I really need
 to test this, I've been looking at
 these figures since I was 15 and
 tonight's a bit --

WADE (VIDEO FEED)
Quinn.

Quinn is quiet.

WADE (VIDEO FEED) (CONT'D)
*If you want to keep your online and
 offline life separate, I get it.
 Just don't weasel out of saying it.*

Quinn looks around at his basement.

QUINN
 I don't have any food in the house.
 I had to move the sofa out of the
 basement so I could fit in an extra
 table.

WADE (VIDEO FEED)
Really, it's --

QUINN

I had to hook the machine into the fuse box and the reduced power load means all the lights in the basement are perpetually dim. There are pizzas and sandwiches I've forgotten about that are still around here somewhere. But if you think you can handle that, I live at 4159 Blue Jay Way.

A brilliant smile fills Wade's face.

WADE (VIDEO FEED)

Seriously?

QUINN

If you come over now -- I can show you what I've been doing. Bennish slept through it, so you'll be the first person after me to see it.

WADE (VIDEO FEED)

*Oh my God -- yes! I'll see you in --
(peering at what we can
assume is Google Maps)
Half an hour!*

Wade rises from her chair. Then leans into the webcam.

WADE (VIDEO FEED) (CONT'D)

*I'm not going to say good-bye
since... I guess pretty soon, we'll
be saying hello.*

And then Wade's webcam feed is gone. Quinn pushes back from the computer, exhaling. He looks around the basement. He gets up and moves towards the machine, holding the timing mechanism in his hand. He puts it down.

But then he picks it back up.

QUINN

Should make sure that I've actually got something to show...

He flips the timer open and taps a command into the touchscreen. The machine on the table, with its coils and processors and motors, begins to hum.

Quinn taps one final command into the timer and aims it straight ahead.

Light bursts from the front of the device. It stops in mid-air and condenses into a single point, a lone-spark of light in mid-air. And then it widens to form the VORTEX.

The basement is filled with wind and a crackling sound of intense energy as the GLOWING, RIPPLING hole in the air takes shape.

Quinn shields his eyes for a moment as the flashing light is reflected across his face. His desk chair on wheels is blown back by the forceful wind of the vortex.

Quinn grins widely. He reaches out, letting his fingers feel the wind.

But then the vortex starts to get BIGGER. More ripples take shape in this hole in the air, and with each circular ripple, the vortex widens. Quinn backs away.

The vortex EXPANDS to reach the ceiling and then begins to drift towards Quinn. He retreats, urgently tapping at the timer. But the vortex doesn't stop growing TOWARDS Quinn's direction. There's a flash of light.

FLASHCUT TO:

QUINN: Falling! Falling through a strange and inexplicable tunnel of purple and green light, flailing madly as the roar of the vortex fills his ears. He screams helplessly.

FLASHCUT TO:

Quinn is thrown against a wall. He cries out in surprise as he lands in an awkward tangle on the floor. He looks up to see the vortex SHRINK and VANISH. Gingerly, he gets up, looking around his basement.

But something is wrong. The shelves and blackboard are gone. The worktables are gone. The machine is gone. He is in the same room, the same house, but all his possessions and all his work have ceased to exist. This isn't a basement lab -- it's simply a basement.

QUINN (CONT'D)

Where am I?

CUT TO:

INT. MALLORY KITCHEN - EVENING

The kitchen lights aren't on. The door to the basement, outside the kitchen, swings upon. Quinn bursts up the stairs.

QUINN
Mom?! Mom!!!

No response. Quinn realizes all the furniture is gone: there's no stove, no kitchen table, no sign that anyone lives here. He flicks the light switch. The lights don't come on.

Quinn shoves the timing device into his pocket. Rushes to the kitchen cabinets and yanks open every drawer. All are empty. He runs into the living room. There's no sofa, no television. No curtains on the windows.

He runs into the front hall. We stay on the FLIGHT OF STAIRS as Quinn runs up them.

QUINN (CONT'D)
Mom!! Are you here? Mom!!!

CUT TO:

EXT. MALLORY HOUSE - EVENING

We hear footsteps charging down the flight of stairs inside the house. The front door swings open and Quinn runs out. His eyes sweep the front porch. He checks the mailbox. Empty.

Terror fills him as he steps out onto the front lawn and sees a realtor's FOR SALE sign stuck in the lawn. He turns around to stare at the strange house that isn't his.

Suddenly, there's a soft, motorized hum. A sleek black car is gliding up the street. This gleaming black sedan pulls into the driveway.

Quinn walks towards the car as two tall men in gray suits and ties emerge from opposite sides of the car.

QUINN
Excuse me? Can you help me?

The two men turn towards Quinn. One of them is holding a small digital device: it looks like a television remote control but with diodes at the end and a SSD display on top. He briefly waves it in Quinn's direction, and it releases a chirp.

The man pockets the device and approaches Quinn, his companion right behind him.

AGENT BARROWS
My name is Agent Barrows and this
is Agent Goldman.

QUINN

Please -- something's wrong! My house -- everything's gone! My mother was upstairs -- she's disappeared! I don't understand -- my house wasn't for sale!

AGENT GOLDMAN

You'd better come with us.

The two agents are entirely unruffled, almost mechanically cool and icy in the face of Quinn's frantic desperation.

QUINN

My mom --

AGENT GOLDMAN

Is your mother here?

QUINN

No.

AGENT GOLDMAN

No sense in staying here, then.

Agent Barrows turns away, not waiting for Quinn's response. Barrows returns to the car and opens the back door. Quinn looks helplessly at his dark, empty house.

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE CAR

The car speeds along a freeway. Quinn is in the back seat. Agent Barrows is behind the wheel with Goldman in the passenger seat.

QUINN

Why did you guys come to my house?

No response.

QUINN (CONT'D)

I was yelling -- did someone call it in?

Agent Goldman turns up the volume on the radio, ignoring Quinn.

Quinn leans back in the admittedly comfortable back seat, gazing out the window, trying to ground himself in something familiar. The streets and buildings don't look different.

But then Quinn finds himself studying the cars passing by and notices: none of them have exhaust pipes. In fact, there's no exhaust to be seen -- and when Quinn looks up at the night sky, he can see the stars without the haze of pollution.

At this point, he starts paying attention to the radio broadcast.

*JACOBS (VOICE ON THE RADIO)
Can you believe it? They're not
going to spend their stimulus on a
light rail system -- oh, no.
They're going to buy a football
team! Seriously?*

*STEVE (VOICE ON THE RADIO)
You have to wonder if those new
Canadian hires forgot what country
they're working in. Football's a
Canadian sport. If it's slower than
soccer, Americans aren't going to
have the patience for it.*

*JACOBS (VOICE ON THE RADIO)
Kind of the nature of the world we
live in these days -- everything
gets faster and faster...*

Quinn listens to the conversation with increasing anxiety.

CUT TO:

EXT. MUSEUM - EVENING

The black sedan with Quinn inside drives up to what looks like a museum. It is a massive white complex with a domed roof. It looks like a church built with modern materials.

The car moves through a set of gates and past the front entrance, driving around to the back.

CUT TO:

INT. MUSEUM HALLWAY - EVENING

We're now inside the museum, in a dark and dimly lit hallway. Agent Goldman walks through the hallway. Behind him is Quinn. And behind Quinn is Agent Barrows, silently storming forward, forcing Quinn to maintain his pace lest he be trampled.

The three come to an elevator. The elevator doors open. Goldman walks in. Quinn hesitates and Barrows steps forward, a hand extended to shove Quinn into the elevator.

QUINN

Hey!

CUT TO:

INT. THIRD FLOOR - EVENING

We're looking at the closed elevator doors on the third floor of the museum. This floor is dimly lit. The elevator doors open to reveal Goldman, Quinn and Barrows. Goldman steps out.

Quinn launches himself forward, away from Barrows and straight into Goldman, knocking him aside. Quinn is about to make a run for it to escape the two agents -- but Barrows leaps out of the elevator, driving every ounce of weight into Quinn's back. Barrows tackles Quinn to the floor and pins him.

QUINN

Hnnghhh! Let me GO!

Quinn cries out in pain as Goldman puts a foot on Quinn's waist, further pinning Quinn to the floor.

From the floor, Quinn sees a THIRD STRANGER approaching. There's a pair of black loafers on the floor in front of Quinn. The shoes take smooth, deliberate steps forward until they're directly in front of his face.

When this new person speaks, the voice is rich and deep and in an English accent.

VOICE

It would be most helpful,
gentlemen, if you would assist our
guest to his feet.

Hands grip Quinn's shoulders and he's hauled up and deposited on his heels. And then he gasps when he sees this third man.

It's Professor Arturo.

But the Professor doesn't look the same as he did in class. His hair is loose and longer, his beard less neatly trimmed. Instead of a sharply fitted suit, he's casually dressed: a loose orange jacket of wool, worn on top of a blue sweater and cargo pants.

QUINN
Professor?! What's going on here?

ARTURO
I'm afraid that before I can answer
your questions, you will be
required to answer mine.

Quinn starts forward towards the Professor -- and Goldman and Barrows yank him back. Quinn struggles and Goldman's fist strikes Quinn directly in the stomach. Quinn lets out a strangled gagging noise and sags forward. Only Goldman and Barrows' arms keep him upright.

Arturo spots the bulge in Quinn's pants pocket. He reaches forward and pulls out the timing device. He flips it open like he's handled it before. He gazes at the display and then snaps it shut.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
Further tests of the agents'
patience would be most unwise,
young sir. Now -- the questions.

Quinn makes a choking, wheezing sound.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
How many stars are there on the
American flag?

QUINN
Whuh --

ARTURO
The American flag. How many stars?

QUINN
Fif -- Fifty!

ARTURO
What is the Seventh Amendment?

QUINN
The -- the one about -- common law
suits -- trial by jury if the value
in question exceeds -- twenty
dollars!

ARTURO
And what is the significance of
October 12?

QUINN
Columbus Day! It's Columbus Day!

At that, Arturo gives a short nod to Goldman and Barrows. Immediately, their hands withdraw from Quinn's person.

Quinn looks over his shoulder to see the two agents quietly returning to the elevator. The doors close with them inside. Quinn and Arturo are alone in the dimly lit hallway.

ARTURO

My apologies, Mr. Mallory. Our tactics are a crude but unfortunate necessity when dealing with guests of your peculiar origins.

QUINN

Why are you DOING this?! I mapped symplectic manifold equations into 3D space and all I asked for was your advice --

ARTURO

Mathematical constructs in physical space...

He looks at the timing mechanism. And then Arturo smiles.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

I understand. You've created sliding.

Arturo turns away. A casual wave of his hand indicates that Quinn should follow.

QUINN

Sliding? What're you talking about?

ARTURO

If you would accompany me to the observation deck, all will be explained.

CUT TO:

INT. OBSERVATION DECK - EVENING

Quinn and Arturo emerge on what looks like a carefully lit balcony that's indoors. A railing guards the two of them from the edge. Beyond the edge is complete and total blackness.

QUINN

Where are we?

Arturo snaps his fingers.

There's a flare of light in the darkness surrounding the deck. The briefest of flashes. It fades away to nothing -- and then reforms into a large, glowing sphere that looks to be the width of four picnic tables. The sphere takes on a bright blue colour. Land masses take shape across it.

It's an image of the Earth floating in the darkness.

QUINN (CONT'D)

Hologram?

ARTURO

An illustrative one, I hope. This building is the Museum of Interdimensional Wonders.

QUINN

Interdimensional?

The image of the planet Earth in front of Quinn and Arturo ripples and widens. A SECOND EARTH flows out of the first Earth, and then separates entirely. The two Earths hang side by side in blackness.

And then, the two Earths each produce an Earth of their own. Now it's four Earths. Each Earth continues to multiply until Quinn is looking at an ENDLESS SPIRAL of EARTHS.

ARTURO

Your answers to the three questions indicate that you originate from an Earth within the Hopkins cluster -- that's a categorization, not a spatial reference, of course.

Quinn stares at the multiplying Earths, stretching farther and farther back. He's enchanted by their symmetrical beauty.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

You found a way to map a manifold equation to three-dimensional space. You saw a rippling in the air. That ripple was a gateway to the Einstein-Rosen-Podalski bridge. A bridge to alternate realities.

Quinn tears his gaze from the display and looks at the Arturo in front of him: this lengthy haired, casually dressed Arturo. This relaxed, laid-back version of the angry man he saw earlier today.

QUINN

You're not the Professor I know.
You're a version of him in a
parallel universe. I'm on a
different planet!

ARTURO

Same planet. Different dimension.

CUT TO:

INT. FRONT HALL - EVENING

We're now in a massive hall of white brick walls with a domed ceiling high above. Quinn and Arturo descend a spiral staircase leading to the ground level. Quinn looks around in every direction: there are six large archways, each leading down separate paths.

QUINN

This place is huge!

ARTURO

The complex spans a hundred and eighty thousand square feet and twelve stories. And yet, it represents a mere fraction of the Earths out there.

QUINN

How many Earths are there?

ARTURO

I lost count after fourteen trillion and five. Our probes find two hundred a day. Each with their own history, their own path from the dawn of existence to the present day. Your timer can open a gateway to each and every one.

Quinn studies each archway. They all have signs next to them. ALTERNATE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGIES. ALTERNATE CULTURES. ALTERNATE THEOLOGIES AND PHILOSOPHIES. ALTERNATE ECONOMICS. ALTERNATE BIOLOGIES. Arturo leads Quinn to a specific archway: ALTERNATE HISTORIES.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Visiting hours are over, but as the curator of this museum, I'm happy to offer you a tour.

As they move towards the Alternate Histories Wing, Quinn spots a display case in the center of the hall. He peers into the case. Inside is a dark wooden bust of Arturo's face.

The inscription on the plaque below reads: MAXIMILIAN ARTURO:
THE FATHER OF INTERDIMENSIONAL TRAVEL.

QUINN
(delighted)
So on this world, you created
sliding? I always knew you were
brilliant.

ARTURO
Let me show you what your own
brilliance has opened the door to.

CUT TO:

INT. ALTERNATE HISTORIES WING - EVENING

Quinn and Arturo walk down a hallway. Each wall is lined with massive glass windows in enormous frames. They stop at the first window. It comes to life and through the window, Quinn can see a park in the daytime, with people walking through.

QUINN
Golden Gate Park -- is this a
display screen?

ARTURO
Three-dimensional flatscreen
technology. It tracks eye-
movements. Where you look, it will
go. Look left.

And Quinn does. The window zooms in on a STATUE in the park. Quinn spares it a glance and looks to Arturo.

QUINN
Statue of Abraham Lincoln, right? I
run by every day to get to campus.

ARTURO
Look closer, Mr. Mallory.

Quinn turns his attention back to the giant screen. Stares at the statue. He realizes this bearded, balding statue is not Abraham Lincoln. He squints at the plaque on the base of the statue.

QUINN

(reading)

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin -- Lenin?
What's a statue of him doing in
Golden Gate Park?

ARTURO

It honours the leader of the
Bolsheviks and the October
Revolution of 1917 that paved the
road to Russian dominance of North
America. This display offers a
three-dimensional representation of
a parallel Earth in which the
United States' failed war efforts
in Korea led to the US becoming
Communist territory by 1961.

QUINN

My God.

(gesturing at the window)

Is this live footage?

ARTURO

Everything here is pre-recorded: a
combination of recreations and on
location visual records.

Arturo steps forward and we see him blink carefully at the display. The view of Golden Gate Park vanishes, and we see brief snippets in separated windows. We see an American flag with a hammer and sickle, an image of the Washington Monument surrounded by Russian soldiers.

Quinn looks down the hallway. The glass displays stretch farther than he can see.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Let's move on, shall we? You may
like this next one.

They move to the next window. Quinn looks in to see an open, grassy hillside. It looks still and peaceful. But then there's a roar and a powerful STOMPING noise.

And emerging at the top of the hill is a STEGOSAURUS DINOSAUR, the fins and plates on its back appearing before the rest of its massive form. The enormous reptile strides onto the hill.

QUINN

Dinosaurs -- they didn't die out on
this world?

Arturo steps forward and looks at a certain part of the window. The image in the window speeds forward until we arrive at a high metal wall. Then the image rotates 180 degrees, spinning THROUGH THE WALL and out the other side.

On the outside, the wall has a sign reading: SAN FRANCISCO DINOSAUR RESERVE.

ARTURO

They're an endangered species on this Earth. Protected and nurtured. Poached, too, but protected.

QUINN

Incredible!

ARTURO

Come, let me show you more --

CUT TO:

A window shows Mount Rushmore -- but it shows the faces of six US Presidents instead of four. And the six faces are those of WOMEN.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

This world has a severe issue of gender-bias, as does yours. Unlike the world we know, however, the gender-bias on this parallel Earth favors women over men.

CUT TO:

Another window: this one shows images of Nikola Telsa, Thomas Edison, Alexander Graham Bell on an advertisement mounted on the side of a bus. A side window shows the cover of PLAYBOY magazine with a portrait of Marie Curie.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

In this parallel culture, scientific, philosophical and technological achievement are the foundation of all celebrity.

CUT TO:

Another window: This one shows a church, but instead of a cross, the church roof has a pentacle (a star in a circle).

ARTURO (CONT'D)

A world where Wiccanism is the dominant religion and Christianity is an isolated subculture appropriated by angry teenagers seeking to annoy their parents.

CUT TO:

And we see another window: we see the Golden Gate Bridge. But we zoom in on it to see horses and buggies being the primary form of transport: there aren't any cars.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

A world that has rejected technological advancement since 1944. I'm afraid I haven't had the chance to visit there since 1996, as I'm wanted by the police for wearing a digital watch.

CUT TO:

Another window: we see what looks like a liquor store. But we zoom on the window and all that's visible are kinds of soda pop in different varieties, including some upscale brands in ornate cases.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

A world where the American Prohibition on alcohol never ended.

CUT TO:

Another window: it shows a bank with a banner for Retirement Savings Plans. But the banner has a photograph of people in their thirties.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

A world where retirement age in America is 30.

We widen to show that Arturo and Quinn are now coming to the end of the hallway of display windows. Arturo continues to walk forward, past the last display window.

QUINN

All these worlds -- have you been to all of them?

ARTURO

Oh, some. Some...

Quinn and Arturo continue through the hallway and find themselves back at the entrance of the Alternate Histories wing. Arturo leads Quinn back into the front hall.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

I had the museum designed to take the visitors in circles. Always bringing them back to the same place but with a new perspective.

He regards the bust of his face in the display case almost wistfully before turning to Quinn.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

An interdimensional civilization, Mr. Mallory, is a post-historical world. Sliding will fundamentally alter the nature of the societies and cultures it touches.

QUINN

What'd sliding do to your world?

ARTURO

To this world? I've been careful. Sliding is restricted. I've done what I can to bring the best of other worlds to this one.

QUINN

The car that brought me here -- it didn't have an exhaust pipe.

ARTURO

Micro-nuclear fusion, yes. I also brought back a cure for leukemia, hydroponic technologies to end world hunger, nanite-based surgical operations, satellite designs that can rebuild the ozone layer, water purification technologies, and also, a technique that prevents liquid absorption in processed-grain foodstuffs.

QUINN

You brought back cereal that doesn't get soggy in milk?

ARTURO

My greatest triumph. The world outside this museum is far from perfect, Mr. Mallory, but no one goes hungry or lives in squalor.

QUINN

Maybe you can come to my world,
Professor, and see what you can do?

At that, Arturo darkens slightly.

ARTURO

Mr. Mallory, there are worlds where psychics have brought an end to wars and zero-point energies have saved the environment. But there are also worlds where global networking systems have perfected war and fusion-based energy has obliterated the human race.

QUINN

What are you saying?

ARTURO

To be a slider is to be many things. A scientist. An objective observer of human behavior. An interventionist or an uninvolved bystander. A victim or a survivalist. The majority of parallel Earths have never been exposed to interdimensional travel and a slider can dramatically alter their circumstances.

QUINN

You can't get involved?

ARTURO

It is not a decision to be made without careful consideration.

Arturo holds up Quinn's timer. With his other hand, Arturo pulls a pen-like device out of his pocket and waves it over the timer. The timer lets out a number of beeps. He gives the timer back to Quinn.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

For you, sliding is still in infancy. Your timer will allow you to produce gateways to parallel worlds, but your destination will be random and uncontrolled.

Quinn is looking at the timer, trying to figure out what Arturo was doing with the pen.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

The duration of your visits will depend on the random convergence of n-factor probabilities: you might stay for a month or a week or an hour. At the end of that period of time, your timer will open a gateway that will take you back to your home dimension.

The timer starts beeping.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

An alert. You have forty-five seconds remaining on this world.

QUINN

Forty-five -- that's not enough! Can I come back here?

ARTURO

I'm afraid your technology's level of development prevents a return visit for the time being.

QUINN

But I --

ARTURO

Mr. Mallory, listen to me now.

Quinn is silenced by the gravity of the Professor's tone.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Your timer will open a doorway to wonders beyond your imagination. But you must remember the significance and value of choice.

QUINN

I don't --

ARTURO

The choice to retreat or advance. To reach out with trust or lash out with suspicion.

(a breath)

Remember that wherever you go and whatever you see is the result of decisions. Decisions determine who we are. What we become. It is from decisions that worlds are built and broken.

The timer starts beeping. Quinn flips it open. The countdown has hit zero. Quinn taps a command into the touchscreen. The vortex opens, bringing thunder and light into the hall.

QUINN
 (calling over the sound of
 the vortex)
 Thank you, Professor! For
 everything!

The Professor smiles broadly at Quinn. He walks closer to Quinn, saying in his ear:

ARTURO
 When you see me back home -- try
 not to be too hard on me.

Quinn laughs and throws himself into the vortex. A moment later, the vortex disappears. Arturo is alone.

He walks towards a large glass window. It looks outside the museum, showing the San Francisco Bay. Illuminated in the bay is the Golden Gate Bridge, lit to be visible at night.

Except the Bridge on this world is a bright and vivid blue.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
 Good luck, my boy.

CUT TO:

INT. QUINN MALLORY'S BASEMENT - EVENING

The vortex opens. Quinn Mallory tumbles out. The vortex closes. He spins around, taking in the sight of his machine, his computer, his blackboard, his shelves, his equipment and his home. He rushes to the desktop workstation. To the framed photo that rests next to the computer monitor; the photo of the older man. He picks up the photo.

QUINN
 We did it, Dad! We did it!!!

On this jubilant moment, we

FADE TO:

We see Quinn, still in the basement, lying back in his chair, sitting by his blackboard, looking thoughtfully at his calculations.

We see Quinn at the contraption on the table, opening it up and removing some of the parts.

We see Quinn opening up the timer and adding some things he took out of the bigger machine.

We see Quinn at his computer, copying a set of files to an SD card (shown on the screen with a file transfer in progress). We see him snap the card into a cell phone.

We see Quinn, resting on top of a sleeping bag on the floor, his eyes closed, the book HYPERSPACE lying open on his chest.

FADE TO:

INT. MALLORY KITCHEN - MORNING

Amanda Mallory is sitting at the kitchen table, a piece of toast and a cup of coffee before her. Quinn appears in the doorway, his face serene.

QUINN

Morning.

But Amanda doesn't look up from her coffee.

AMANDA

Where were you last night?

QUINN

Doing research.

AMANDA

And was this before or after you asked Kathleen to pay us a visit?

Quinn's mouth hangs open. He completely forgot about Wade.

QUINN

Cripes!

AMANDA

Over the last few years, I've been relieved at how your nightlife's evolved. I used to fall asleep terrified I'd be a grandmother before you or I were ready for it, or wonder whose heart you'd abused and misused this week.

Quinn looks away.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

I know most of them liked being disposable, but there were a few who hoped for more, weren't there?
(MORE)

AMANDA (CONT'D)
 Poor Stephanie. And Daelin, it's
 Daelin I felt worst for.

QUINN
 That was a long time ago.

AMANDA
 Really? Seems like it was only ten
 hours ago.

QUINN
 I forgot. I didn't mean to --

AMANDA
 There's a difference between not
 meaning to do something and not
 caring to do better --

QUINN
 But this time I really didn't mean
 to!

Amanda glowers at him.

QUINN (CONT'D)
 I'm sorry.

AMANDA
 Don't be sorry to me.

She returns to her seat at the table and starts eating her
 toast, indifferent to Quinn. Quinn pulls out his phone and
 dials a number. It rings a few times and goes to voicemail.

QUINN
 Wade? It's Quinn. I am so sorry --
 I should have been here. I got
 pulled away -- If we could try
 again -- I'd be grateful.

He clicks the phone off. Amanda Mallory eats her toast.

QUINN (CONT'D)
 Kathleen -- I call her Wade. It's
 her handle. That's an online --

AMANDA
 I'm old, not senile.

QUINN
 I need to get to school, Mom. But
 I'll see you tonight for dinner?

Amanda doesn't answer, but her demeanor is certainly less cold. Quinn kisses his mother on the cheek as he walks out.

QUINN (CONT'D)
Eight o'clock at the restaurant!

CUT TO:

INT. FACULTY BUILDING HALLWAY - MORNING

Wade Welles is on a bench outside an office. The office door has a sign on it, saying IN A MEETING. Over Wade's head, against the wall, is a poster for the basketball game that Rembrandt's singing at.

Wade takes out her cell phone. Onscreen text reads: **1 missed call - Quinn Mallory**. She's distracted by someone muttering. The only other person in this hallway is a man in a sweater and suit jacket, looking around. He's holding a map of the Berkeley campus.

REMBRANDT
'Scuse me, sweetheart? Can you tell me where the Haas Pavillion is?

Wade shyly looks down at her knees and shakes her head.

REMBRANDT (CONT'D)
(shaking the map)
Doesn't anybody know their way around this frickin' maze?!

His angry tone jolts Wade: she pushes back into the wall as though trying to melt into it.

REMBRANDT (CONT'D)
Sorry. Rough morning.

WADE
I'm sorry. I don't go to school here. I'm waiting for someone.

REMBRANDT
Me too. Well. I'm not waiting for anyone.

WADE
Why're you here?

REMBRANDT
I'm singing the national anthem tonight at the big game.

Wade tilts her head up to look at the poster on the wall that's advertising the game. She makes an effort to read who's singing the anthem.

WADE

If the game's tonight, why're you here in the morning?

REMBRANDT

I want to get the lay of the land! See the stadium, check out the acoustics, know what I'm working with tonight.

WADE

Well, if it means that much --

She gestures at the map. Rembrandt hands it over.

WADE (CONT'D)

This is the physics wing -- the Pavillion's on the other side of campus! You can cut across the field here and --

REMBRANDT

(looking at the map)

I see it! I'll just drive on the edge of campus 'til I hit it.

He takes the map back, and starts for the exit.

REMBRANDT (CONT'D)

Thanks a lot!

WADE

Good luck tonight, Crying Man.

Rembrandt, walking away, cringes slightly at the name.

As Wade settles in her seat, the door to the office next to her swings open and a student with a shaved head runs out.

ARTURO (OFF CAMERA)

I teach cosmology, not arithmetic, you mentally-challenged cretin!!!

A notebook, thrown from inside the office, comes flying out. It barely misses the fleeing student.

ARTURO (OFF CAMERA) (CONT'D)

And don't come back until you know the difference between M-theory and supersymmetry!

Wade stands and approaches the door to the office. Arturo is hunched over a desk, not looking up. She knocks on the door.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
What?! Can't you tell I'm --

He looks up and trails off. And then, in a voice several pitches higher, with a tone that seems almost frightened --

ARTURO (CONT'D)
Kathleen?

CUT TO:

INT. PROFESSOR ARTURO'S OFFICE - MORNING

Wade is seated in front of the Professor's desk. The Professor is on his feet, looking awkwardly at various books on his shelves. He can't quite make eye contact.

ARTURO
I always wanted to apologize. I'm very --

WADE
(reaching into her bag)
I'm here because of this.

She pulls out a tablet (Samsung Galaxy 7.0). She turns it on and hands it to Arturo.

WADE (CONT'D)
My friend, Quinn, had this equation on a blackboard in his basement. I took some photos for you here --

ARTURO
Quinn Mallory? How do you know him?

WADE
His equations reminded me of your --

ARTURO
Yes. Yes, I see.

WADE
When I was your TA, you had me checking your math for errors. Line 5, segment 3 reminds me of your --

ARTURO
My folly.

CUT TO:

EXT. UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - DAY

Quinn walks through the campus. As he moves towards the physics building, he walks past Rembrandt Brown.

CUT TO:

INT. PROFESSOR ARTURO'S OFFICE - MORNING

The Professor is seated behind his desk, racked with regret. He has before him, a yellowed copy of an old paper.

ARTURO
You left before this paper was submitted for publication.

WADE
I did the editing. It looks like Quinn is trying to do what you were going for --

ARTURO
I was a fool. I thought my perspective would bring the abstractions of physics into the physicality of the real world.

He traces one set of calculations in the journal, which has a SMILEY-FACE printed next to it.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
I was convinced of my own brilliance. The faculty head didn't see it that way. The good doctor was on a campaign to reforge the Harvard physics department into focusing on pure mathematics without what he called the banality of experimentation and observation. My paper wasn't in tune the prevailing attitude.

WADE
That's no reason to --

ARTURO

My paper was leaked. Before it was published, the faculty head declared that anyone who wanted physical realities to abstract mathematics was thinking too small. My tenure was revoked, my responsibilities redistributed --

WADE

I'm sorry. That wasn't --

ARTURO

They were right, Ms. Welles. If Mr. Mallory is following my path, his destination will be the same as mine.

And then Arturo's office door swings open and Quinn Mallory charges through it, holding up his phone.

QUINN

(babbling)

Professor! I solved it! And Bennish helped me map it! And you were there to explain it!

WADE

Hi, Quinn. Cool basement.

QUINN

Wade, what are you -- look, I am so sorry about last night. I got --

ARTURO

Mr. Mallory!

(a growl)

As you may have noticed, I am entertaining a guest. Kindly wait outside and I will --

Quinn mutely holds up his phone, showing the completed equations for the timer with Bennish's corrections and Quinn's own modifications. Arturo takes the phone, reads several sets of equations and his eyes pop.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Oh my God. You solved it.

QUINN

Well, technically, I did the math and Bennish tweaked it and --

ARTURO
 You've reconciled Trinification
 with magnetic monopolies --

QUINN
 I didn't know what I did 'til the
 other you explained what I'd --

ARTURO
 (struggles with the phone)
 I can't work with this! It's the
 size of a business card!

Quinn takes the phone back, pops the SD card loose and moves to the computer on Arturo's desk. He turns on the monitor, puts the SD card into the computer's card reader and opens the file containing his calculations. Arturo begins to review them intently and with an almost giddy delight.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
 The symplectic manifold equations --

QUINN
 I took a guess at how virtual
 particles of exotic matter might
 balance and then I found some.

ARTURO
 Found some!?

QUINN
 Well, I had a helium-neon laser --

As Quinn and Arturo talk, Wade gets up. The door to Arturo's office is still open as she slips out unnoticed.

CUT TO:

INT. FACULTY BUILDING HALLWAY - MORNING

Wade's approaching the exit when Quinn catches up to her.

QUINN
 Wade, wait up!

She keeps walking.

WADE
 I did wait. For like a whole hour.
 It wasn't nice not meeting you.

QUINN
 I can explain --

WADE
You changed your mind. I get it.

QUINN
I got sucked into a parallel
universe!

Wade stops and glares at Quinn. Her disgust is withering.

QUINN (CONT'D)
I'll prove it!

He reaches into his pocket and pulls out the timer. Wade rolls her eyes as Quinn flips it open and aims the timer at the wall next to them.

WADE
I'm not in the mood for --

Wade is cut off as the timer sends out a beam of light that compresses to a pin-point and widens into a giant, RIPPLING HOLE IN THE AIR.

She is transfixed by the flashing blue and silver of the vortex. She feels the wind against her face.

Arturo pops his head out of his office door.

ARTURO
Mr. Mallory, how did you work out --

He trails off at the sight of the blue and silver vortex floating in the hallway of the physics building.

Off Arturo and Wade's stunned expressions, we

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPUS PARKING LOT - MORNING

The lot is half-full, and some students pass by Rembrandt. Some give Rembrandt some curious looks as he approaches his Cadillac. Rembrandt checks the campus map again before climbing into his car and starting the ignition.

CUT TO:

EXT. UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - DAY

Quinn, Wade and Arturo are striding across the campus. Arturo carries a shoulder bag.

Not many students can be seen, and the three of them are moving away from the campus buildings and towards a back area of empty fields.

ARTURO

Showmanship aside, Mr. Mallory, the faculty hallways are a poor place to examine a portal to the Einstein-Rosen-Podalski bridge. We can't have innocent bystanders getting sent to parallel worlds.

Wade grins at Quinn and Quinn smiles back.

WADE

Where are we going, anyway?

ARTURO

A back field. Isolated from the rest of campus. The best place for a preliminary examination of the gateway.

QUINN

(eyeing Arturo's bag)

I don't know if a Geiger counter and an EMF reader are the right tools --

ARTURO

You'll have to start somewhere. But once the faculty office is open, we shall secure a lab for further analysis of your discovery.

QUINN

Professor! Thank you!

WADE

Why are you thanking him? What's he ever done for you?

QUINN

Wade --

ARTURO

Why does he keep calling you that?

QUINN

Oh. It's your handle. I should be calling you Kath --

WADE

No you shouldn't. And it's nice to meet you, Quinn.

QUINN

Nice to meet you, Wade.

ARTURO

Wade -- ?

WADE

That's Ms. Welles to you. And why exactly should Quinn even let you in on his hard work, when you've been grinding him down every day?

QUINN

It's fine, it's --

ARTURO

Ms. Welles, Mr. Mallory is a scientist. He has the intelligence to set aside grudges and appreciate skill and experience regardless of the source.

QUINN

If the Professor wants to help, I want him to --

ARTURO

We're almost there!

We can't see the campus buildings anymore, and Arturo points to a small valley ahead.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

We'll be isolated from prying eyes and passers-by. No one who knows this campus would use such a roundabout path.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPUS ROAD - DAY

Rembrandt, in his Cadillac (with the top down), speeds along a poorly paved road.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE VALLEY - DAY

Arturo leads Quinn and Wade to the base of the hill. Arturo reaches into his bag and pulls out a plastic handheld device with a small needle-meter on it. This is the EMF reader. He hands it to Wade.

He pulls out the second item from his bag. It's another metallic, handheld device. Yellow and with a small, calculator-like display screen and a number pad. This is the Geiger counter.

Quinn stands nearby, holding the timer.

ARTURO

Trigger the vortex, Mr. Mallory!

WADE

Don't order him around!

(beat)

But, yeah, open the vortex, Quinn.

With an eager grin, Quinn aims the timer at the space in front of the three of them and activates the vortex. The stream of light opens the blue and silver rift in reality. The sound of crackling energy is like thunder, mismatched to this sunny day.

Arturo drinks in the sight. Wade waves the EMF meter in the direction of the vortex.

WADE (CONT'D)

(shouting)

No reading, Professor!!

The Professor also waves the yellow device at the vortex.

ARTURO

No radiation of any kind! It seems a mapped mathematical concept is not a actually a physical object!

QUINN

But the wind!

ARTURO

It must be altering gravimetric constants!

The three of them admire the sight. Quinn raises his timer and taps in another command. The vortex closes.

WADE

What's on the other side this time?

QUINN
We could find out.

ARTURO
Don't be absurd. The risks must be
fully assessed before --

WADE
Quinn went through it twice. What
more assessment do we need?

Before Arturo can protest --

WADE (CONT'D)
Come on, Quinn. You missed our
date! You owe me a spin around the
universe.

As Quinn looks at Wade enthusiastically, Arturo realizes he's
lost this battle.

ARTURO
Very well! But I insist on joining
you in the spirit of scientific
curiosity.

Wade wants to object, but --

QUINN
Absolutely!

He taps several commands into the timer.

QUINN (CONT'D)
I'm just putting more power into
the system...

He taps another command and the vortex appears. At first,
it's the same size as the previous vortex, but then it swells
in width and height, expanding to twice their height.

QUINN (CONT'D)
Big enough for three!

Wade takes Quinn's hand. Arturo sees this and rolls his eyes.
Side by side, the three step into the glowing, swirling void
and vanish with a flash.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPUS ROAD - DAY

Rembrandt is in his Cadillac, driving along.

REMBRANDT

Damn it. Why didn't I take a taxi?

And then, ahead of him, Rembrandt sees a rippling in the air. He can see, beyond the rippling, the sight of the road seeming to twist and bend, like some optical illusion.

Fascinated, he drives the car forward, braking just in front of the vortex. It has expanded to twice its size before Quinn, Wade and Arturo stepped in. Rembrandt leans back in the driver's seat, astonished by the silver-blue hole floating in the air.

And then his expression turns to fear as the silver-blue hole expands in size and begins to drift towards him.

REMBRANDT (CONT'D)

What the -- no! Stay away!!!

He puts the car into reverse. But the moment he spent looking at the vortex has cost him. Before Rembrandt can back the car away, the vortex sweeps forward and Rembrandt and his Cadillac disappear in a flare of white light.

FLASHCUT TO:

INSIDE THE VORTEX: We see a POV shot: the glowing streams of energy that form the walls of the interdimensional tunnel, sailing past our perspective. We see a gap widen up at the end of the tunnel --

FLASHCUT TO:

EXT. THE VALLEY - DAY

We see the open vortex. It's opened in what looks like the same location, but the sky is grayer. Quinn, Arturo and Wade come flying out of the gateway. They turn to look at the vortex.

WADE

(adrenaline-flushed)

That was like -- better than sex!!

Before Arturo and Quinn can react, they can suddenly make out the FRONT BUMPER of a CAR emerging from the vortex.

Arturo dives left. Wade throws herself right. And Quinn drops flat on the grass as REMBRANDT AND HIS CADILLAC are thrown out of the vortex and OVER Quinn's head.

Quinn, Wade and Arturo rise to their feet and stare at the the Cadillac embedded in a ditch in front of them. They rush forward to the car. Behind them, the vortex closes.

The front of the car is angled downward. The rear-wheels spin in the air, not touching the ground. Rembrandt's face is buried in the air bag. He lifts his head and looks to his left to see Quinn, Wade and Arturo.

REMBRANDT

Who the heck are you people!?

FADE TO:

EXT. UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - DAY

Quinn, Wade, Rembrandt and Arturo are walking together. Rembrandt is holding his cell phone. We can see some faculty buildings behind them, but there are absolutely no people.

REMBRANDT

No signal! How am I supposed to call a tow truck?

QUINN

Rembrandt, we're in another dimension --

REMBRANDT

You're not fooling me, Q-Ball!

As Quinn reacts to his new name --

ARTURO

Mr. Brown, surely you realize the vortex was no counterfeit of any kind.

REMBRANDT

And you can shut it too, Professor Dumbledore! I know you brain boxes and your magic tricks.

WADE

You do? How?

REMBRANDT

Because, Tinker Bell, I used to volunteer for medical experiments.

(as the others exchange looks)

There've been times when I was desperate for cash.

WADE
 (impressed)
 What kinds of experiments?

REMBRANDT
 I know a psych experiment when I'm
 in one! Making me doubt reality!
 Some low-rent special effect --

ARTURO
 (furious)
 Low-rent special effect?!
 (hand on Quinn's shoulder)
 This boy is a genius and he's
 opened up a new world in every
 field of mathematics and --

QUINN
 Professor!

Wade is already yanking Arturo's sleeve to shut him down.

QUINN (CONT'D)
 The guy's already under stress and
 this is all our fault.

Quinn examines the timer. It's counting down from 00:10:55.

QUINN (CONT'D)
 The mass of the Cadillac drained
 the system. It can use the exotic
 matter matrix to recharge, but
 it'll be 11 hours before it's
 ready. We need to keep him with us
 to get him home.

Rembrandt glares at Quinn, Wade and Arturo. He can hear every
 word.

REMBRANDT
 The game's in 10 hours! And if you
 think I'm going to be anywhere
 other than that stadium when --

QUINN
 Right! But for now -- seeing as the
 campus is a ghost town -- let's
 take a look at what's outside.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE CAMPUS - DAY

They're at the edge of campus and pass through the barriers of stone and brick. Past the campus border, the four turn back to look at the metal plaque. Over BERKELEY UNIVERSITY is a sign saying, TARGET RISK: LEVEL 7. DO NOT ENTER.

FADE TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

The streets have more people than the campus did, but it doesn't seem to be the commuters' jam one would expect on a weekday morning. The four wanderers look down the street at the various establishments.

WADE

"Target Risk: Level 7."

ARTURO

This university has been a threat to my sanity on more than one occasion, but advising people not to enter is more overt than I'd care to be.

QUINN

It said not to enter, but there weren't any guards or fences -- like nobody would want to go in anyway.

ARTURO

This Level 7 risk, whatever it is, is a deterrent stronger than any security measures.

CUT TO:

A CLOSEUP of a security camera mounted on a telephone pole. We go to a wider angle and see that every telephone pole has one and Rembrandt regards the one closest to him with alarm.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

Are you alright?

REMBRANDT

Look at all those cameras. I've never seen that kind of hardware in town.

ARTURO

(looking about)

There was a bakery on this block with some of the finest meat pasties in San Francisco. Here, it's a used clothing store.

QUINN

There was a travel agent there, with a notary public --

WADE

Now it sells used sports gear.

ARTURO

Life's smaller luxuries, replaced with cut-rate essentials. Why?

Rembrandt's uneasiness grows. He starts to move away from the three of them. Quinn hurries to his side.

WADE

A coffee shop!

She points to an establishment across the street.

WADE (CONT'D)

I gotta use the washroom. And maybe they've got wifi.

She starts to cross the street. Quinn follows after her, calling over his shoulder --

QUINN

I want to keep an eye on her!

ARTURO

We'll meet you in a bit, Mr. Mallory! More to see out here!

He claps a friendly hand on Rembrandt's shoulder in an attempt at being reassuring. Rembrandt scowls at the hand and Arturo withdraws it.

REMBRANDT

Leaving me with you. Is this part of the experiment?

ARTURO

Mr. Brown -- haven't you ever wondered-- what if things were different? If we had made different choices?

(MORE)

ARTURO (CONT'D)

What would we be today if we'd gone left instead of right, taken one door instead of the other?

Arturo is both giddy and reflective.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

I've grappled with such questions in theoretical physics. An esoteric field, but sliding changes everything. Supersymmetry. Loop quantum gravity. The cosmological constant. M-Theory. All of this can now be understood by looking at the worlds we visit and comparing them to ours. Don't you see?

Rembrandt not only doesn't see, he has vanished.

Arturo realizes he's talking to himself. He whirls about.

CUT TO:

WE SEE REMBRANDT: he's reversed his steps and moved back the way he came. He sees Arturo coming in his direction. Rembrandt dashes around a corner.

ARTURO (OFF CAMERA) (CONT'D)

Come back, you fool! You'll never get home without the timer!!

At that, Rembrandt sprints up the pavement, desperate to get away -- and then skids to a stop. He stares at what's in front of him, eyes wide. Arturo catches up.

And then Arturo, like Rembrandt, is also struck by the sight before their eyes.

The street is at the peak of a hill. Arturo and Rembrandt have a view of the San Francisco Bay and in the distance, they can see the Golden Gate Bridge.

But this Golden Gate Bridge is **BROKEN**: the middle has been **BLOWN APART** by a massive explosion. The remains on both sides are **TWISTED** and **WARPED** and portions of either side have fallen into the Bay. The top of the north tower is missing and what's left has toppled. The south tower is missing. What remains of the suspension cables flap in the wind.

Pedestrians walk past, utterly indifferent to the destruction in the distance. It's like they see it every day.

REMBRANDT
Okay. Now I believe you.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAMPLIGHTER COFFEE SHOP - DAY

A coffee cup shaped like a lamp marks the window.

CUT TO:

INT. LAMPLIGHTER COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Quinn is near the front of a short lineup at the counter. He spies a Coldplay concert poster, with Doppler Computers as a sponsor. Except this poster is for a LIVE WEBCAST. BIO-D AND INTERAC PAYABLE. A little table by the lineup of customers catches Quinn's eye. It's covered with tiny little event fliers.

But they're all for online events: web conferences on genetically engineered foods. Online cooking classes. Online computer tutoring.

Quinn looks about the coffee shop and notices there are no tables. No stools. Nothing to invite anyone to sit. Only two people linger by the customer counter: a dark-haired woman in a baseball cap (30s) and a teenager both stirring sugar into travel mugs. In fact, all the customers, save Quinn, have travel mugs. No one is talking. No one makes eye-contact.

Quinn gets to the front of the lineup. The cash register has a sticker on it: **REPORT MOVEMENT ACTIVITY: 1-888-553-4230.**

The barista behind the cash register is a teenager with reddish-brown hair and a perpetually nervous face. Her nametag says GILLIAN.

GILLIAN
Hi, what can I get you?

Quinn glances at the washroom door that Wade's behind.

QUINN
(from memory)
Decaf-non-fat-caramel-latté-with-cinnamon.
(beat)
And a mint tea.

GILLIAN

Do you have a travel mug? There's a six-dollar surcharge for each beverage without one. Or you can buy a mug for four-dollars each.

CUT TO:

INT. LAMPLIGHTER WASHROOM - DAY

Wade is washing her hands at the sink when she notices the HOW TO WASH YOUR HANDS next to the mirror. And she realizes: it's doesn't say HOW TO WASH YOUR HANDS.

It says HOW TO RESPOND TO ANTHRAX POWDER EXPOSURE. The first picture shows hand-washing. The second picture shows a generic figure taking off contaminated clothing. The third picture shows the figure sealing the clothing in a plastic bag. A dispenser labelled CONTAINMENT BAGS is helpfully located near the sign, with emergency numbers printed on the dispenser.

She pulls out her tablet. We see onscreen text:

3G Network Detected >> Active Login Detected >> Cloning Credentials >>

Wade keys in some text. And onscreen, we see more text:

Searching: Bioterror - United States >> UNAUTHORIZED ACCESS >> UNAUTHORIZED ENTRY >> UNAUTHORIZED SEARCH TERMS >>

Wade twitches with alarm as she urgently yanks the battery from her tablet.

CUT TO:

QUINN AT THE CASH REGISTER

Quinn is pulling out his wallet. He digs cash out.

GILLIAN

I'm sorry, sir -- we can only process Bio-D transactions.

QUINN

I don't have one. You can't take cash?

Gillian pales. The customers behind Quinn visibly tense, bracing themselves for some kind of confrontation.

CUSTOMER (OFF CAMERA)
What's with you people?

Quinn casts a baffled expression at the customer and sees the fearful, angry faces of the people behind him. He glances at the restroom that Wade's inside.

GILLIAN
Look, I don't want any trouble -- I
have a family!

Quinn shoots this teenager a look.

At that moment, Wade emerges from the washroom.

GILLIAN (CONT'D)
My parents count! Look -- please
just go before --

And then the door to the coffee shop swings open and two men in gray suits and ties enter. It's Agent Goldman and Agent Barrows once again. Agent Goldman is holding a small, plastic device with a thin digital screen at the top.

AGENT BARROWS
(holding up his badge)
Department of Homeland Security
here. I'm sure no loyal citizens
will object to a routine security
sweep.

Wade stands by the washroom door. Goldman walks to the back of the lineup of customers -- and then walks down the line, sweeping the device across each person. Customers murmur things like, "Nothing to hide," and "Wasn't me, man." When he gets to Quinn, Goldman's device starts buzzing. Instantly, Barrows draws a gun and aims it at Quinn's chest.

AGENT BARROWS (CONT'D)
Hands up! I want to see hands!!

Quinn throws his hands in the air instantly.

QUINN
This is a mistake! I haven't done
anything --

Goldman spins Quinn around and slams him against the counter. He efficiently frisks Quinn and pulls out Quinn's cell phone.

AGENT GOLDMAN
Searching for bioterror tactics
isn't nothing!

QUINN

I don't know what you're talking about -- read my phone, there's nothing there on --

AGENT GOLDMAN

So you wiped your footprints!
(pressing the phone into
Quinn's face)
You still forgot to wash your feet.
This phone is scanning on twelve
unauthorized frequencies.

QUINN

I'm not --

GILLIAN

It's not just his phone. He's got
no Bio-D!

At that, Goldman grabs Quinn's wrist, twisting it.

AGENT GOLDMAN

She's right, Barrows. He's one of
them.

Goldman handcuffs Quinn. Wade advances towards him, but Quinn, seeing her without making eye-contact, briefly shakes his head no.

Wade stays where she is as the two agents yank him out of the coffee shop.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAMPLIGHTER COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Arturo and Rembrandt are walking towards the Lamplighter when they see Quinn hauled out from inside in handcuffs. Barrows and Goldman shove Quinn into the backseat of a black car just as Arturo and Rembrandt make it to the shop.

Wade comes out of the coffee shop just as Barrows and Goldman drive off with Quinn.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - DAY

The three of them are walking urgently. Rembrandt and Arturo are turning off their phones.

WADE

The Bridge is gone?

ARTURO

Destroyed. From what you tell me, this America is in constant fear of attack. Paranoid about who has access to electronic data. Suspicious of any who lack this 'Bio-D.' And these online events indicate a fear that public gatherings create large civilian targets.

REMBRANDT

Putting a university at a Level 7 risk for attack.

WADE

We have to get Quinn back --

REMBRANDT

If the Feds nabbed him, we're not getting him back by asking nicely. And I am not getting locked up for that little snot!

WADE

Rembrandt, he's an innocent --

REMBRANDT

I'm an innocent! I wasn't doing anything until you kidnapped me! And I'm not doing anything other than hiding out 'til that cell phone hits zero and sends me home!

Rembrandt and Wade glare at each other. Arturo examines the timer.

ARTURO

We have ten hours until the slide. From what Mr. Mallory told me about the present state of his technology, we cannot return for him.

REMBRANDT

Not my problem!

And then Wade grabs the timer from Arturo and storms off.

WADE
 (calling back)
 How about now!?

Rembrandt and Arturo trail behind her.

REMBRANDT
 Where are you going?

WADE
 To get information! Help me or stay
 out of the way!

CUT TO:

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO FEDERAL BUILDING - DAY

An enormous building of two parts: one large 18-floor building and a splinter-section of 7-floors. It's glass and steel and it looks gray and cold.

CUT TO:

INT. SAN FRANCISCO FEDERAL BUILDING - DAY

We see Quinn in a lineup of at least 20 people, with a large counter at the front of the line. Everyone lined up with Quinn is handcuffed. Six armed guards in bulletproof vests stand by, three on each side of the lineup. Overhanging signs read: NO TALKING. STAY IN LINE. RESISTANCE WILL BE MET WITH PHYSICAL FORCE. People who get to the front of the line are spoken to, and then sent through a door framed with what looks like a metal detector.

Quinn arrives at the front of the line, and finds himself looking at a woman with a sedate, indifferent face. The nameplate on the counter reads: DAWN SYLVIUS.

SYLVIUS
 Detainee Y-30. You are charged in violation of Article 12 of the Access to Communications Act and Section 37 of the Federal Standards of Identification.

QUINN
 Not guilty!

SYLVIUS
 Pleas are not required at this time. Step into processing pad.

Quinn glances at the doorway that looks like an airport metal detector. He steps into it. The device makes a whirring sound. A flash bursts briefly at Quinn's face, photographing him. As Sylvius studies a computer screen in front of her, we see onscreen text: **HEIGHT - 6'2", WEIGHT - 156 LBS, HAIR - BROWN, EYES - BLUE. And DATA FROM CONFISCATED ANALOG IDENTIFICATION: UPLOADING.**

The metal detector-type device lets out a soft, humming BEEP. Immediately, Sylvius stiffens. She regards Quinn with what looks like fear.

At the humming sound, two of the guards watching the line break away from their positions and approach Quinn. They yank him out of the doorway and down a separate hall in another direction.

SYLVIUS (CONT'D)

Process him according to Security-Code Risk 14-Alpha. A DHS agent has been dispatched.

The guards grab Quinn's shoulders and shove him forward.

QUINN

Wait, what? What's going on?!

He doesn't get an answer, he just gets marched forward.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOPPLER COMPUTERS - DAY

Wade, Rembrandt and Arturo approach the Doppler building. The glass of the entrance has posters on it reading: **REPORT MOVEMENT ACTIVITY** and provides the hotline number.

ARTURO

This corporate warehouse of overpriced consumer hardware is a repository of human knowledge?

CUT TO:

INT. DOPPLER COMPUTERS - DAY

The three enter and look around the Doppler Computers shop floor. This is not the bustling den of energy we saw before. At the front of the store are aisle and aisles of store-racks. Signs mark them as selling BATTERIES, MEMORY CARDS, LIGHT BULBS, REFRIGERATORS & FREEZERS, ELECTRIC COOKING RANGES, PORTABLE HEATERS & A/C UNITS.

Wade leads Arturo and Rembrandt into the entertainment and computer sections at the back of the store. There are only 3 to 4 big-screen TVs and sound systems on display. They're set to play FISHING AND GOLFING GAMES. The racks are filled with PORTABLE VIDEO PLAYERS, PORTABLE AUDIO PLAYERS and plastic cards with movie and music album covers on them.

WADE

They don't sell discs. They sell download codes on cards.

ARTURO

Every product is cheap and functional.

At the far back of the store is the small selection of computers. And it's little more than a table of netbooks.

Rembrandt watches as Wade reaches into her bag and pulls out her tablet. She detaches a Micro-SD card from her tablet and snaps it into an adapter from her bag. She plugs it into one of the netbooks. She starts typing.

As she does, MR. HURLEY, the store manager, approaches.

WADE

(whispering)

We got lucky. Whoever logged in last never logged out. There's a spider-app on my card: it'll search for information online from whatever newsfeeds it can find. Distract that guy while it works.

REMBRANDT

(whispering)

Don't tell me what to do! I didn't even want to come here!

Arturo steps forward to talk to Hurley.

HURLEY

Good morning! Is there anything I can help you find?

ARTURO

Yes -- my firm could use a portable video player or two.

HURLEY

Absolutely! Come right this way --

As this cheerful, friendly Hurley guides Arturo away from the netbooks, another Doppler employee approaches them.

This employee is clean-cut and tidy with a nervous face. He's carrying in his arms a pile of those download code cards.

BENNISH

Mr. Hurley? I accidentally dropped all these cards into the tub of fridge magnets.

Hurley's eyes bulge with frustration. Arturo examines his former student: this Bennish is sharp and polished, but apparently, no more competent.

HURLEY

(with strained calmness)
That's alright, Conrad. I want you to throw out the cards. Then make two signs that say **WARNING: MAGNETS** and put them at both ends of the refrigerator aisle. Then back to work, alright?

Conrad Bennish Jr. smiles with relief and scurries off. Hurley mops at his brow and a look of fury crosses his face.

ARTURO

Your patience is admirable, sir.

HURLEY

Corporate gave us voice training. We're not allowed to go higher than 65 decibels.

CUT TO:

WADE: AT THE NETBOOKS.

She looks at the screen. Onscreen text shows words flashing by. The words include **BIO-D, GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE, CELL PHONES, COMMUNICATIONS, TRANSACTIONS, ATTACKS, SAFETY**, and more.

REMBRANDT

We going to get in trouble?

WADE

Everything's going on the memory card in a compressed format. We can go somewhere safe and read it then.

REMBRANDT

And then what?
(gesturing at the tablet
in Wade's bag)
(MORE)

REMBRANDT (CONT'D)
You going run a jailbreak from your
Etch-a-Sketch?

Before Wade can retort, she sees Bennish approaching.

WADE
(low voice)
Keep him busy!

REMBRANDT
Don't get me involved!

WADE
Have him show you the music --
maybe you've got a career on this
world!

Wade hasn't even finished her sentence before Rembrandt has run to Bennish. The two set off for the music section.

CUT TO:

ARTURO: AT THE PORTABLE VIDEO PLAYERS

Arturo observes as Hurley holds his wrist over one of the video players. It looks like a digital picture frame. It lights up, showing a menu of video files.

HURLEY
Total security, sir. The player
uses your Bio-D to access your
cloud storage. And this model uses
a 4G-duplication protocol for
backup to government servers.

ARTURO
Our data is copied to government
servers?

HURLEY
This new system scans your files
and sends the bare code to the
government servers. They rebuild
exact copies without the bandwidth
of file transfers. All your data's
safe.

ARTURO
Safe for the government to sift
through and monitor...

HURLEY
 (robotically)
 It's just another wonderful way for
 Doppler and the Department of
 Homeland Security to protect your
 interests and safety.

Arturo raises an eyebrow at that.

HURLEY (CONT'D)
 Sorry. I say it so many times a day
 the words have lost all meaning.

CUT TO:

REMBRANDT AND BENNISH: LOOKING AT MUSIC DOWNLOAD CARDS

BENNISH
 No Crying Man in the catalog. But
 we have a wide selection of rhythm
 and blues. We keep it next to
 soothing nature sounds.

Rembrandt follows Bennish gesturing at a small sign that
 shows the words R&B AND JAZZ on a red background. CLASSIC
 ROCK on green. SOOTHING NATURE on blue. SLEEP SOUNDS on
 yellow. CLASSICAL on purple. And the racks of download cards
 are all grouped together by colour. The blue-cards occupy the
 most space in the aisle.

REMBRANDT
 Most of this stuff's for chilling
 out. Where's the stuff with passion
 and a pulse?

A customer passes by as Bennish responds.

BENNISH
 I'm sorry, sir. Such materials are
 curtailed following Federal Statute
 5A where non-government media is
 barred from inciting alarm or --

The customer walks out of earshot and Bennish leans in to
 whisper to Rembrandt.

BENNISH (CONT'D)
 Listen, buddy, if you're in the
 market for Madam Gaga and Ray-B, I
 know a guy who knows a guy.

CUT TO:

WADE AT THE NETBOOKS.

She detaches her Micro-SD adapter and stows it in her bag. Arturo and Hurley are returning.

HURLEY

I used to think this job was just a stepping stone to better things. Then I just didn't want to be another victim of Al-Qaeda or the Movement or whatever's next. Oh God. I'm trapped here and this place is my tomb.

ARTURO

My dear fellow, this place would collapse overnight without you. My firm will contact you tomorrow with quantities we require.

Hurley cheers up a bit at that. He walks off, just as Rembrandt returns to the netbooks.

REMBRANDT

The top-selling album in this America is 34 hours of ocean waves. I want off this world and I want off now!

WADE

10 hours left. 'Til then, we can do some reading. Let's go.

As the sliders walk away, heading for the exit, we see someone watching them. A DARK-HAIRED WOMAN (30s) in a baseball cap. The SAME WOMAN who was in the Lamplighter coffee shop.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOPPLER COMPUTERS - DAY

Wade, Rembrandt and Arturo move out of the store. As they're leaving, the DARK-HAIRED WOMAN in the baseball cap falls in step with them.

ARTURO

Good day, madam. May we be of assistance?

BRICE
(adjusting her baseball
cap)
"Who is John Galt?"

Rembrandt and Wade exchange baffled looks. However, Arturo seems to recognize the phrase.

ARTURO
"A name I'm tired of hearing."

Brice seems satisfied. She leans close to the three.

BRICE
(a harsh whisper)
If you want your friend back,
you'll follow me.

She strides off, her long legs putting her well ahead of the sliders.

CUT TO:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

Quinn is handcuffed to a table. He's in a gray, bare room with nothing in it save two chairs and the table. A small mirror-window is pressed into the wall near the door.

As Quinn studies his handcuffs, the door opens and a tall, trim woman (late 20s) in a sharp black suit enters. Her hair is reddish brown and tied back, her demeanor is crisp and professional. She holds a file folder.

AGENT WARREN
I'm Agent Warren.
(as Quinn reacts)
I'm certain a man of your skill-set
would have little difficulty
getting out of those cuffs.

Quinn's expression is blank.

AGENT WARREN (CONT'D)
Of course, then you'd still be on
the 19th floor of a federal
building with enough armed guards
to kill you 37 times over.

QUINN
All I wanted was a cup of coffee. I
haven't done anything.

AGENT WARREN

(leafing through folder)
Haven't you? Rather extensive record here, Mr. Quinn Michael Mallory. Stole a car in 2003 -- got caught. Two instances of dining and dashing in 2004 -- your date turned you in. No Bio-D -- federal offense. But this is what's very strange, Quinn --

She drops the folder in front of Quinn. On top of the assorted papers and reports are a set of photographs. They show QUINN MALLORY. With short hair. With a black-T-shirt and well-fitted jeans. With a leather jacket.

And with the upper portion of his skull and half of his torso missing, burned away by the intense heat of an explosion.

AGENT WARREN (CONT'D)

You're exceedingly lively for a dead man.

Quinn regards the photos with horror. His corpse looks back lifelessly from the photos.

AGENT WARREN (CONT'D)

How'd you fake your death? Who've you got on the inside helping you?

The photographs won't let Quinn look away until Agent Warren shoves them aside and demands:

AGENT WARREN (CONT'D)

How long have you been a member of the George Washington Movement?

QUINN

Wait -- wait! I can explain what's going on here.

(absolutely earnest)

I'm from a parallel universe.

Agent Warren eyes him with cold contempt.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - DAY

We see Brice moving determinedly down a quiet street of abandoned and condemned shops and buildings. At a distance, Wade, Rembrandt and Arturo are following.

She makes an abrupt turn down an alley. The three follow after her to find that Brice has vanished -- but there is an open door going into the side of a building.

REMBRANDT

There is no way I'm going in there.

Wade immediately walks towards the door, throwing up a hand in the air to show she's holding the timer. Rembrandt fumes and follows, as does Arturo. They move through the door.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN - DAY

Wade, Rembrandt and Arturo find they're standing in what looks like a large, unused restaurant kitchen. Four large stoves and six ovens line the walls. In the center is a table. On the table sits a large, black man (40s) in a slightly ragged sweater and suit jacket. This is Wilkins.

WILKINS

Good job, Brice.

(a breath)

Reynolds! Johnson! Altman! Search our guests.

Three LARGE MEN who were standing behind a rack of metal shelves appear and they each grab one of the sliders and begin patting them down.

WADE

What are you doing?!

WILKINS

Searching you for your gear. The DHS tracks every kind of signal.

The three men let the sliders go. They have confiscated Arturo's bag, three cell phones, Wade's tablet -- and the TIMER. They empty Arturo's bag, dropping the Geiger counter and EMF reader on the table. But they hang onto the phones, tablet and timer.

WILKINS (CONT'D)

Standard suppression procedure.

One by one, Wilkins' people start throwing the phones into a nearby sink, and there's a SPLASH for each one. The sink is filled with water. Rembrandt's phone is the first to go, then Arturo's phone with Wade's tablet. As the man holds the timer above the sink --

WADE

No!

REMBRANDT

That's my only way home! Don't --

There's a splash and a hideous fizzing sound as the timer goes into the sink.

CUT TO:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

QUINN

(pointing at the photos)

That's me from this universe, and I'm me from mine. And I don't even know what this Movement is.

AGENT WARREN

This is no time to play stupid. But if it'll help us skip over more pointless denials --

She reaches into her pocket and pulls out a phone. Brings up a document for her to read off to Quinn.

AGENT WARREN (CONT'D)

The Movement. A group of militant, anti-government individuals who've coordinated a series of attacks on American security from 2008 to the present and put us at constant and prolonged risk of attack.

(beat)

In the past year, they destroyed 12 surveillance towers, robbed 53 food storage warehouses, caused mass disruptions in street camera networks for New York City, Chicago and the entire state of California. They've resisted arrest and engaged in firefights with the DHS and FBI across the streets of LA, San Francisco, Las Vegas and Buffalo.

(holding Quinn's cell phone)

And there's their illegal creation and use of restricted frequencies and ghost-networks.

Agent Warren leans right into Quinn's face.

AGENT WARREN (CONT'D)
So why don't you tell me why the
Movement faked your death and what
it is you do for them?

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN - DAY

The timer, thrown into the sink, has sunk to the bottom.
Arturo glares at Wilkins and starts towards him.

ARTURO
You blistering idiot!!

The large man bars Arturo's path. Arturo wilts.

ARTURO (CONT'D)
That device was our only way out of
our situation!

WILKINS
And I'm really sorry about that --
but this place is all that's
standing between prostitution and
starvation for three-quarters of
the neighbourhood. We can't leave
your devices running here.

Arturo shakes his head in fury and moves to the sink, pulling
the waterlogged timer from the water.

WADE
What is this place?

WILKINS
Sanctuary. One of many. We offer
food. Access to information. But as
for us --

He gestures at Brice. At the three men who searched the
sliders. And then several more people appear behind Wilkins:
about 15 men and women in their thirties and forties, all
with hard demeanors but respectful faces towards Wilkins.

WILKINS (CONT'D)
My name is Wilkins. Welcome to the
George Washington Movement.

Arturo spins around from the sink, reacting to the name. As the sliders stare at this awkward assortment of strangers...

CUT TO:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

Agent Warren stands, looming over the seated Quinn. Quinn tries to stand, but being handcuffed to the table, he's forced to sheepishly reseat himself.

AGENT WARREN

We have two options. You are an impostor who assumed a dead man's identity to escape the consequences of your previous life. Or you are a Movement rebel who faked his own death in the January 4th attacks.

QUINN

The what attacks?

AGENT WARREN

There's the possibility that you've risen from the grave and somehow managed to rebuild your skeletal structure and left arm, but I don't believe in vampires.

(beat)

Or parallel universes.

QUINN

(desperate)

It's a perfectly valid scientific concept! It's achieved by mapping a symplectic equation to --

AGENT WARREN

They're not who you think they are, Quinn.

QUINN

Who's not who I think they're what?

AGENT WARREN

I'm sure they told you they were fighting for freedom. That they're trying to help Americans. That they care about others. But everything the Movement does puts ordinary people in danger and makes it harder for us to protect them.

QUINN
I'm not a terrorist!

AGENT WARREN
These days, who is? Al-Qaeda thinks the Movement and the government are doing a better job of destroying America than their bombings ever could.

QUINN
(panicked)
I'm not from here -- I accessed the Einstein-Rosen-Podolski bridge -- Look! If you'll just give me some paper, a pen and a particle accelerator, I can prove --

Agent Warren slams her hands down on the table, creating a bang that makes Quinn jump. His handcuffs yank him back down.

QUINN (CONT'D)
(meekly)
It doesn't have to be a particle accelerator. I could use a helium-neon --

AGENT WARREN
Stop it. I don't want your cover story. I want information.

QUINN
(helpless)
Scientific information is all I can offer! But if you'll --

AGENT WARREN
What are the Movement's plans? Why have they moved their top leaders to San Francisco? Who is your mole in the federal office? How did you fake the records your death?

QUINN
I'm not from here -- I can't answer any of your questions.

AGENT WARREN
If you don't cooperate, you'll be sent to Alcatraz with the other rebels and terrorists and everyone else who refused to register with the Bio-D program.

QUINN

I don't know what that is.

AGENT WARREN

Tell me why the Movement's here and it'll be a minimum security facility outside Everwood, Colorado. There'll be significantly few incidents in the shower.

QUINN

I don't know anything.

AGENT WARREN

Then I say this with absolute sincerity and the utmost compassion -- I wouldn't drop the soap.

She stands up, gathering the files, just as Quinn gapes at her words, her familiar phrasing.

Quinn studies her: this Agent Warren's tight brown hair is unlike Kelly's loose, red mane. Her expression is cold and distant. But she gives him one last look, and for a brief moment, Quinn sees her with Kelly's smile and red hair and realizes for certain who this woman is.

AGENT WARREN (CONT'D)

I'll give you a little time to change your mind, Quinn.

Agent Kelly Welles-Warren, sister of Kathleen Welles, opens the door. It closes behind her.

QUINN

Kelly -- ?

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN - DAY

The sliders are facing the assortment of people who make up the Movement.

WADE

What do you want from us?

REMBRANDT

They just tanked the timer -- we're stuck here! Why are you --

WADE

They said they could get Quinn
back! How? Why?

Arturo is still examining the soaked timer, drying it off on
his sleeve. But he listens.

WILKINS

We had a man in the Federal
Building. He got his hands on some
important info. We had a plan for
him to send it to us. But our
messenger didn't come through.

WADE

Why not?

Wilkins drops off the table and moves to a freezer. He yanks
open the door. Inside the freezer is a frozen body with a
terrified expression and a bullet wound between the eyes.

REMBRANDT

Oh my God -- you guys killed him?!

WILKINS

No. Our messenger here got his
cover blown and they shot him when
he escaped. We stole the body
before it got to the morgue, but he
didn't have the package in him.

REMBRANDT

In him? You mean --

WILKINS

I used to teach kids how to cut
open frogs, same thing.

REMBRANDT

Jesus!

WILKINS

(closing the freezer door)
So we've got an unfinished job
opening and your friend's in
exactly the right place to do it.
He was recently arrested. He's in
the Federal Building.

REMBRANDT

You can't really think we'll --

WADE

What do you need from us?

WILKINS

What's your friend's name? How much does he weigh? We know he's got brown hair, but what colour are his eyes? Brice saw him with a wallet, so what was inside? What else was he carrying? You've got to tell us what to look for to find him.

REMBRANDT

You can't expect us to know all that!

WADE

He's six-two. Blue eyes. Brown hair. He weighs 156 pounds. He was carrying a driver's license with the serial number N302-392-5932. His address on it would be 4159 Blue Jay Way. Social Security number 355-104-6852. He would've also had a student ID for Berkeley University, serial number 985-2045-698, a Costco membership card --

Rembrandt and Arturo are astonished.

WADE (CONT'D)

I met him online. I checked him out to see if he had a criminal record. His records were sealed, though.

(Arturo and Rembrandt
exchange looks)

What?

CUT TO:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

Quinn sits alone in the room, handcuffed to the table.

We pull back from our view of him to see the SAME IMAGE but now on a VIDEO MONITOR.

And we pull farther back to see Quinn on the video monitor is merely ONE TINY VIDEO of SEVERAL HUNDRED IMAGES, all showing prisoners inside the facility in holding cells and interrogation rooms.

WADE (VOICEOVER)

How're they going to find Quinn?

INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN - DAY

Wade is seated at a table. She's snapped open the timer casing and disassembled it using a tiny screwdriver set. Arturo stands before her carrying a cardboard box. Items inside rattle about as he hands it over to Wade.

ARTURO

They wouldn't tell me. But our new friends in this Movement seemed to be in dire need of my EMF meter and my Geiger counter. I traded them in exchange for these.

He empties the box onto the table, revealing 12 switched-off cell phones.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

I could go back for tools -- they are well-equipped in this area --

WADE

Your eye-glasses repair kit's fine. But I need --

Rembrandt enters the room, carrying a large, scuffed and dented laptop.

WADE (CONT'D)

I need that.

REMBRANDT

It's a loaner. They really needed the Prof's EMF meter. Not sure why.

WADE

And they bartered for it? They didn't just take it?

Wilkins re-enters the kitchen.

WILKINS

I sent your details to our inside guy. We're looking for your friend. And when your friend's been given the package, we'll get him back.

WADE

What's the package?

WILKINS

Good question. I've got some too. What's that phone you're working on?

(MORE)

WILKINS (CONT'D)

It's got no antenna, it's not a bomb -- why's it so important?

(they don't answer)

What was your friend doing trying to buy things without a Bio-D chip in his wrist? What are you three doing in this country?

(to Wade)

I used to have to gauge kids in my class to know who'd be troublemakers and who'd be the quiet ones. You're a shut-in.

(to Arturo)

You're not a Fed -- you're a former teacher, you got that traumatized look to you.

(to Rembrandt)

And if you've known your friends for more than an hour, I'd be surprised. So where are you all from?

WADE

You wouldn't believe us.

WILKINS

You got your secrets, I got mine. But I've also got a way to get your friend back, maybe alive.

WADE

"Maybe"!?

WILKINS

Take a look around when you have time. You'll understand if my priorities aren't the same as yours.

He walks out. The sliders are alone in the kitchen.

CUT TO:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

Agent Warren walks in again, holding a paper cup. She sets it next to Quinn. It's water. Quinn takes a sip.

AGENT WARREN

It doesn't have to be this way. I just want to know who you are and what you do.

(as Quinn drinks)

(MORE)

AGENT WARREN (CONT'D)

Why won't you people just stop? Why do you fight this war when we should all be on the same side?

QUINN

This is all new to me. This isn't --

AGENT WARREN

Your world. Because you're from some better world where terrorist attacks don't happen and the government minds its own business, and the Movement will make that world this world too. Was that the pitch?

QUINN

My world isn't better, Agent Warren, it's just different.

(hesitates, then)

I didn't come here alone. I came here with a friend.

AGENT WARREN

Really.

QUINN

My friend's name is Kathleen Welles. Does that name mean anything to you?

Quinn's words seem to jolt Agent Warren. But not with shock. Instead, a twisted viciousness takes shape in her face.

AGENT WARREN

So you know my face and my sister's name. You used a national tragedy to fake your own death -- and now you'd use my dead sister?

(cold fury)

You're diseased.

QUINN

(shocked)

I don't -- she's dead?

AGENT WARREN

You know she is -- everyone knows she is -- the White House, the Chrysler Building, the Pentagon and the Golden Gate Bridge were bombed and some papers used her picture as an icon for the innocent.

(seething)

(MORE)

AGENT WARREN (CONT'D)

The media used her to put a human face on the tragedy. The fact that you know who she is to me means nothing, Mallory.

QUINN

(determined)

I don't know what Kathleen was like on your world. But on mine, she went by Wade.

Agent Warren's reaction is guarded.

QUINN (CONT'D)

She used it as a penname when writing poetry for the school paper, but because her pseudonym was "Wade Welles," it didn't fool anyone. Wade was allergic to everything from raisins in toast to the glue in her shoes. Spent most of her childhood sick in bed.

Agent Warren's eyes widen.

QUINN (CONT'D)

She felt like her bedroom was a prison. But no matter how bad it was, she always had her sister. Kelly always made sure to spend some time with her, got her parents to bring her computers and puzzlebooks and never let her feel lonely. Kelly gave Wade a bear named Mugsy. Wade still talks to him like he's alive.

(a beat)

When Wade was 16, everything changed. Her allergies went away. Her health improved. Today, she's healthy. She likes to build cellphone apps. She moved out of her parents' house, but Kelly still checks on her twice a week to get her outdoors.

Agent Warren considers Quinn's words.

QUINN (CONT'D)

There are worlds beyond the one you know and I come from one of them, and where I come from, your sister is my best --

Agent Warren's grab Quinn's throat and his account is cut off by her fingers choking the life out of him.

AGENT WARREN
Who's your mole!?

She releases him. Quinn gasps.

AGENT WARREN (CONT'D)
I said -- who's your MOLE?!

And then she lashes out. A fist to Quinn's stomach. A foot to his shin. She stomps on his shoes and tips his chair backwards, until his wrists handcuffed to the table are all that keep him upright. Then she knocks the chair away.

Quinn howls in pain as he drops to the floor but with his wrists still cuffed to the table. He hits the ground twisted and wrenched.

QUINN
Wade's my friend, she came here
with me, I can take you to --

AGENT WARREN
LIAR!!

She grabs Quinn by the collar and hauls him up. Pulls the chair upright and slams him into it.

AGENT WARREN (CONT'D)
I'm going to find out how you
learned everything you know. And
I'm going to escort you to the
darkest hole there is for people
like you -- and throw you in
myself.

She picks up Quinn's paper cup of water and takes it with her as she leaves.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN - DAY

Wade is still at the table. Arturo is next to her. Four cell phones from the pile have been disassembled and the timer has been put back together and plugged into the loaner laptop Rembrandt brought.

WADE

I had to cannibalize the other cell phones for their processors and relays --

REMBRANDT

But you put it back together. Why isn't it working?

The timer display isn't counting down: the touchscreen is lit, but the time-display shows dashes instead of numbers.

WADE

I don't know -- I'm pulling up the timer's internal software. It's all these calculations and equations, I don't know what they're for.

ARTURO

Backtracing.

REMBRANDT

What?

ARTURO

Mr. Mallory's calculations. He designed them to help the timer maintain a lock on our home dimension, allowing us to return within the window of dimensional convergence. The timer has been shut down for several hours. The calculations no longer apply.

WADE

You mean we can't go home!?

ARTURO

We cannot even open a vortex.

(studying the screen)

Unless I can rebuild the equations, maintaining the backtrace and accounting for the time the timer was non-functioning... yes...

He begins to type on the laptop, adjusting Quinn's equations, recalculating and altering them.

REMBRANDT

So can he --

WADE

Remmy, come with me.

She pulls him away from the Professor, who continues to mutter to himself while looking through and editing Quinn's work. Wade also sweeps the remaining phones into a box and takes the box as well.

WADE (CONT'D)

He needs to think.

REMBRANDT

But I want to know if he can get me home, I want --

WADE

And he'll tell you when he knows. Until then, let's just step back.

Rembrandt is upset.

REMBRANDT

Oh, sure! I'll just wander around town, get some dinner, take in a show, try not to get arrested while the big brain over there finds out whether or not we're stranded here for good!

Wade and Rembrandt step out of the kitchen.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

The two look around, seeing a fairly open space. The tables and booths of what once was a restaurant have been cleared. A woman sits at the front desk where a cash register would be. She signs people in and out.

In one corner, there's a set of clothing racks and a row of shoes. At the far end, there's a table with a set of cafeteria counters holding large pots of soup and some bowls and cutlery. There's a sitting area with several worn armchairs and sofas and a table. A small number of people are in each area.

Wade spots Brice at one of the desks, talking to a woman in her 50s who has a little boy with her. Brice gets up and hands the woman a bag of what looks like oatmeal, crackers and canned goods. The woman hugs Brice before leaving.

Behind one of the cafeteria counters, Reynolds, one of the large men who frisked the sliders, is ladling soup out for thin and tired looking men.

Altman is in another corner, making coffee and bringing it to the sitting area with the people there.

WADE
What is this?

WILKINS (OFF CAMERA)
I told you.

He approaches Rembrandt and Wade.

WADE
A shelter.

WILKINS
Ever since President Daniels decided anyone who didn't want a chip in their wrist wasn't an American, we've been pretty busy.
(beat)
We don't have quarters on site, but we can direct people to places where they can get a bed for the night. We can give them food and clothing if they're without. We can help them get word on their friends.

WADE
Still waiting on that.

Wilkins gives her a look and walks off. Wade and Rembrandt approach a sofa. Wade plunks herself down she pulls out her Micro-SD card and adapter.

WADE (CONT'D)
Nice of them not to destroy this.
(looking at the phones)
Maybe one of these can read the data.

REMBRANDT
Great. Then we can find out what kind of sentences people on this world get for associating with terrorists.
(as Wade puts aside one phone, picks up another)
Tonight was my comeback! My chance to go up to 9-point font instead of 8-point font.

WADE
 (utterly fixated on a
 phone)
 Uh-huh.

Rembrandt realizes Wade isn't listening. He steps away from the sofa, still fuming. Wade looks into the box, and then pulls out something that was stuck in the flaps: a small plastic case with liquid and a small gelatin square inside.

She sees Wilkins nearby.

WADE (CONT'D)
 Hey!

WILKINS
 (approaching)
 What?

WADE
 I wanted to ask -- what's this?

Wilkins looks at the plastic item in her fingers.

WILKINS
 You don't know what a Bio-D chip
 is?

Wade examines the chip.

WILKINS (CONT'D)
 It's a discard. We remove them
 here.

WADE
 Never seen one before.

WILKINS
 That's interesting. Impossible, but
 interesting.

And he leaves her alone.

CUT TO:

A DIFFERENT ANGLE ON THE SHELTER

Rembrandt is muttering to himself. And not looking as he walks RIGHT INTO a 16-year-old boy with dark skin and kind eyes. The teenager is carrying a stack of DVD cases, which go scattered all over the floor.

REMBRANDT
Crap! Sorry, pal.

He drops to his knees, picking up the cases. The teenaged boy picks up a handful of cases as well.

MALCOLM
It's okay, mister.

REMBRANDT
Rembrandt.

MALCOLM
Malcolm. Help me carry these to the back, would you?

Rembrandt, his arms full of DVD cases, follows the teenager.

CUT TO:

INT. SHELTER SITTING AREA - DAY

We see Wade, holding one of the phones, and snapping her Micro-SD card into the slot. The screen comes to life, and various article titles flash by, just as they did at Doppler Computers.

She stops at one article. It's dated **JANUARY 4, 2004** and read: **AMERICA ATTACKED!**

CUT TO:

INT. BACK ROOM - DAY

Malcolm and Rembrandt, carrying discs, enter a back office. On the desk is four laptops and around 10 DVD burners. Behind the desk is Brice.

REMBRANDT
What is this? Some way of spreading stolen government intelligence?

Malcolm and Brice start laughing.

CUT TO:

INT. SHELTER SITTING AREA - DAY

Wade, holding her new phone, reads the article. Relevant photographs and snippets of articles flash by as ONSCREEN TEXT and IMAGES that we can see as Wade reads off her screen.

DEALEY PLAZA BOMBED, CHRYSLER BUILDING TOPPLES, WASHINGTON MONUMENT DESTROYED and **GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE FALLS** appear, and we see a photograph of each, every landmark framed in smoke and rubble. **150,000 DEAD** and **AL-QAEDA DECLARES VICTORY** are next to appear.

Then comes **THE FACE OF OUR ANGUISH** and a photograph appears -- a photograph of a **16-year-old KATHLEEN WELLES**. Snippets of articles appear: "**Kathleen Welles was on a school trip to a science exhibit,**" " **... Kathleen and her father were killed in the explosion...** " "**Her body was the first to be identified...** "

CUT TO:

INT. BACK ROOM - DAY

We see Malcolm holding up one of the disc cases. It's a DVD copy of **THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING**. He puts it in one of the burners and puts a blank disc in another burner.

REMBRANDT

You're bootleggers?

BRICE

With content restrictions, people can't get these movies through legit retail. They get them through us. And we channel the profits into shelters like these.

(she goes to the door)

We need more blanks. Be right back.

She gives Malcolm a fond smile and leaves.

MALCOLM

How do you not know this? You new around here?

Rembrandt helps load a disc into a burner for the boy.

REMBRANDT

I'm not supposed to be here.

(a sigh)

I'm supposed to be getting my dream back tonight.

MALCOLM

What dream is that?

REMBRANDT

To be on the stage with an audience of millions. Spotlights in front of me and a band behind me. And singing the national anthem while people cheer me on -- I'm missing all of it.

At that, Malcolm chuckles.

REMBRANDT (CONT'D)

What?

MALCOLM

Who goes to concerts? People are afraid to be terrorist targets.

(beat)

Most people these days dream smaller. They dream about having homes and feeling safe with their families.

Rembrandt realizes something is wrong with this young man's presence in this place.

REMBRANDT

Why -- are you here with these guys?

MALCOLM

Because I can do something here.

REMBRANDT

Wouldn't your family want you to stay out of harm's way?

MALCOLM

My family tried playing it safe after the attacks. We still lost.

CUT TO:

INT. SHELTER SITTING AREA - DAY

Wade clicks to the next set of articles. Onscreen text shows the headlines. **12 BOMBINGS IN 120 DAYS**

WASHINGTON MONUMENT RECONSTRUCTION DELAYED BY SECURITY ISSUES. And then:

PRESIDENT DANIELS PLANS TO REVOLUTIONIZE SECURITY AND HEALTHCARE

MEDICAL RECORDS LINKED TO INDIVIDUAL SECURITY PROFILES

**HEALTH INSURANCE NATIONALIZED, INTEGRATED INTO DEPARTMENT OF
HOMELAND SECURITY**

**TERRORIST AGENTS IDENTIFIED BY CROSS-REFERENCED MEDSECURE
FILES**

27 ATTACKS AVERTED BY THE MEDSECURE SYSTEM

PRESIDENT DANIELS: "THE WAR IS FAR FROM OVER"

INT. BACK ROOM - DAY

Malcolm continues.

MALCOLM

We thought things were going back to normal. My grandmother was looking after me and my brothers while my parents worked. But Grandma got sick. And the insurance company didn't come through.

REMBRANDT

What was going on?

INT. SHELTER SITTING AREA - DAY

Wade reads the next article.

DHS MEDICAL TIE-IN PLAN EXPOSES HEALTH INSURANCE SHORTCOMINGS

MEDICAL SYSTEM SLOWS TO NEAR-HALT

30 PEOPLE APPOINTED TO REVIEW 300 MILLION CASES

AVERAGE WAIT TIME FOR PRESCRIPTION RENEWAL: 8 MONTHS

LOS ANGELES WOMAN WAITS 14 MONTHS FOR DIALYSIS (TO BE DENIED)

INT. BACK ROOM - DAY

MALCOLM

Dad took Grandma to Texas -- it was the only place where they could afford cancer treatment -- or even get it approved. We thought things would be okay.

CUT TO:

INT. SHELTER SITTING AREA - DAY

Wade is now on the next article. Onscreen text reads:

GOVERNMENT CRACKS DOWN ON ROGUE STATES
CORRUPTION OF BANKING SYSTEMS LEADS TO STRICTER REGULATION
CONGRESS VOTES TO SAVE US ECONOMY FROM COLLAPSE
PRESIDENT DANIELS LEADS BANKING SYSTEM RESTRUCTURING

CUT TO:

INT. BACK ROOM - DAY

MALCOLM

Dad had to stay in Texas just to keep paying for Grandma's treatment. My brothers and I came to San Francisco with Mom -- she found a job as a teacher. Could use that to help pay for some of Grandma's meds.

(voice wavering)

We still felt like things were getting better with the DHS stopping all those terrorist attacks. We were struggling, but --

Malcolm shakes.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

(bitter)

We still thought President Daniels was doing a great job. And then he announced the Bio-D.

CUT TO:

INT. SHELTER SITTING AREA - DAY

Wade is on the next article, which reads:

BIO-D BRINGS FORTH A NEW ERA IN US STABILITY
BIO-D: THE WORLD IN OUR WRISTS
SECURITY, FINANCE, EDUCATION, ENTERTAINMENT, ALL WITH THE FLICK OF A WRIST
GOVERNMENT'S CHAOTIC PAPERWORK REPLACED BY EFFORTLESS BIO-D

And then Wade's eyes narrow at one article:

KATHLEEN WELLES MEMORIAL FUND AIDS SECURITY RESEARCH

Through onscreen text, we see a few brief snippets of the article: "Subdermal chip." "Printed microcircuitry encased in gelatin." "5-minute surgery." "Implanted in the wrist."

And then, one more excerpt: "We were grateful to the Kathleen Welles Memorial Fund for its support. We named the Bio-D chip architecture 'the Katie.'"

CUT TO:

INT. BACK ROOM - DAY

MALCOLM

Mom was one of the first in line for a Bio-D chip.

Rembrandt nods.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

But she started to notice things going wrong. Chipping stations for the 5-minute surgery were set up in our schools. Kids my age being sent home with permission slips to get chipped. And outside of school, unions needed everyone to chip in and the law was made so that cops had to scan the Bio-D for anyone they stopped.

Rembrandt is aghast at the implications.

REMBRANDT

They made you use it?

CUT TO:

INT. SHELTER SITTING AREA - DAY

Wade and her phone.

BIO-D NOW REQUIRED FOR ALL FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS

T-MOBILE'S LAST CHIPLESS CELL NETWORK SHUT DOWN

BIO-D PURCHASE TRACKING LEADS TO FERTILIZER BOMB STOCKPILE

PRESIDENT DANIELS: "NO REASON NOT TO GET CHIPPED IF YOU'VE GOT NOTHING TO HIDE"

HOT DOG VENDOR ARRESTED FOR CHIPLESS SALES

BIO-D MONITORING IDS TERRORIST COLLABORATORS

NEO-CONSERVATIVE MAN SAYS BIO-D MAKES PEOPLE GAY!

WHITE MAN BEATS HISPANIC SCHOOL TEACHER AFTER LEARNING SHE HAD BIO-D

ANGRY SOUTHERN PREACHER CLAIMS PRESIDENT DANIELS IS THE ANTI-CHRIST

BIO-D: GUARDING THE COUNTRY ONE WRIST AT A TIME

RADICALS REBEL: VIOLENCE IN THE STREET!

ELECTIONS DELAYED: DANIELS SAYS STABILITY NEEDED FIRST

PRESIDENT DANIELS FEEDS THE HUNGRY

BIO-D TRACKING LOCATES MOVEMENT SUPPLY DEPOT

DANIELS: CHIPLESS CITIZENS ARE A THREAT TO OUR SECURITY

VICE-PRESIDENT GARNER TALKS PEACE WITH MIDDLE-EAST FOES.

CUT TO:

INT. BACK ROOM - DAY

MALCOLM

(angry, words flying out of him)

My homeroom teacher was at a protest over elections being delayed. So the DHS shut down his Bio-D. Then arrested him for not having one. And the papers called him a terrorist threat and a rebel. Half our neighbours got treated the same for unpaid bills and taxes.

(beat)

Mom held off on getting me and my brothers chipped. But one day, I came home with a permission slip.

Rembrandt puts a hand on Malcolm's shoulder. Brice re-enters the room with a handful of discs and a sympathetic face.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Mom packed the car. She wanted to find Dad in Texas, but she knew we'd get caught. So she went to Alaska. Best place for her and my brothers to disappear.

REMBRANDT

But you didn't go. Why not?

MALCOLM

Mom tried to throw me into the car. But I didn't want to spend my life running. And my old bio-teacher brought me here.

Malcolm's eyes are welling up, and Rembrandt wants to hug him, but Malcolm moves to the door.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Going to go ship out our next batch of copies.

And then he's gone, leaving Rembrandt with Brice.

FADE TO:

INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN - DAY

We see Arturo, sitting in front of the laptop. We see him looking at a particular line in Quinn's calculations with a SMILEY-FACE next to it -- just as there was in Arturo's paper, the one that made him a laughingstock.

Arturo's eyes narrow.

FADE TO:

INT. SHELTER SITTING AREA - DAY

Wade taps the phone.

The next set of headlines:

MOVEMENT EXTREMISTS BATTLE POLICE IN THE STREETS

HOMELESS SHELTERS RECEIVE FOOD SUPPLIES FROM GW MOVEMENT

MOVEMENT SABOTAGES FLORIDA SECURITY NETWORK

ELECTIONS SUSPENDED UNTIL MOVEMENT DEFEATED

PRESIDENT DANIELS: UNELECTED THIRD TERM

As Wade reflects, we see Wilkins watching her. We see him raising a cell phone to his ear.

WILKINS

Go now.

CUT TO:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

Quinn is resting his head on the interrogation room table when the lights go off. He hears the door squeak open.

QUINN

What --

THE MOLE

Shut up!

A small light clicks on: a flashlight. Quinn can make out a man in a dress shirt and tie.

QUINN

Who're you?

THE MOLE

Not important. What matters is what I've got.

He puts what looks like a black pill on the table.

THE MOLE (CONT'D)

Swallow that pill -- and we'll extract you.

QUINN

What do you want with me?

THE MOLE

I want you out of here, but only if you swallow the damn pill!

Reluctantly, Quinn grasps the pill between two fingers and presses it into his mouth. He swallows.

THE MOLE (CONT'D)

Here's the deal, mule. We had a messenger planted for transporting out some vital intel. He got caught. So we picked the next available choice -- you.

QUINN

Why me?

THE MOLE

Because you've got a transport scheduled to take you to the Island. That gives us a window to retrieve your information.

QUINN

I don't have any information --

THE MOLE

Yes you do. You have it inside you.

Quinn's hands reach for his throat.

QUINN

What'd I swallow? A chip? A card? Flash drive?

The mole is already heading for the door, but before he leaves:

THE MOLE

I was never here. And generally, I find Micro-SDs the way to go.

The lights come back on. Quinn is alone in his interrogation room and it's like nothing happened.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN - EVENING

Arturo is sitting at the table with the laptop and the timer. Rembrandt and Wade are next to him.

WADE

It's a culture of fear. Fear of terrorists let the government combine the healthcare system with their security infrastructure. Then once the terrorists were done, the government amped up fear of the economy to introduce the Bio-D. Then once that got popular, they used fear of the Movement to make it mandatory.

REMBRANDT

But these guys aren't terrorists. They sell bootleg DVDs and use the cash to buy food. They've sabotaged security networks, they haven't attacked people.

ARTURO

I doubt you can engage a firefight through the streets of Chicago or Cincinnati without innocent lives in the crossfire. Even if you are running from the authorities.

Arturo shuts the laptop and raises the timer.

ARTURO (CONT'D)

In any case, my repairs are complete.

And he shows that the timer is counting down from 6 hours.

REMBRANDT

We're going home!?

ARTURO

Mr. Mallory's backtracing calculations were designed to operate on a continuous algorithm of constant adjustment. But while the timer was shut off, the dimensions have shifted --

WADE

How's that going to affect the slide?

ARTURO

There is a chance it will take us home -- and there is an equal chance that it will not. The only guarantee I can offer is that we will be able to slide once the internal matrix of the timer recharges the hardware -- and the vortex will not expand as it did before: I have balanced the matter intake ratios.

REMBRANDT

You couldn't have done this before I got dragged along?

WADE

What about recharging? The timer was off for --

ARTURO

The timer has made up for lost time by drawing power from the laptop. Our time to leave hasn't changed.

WADE

And what if we don't slide when the timer hits zero? We can't just leave Quinn --

ARTURO

Then, Ms. Welles, the window of opportunity is lost and we become permanent residents here.

Rembrandt wants to protest. But Malcolm and Brice enter the kitchen. Rembrandt closes his mouth, his complaints and anger silenced. Wilkins appears, standing behind Brice and Malcolm.

WADE

You've got news?

WILKINS

We've found him and he's got the package. It's his retrieval that we need help with.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT, SECOND FLOOR - EVENING

We're on the second floor of the restaurant: an space of shelves and tables with all sorts of weapons and explosives and battle armor lining the walls. Arturo and Rembrandt are apprehensive. Wilkins leads Wade to a table in the center, with Arturo, Rembrandt, Brice and Malcolm behind.

WILKINS

(to Wade)

You understand communications technology.

He waves at what's on the table: an apparatus that Arturo's EMF meter has been added to. This machine is composed of FOUR METAL BOXES, each with a dial on it, each connected to each other and linked to a massive SWITCHBOARD that's connected to what looks like the landline for a telephone system as well as into the breaker box for the building. Six laptops are connected to the four boxes.

WILKINS (CONT'D)
 (to Wade)
 Can you tell what this is?

ARTURO
 (just as Wade opens her
 mouth)
 Of course I can tell! It's a set of
 microwave generators designed to
 create an electromagnetic pulse!

REMBRANDT
 A pulse that knocks out electronics
 and any tech in its path?
 (beat)
 It was in "Goldeneye."

ARTURO
 The path of this device -- it would
 be using buildings and telephone
 towers as the antenna. Directing it
 to cause traffic and surveillance
 disruptions.

Wade's mouth is still open. She closes it.

WILKINS
 (to Wade)
 Can you tell why it's not working?

WADE
 It's --

ARTURO
 Of course I can tell! You needed to
 use an air-gap capacitor but
 settled for the vacuum variables.
 The armature cylinder's stator
 winding is a joke. This contraption
 will blow a fuse before it
 generates a pulse on this scale.

WADE
 (to Wilkins)
 But you need it to. Why?

CUT TO:

INT. SECOND FLOOR SITTING AREA - EVENING

Brice, Wilkins and Malcolm sit on one end of a table. Arturo,
 Wade and Rembrandt sit on the other.

WILKINS

We've never targeted civilians. But the intel your friend's now carrying -- it's everything we've been fighting for. We need it no matter the cost -- but if we attack your friend's prisoner transport, people will die. DHS agents who're only doing their jobs. Civilians driving home from work.

WADE

But you'll do it anyway?

WILKINS

None of us were soldiers before the Bio-D program. We were teachers and architects and botanists. We don't want to attack our own people.

All around this discussion, other Movement rebels, including Johnson, Reynolds and Altman are gathering weapons, holstering pistols, putting on vests.

WADE

Then what would make you even consider it?

WILKINS

A spreadsheet encoded on a micro-SD card that our inside man had your friend swallow.

REMBRANDT

A spreadsheet?!

WILKINS

The administration and the DHS have used the Bio-D program to repeal and curtail every civil right this country's founded on. Claiming it's necessary, for the best. But our man found proof it's all a lie.

BRICE

They said the Bio-D would rescue the country from an economic crisis -- but our agent found data proving that even massive tax increases couldn't keep the program going.

MALCOLM

Same with Biocare and the National Food Rationing program.

(MORE)

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

President Daniels kept all his promises, but he can't maintain 'em.

WILKINS

That prisoner compound your friend's being shipped to -- it's a nice place, really. Mandatory workout room. Three squares a day with force-feeding if you won't eat up. The administration wants their prisoners healthy -- because the chipless will be a slave labour force. That's their solution to their money problems.

BRICE

We need that data to prove it to the country --

WADE

And you'll kill for it.

WILKINS

The EMP was an alternative. We'd use it to disrupt the entire city traffic system and control the situation. If we can't get it to work, we can't keep civilians out of the line of fire --

ARTURO

Your machine is never going work on a city-wide scale.

WADE

Wait! You were thinking big -- but what if you thought smaller?

CUT TO:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

We're in the room with Quinn. Three armed guards and Agent Warren enter. The guards start unlocking Quinn's cuffs from the table.

QUINN

What is this?

AGENT WARREN

I said I'd escort you personally to the darkest hole I could find. Time to go.

Quinn remains cuffed as he's pulled to stand up.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - EVENING

Quinn walks down the hallway, one guard in front of him, two behind him, and Agent Warren leading the way.

QUINN

You can't just send me to Alcatraz -
- I'm entitled to a lawyer! I have rights!

AGENT WARREN

You're a dead man, remember?
Chipless corpses have no rights.

CUT TO:

INT. TRANSPORT BAY - EVENING

We're on an underground level of the San Francisco Federal Building. Quinn and his captors lead him out of an elevator and towards a ramp. At the end of the ramp is a black van, the ignition running and a driver in the driver's seat.

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE VAN

We see Quinn's handcuffs being secured to a railing against the interior wall of the van. His feet are chained and he's belted in.

Agent Warren takes the seat across from him.

CUT TO:

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO FEDERAL BUILDING - EVENING

We see Quinn's prisoner transport van flanked by four black sedans, escorting it as it pulls out onto the road and speeds off towards the freeway.

It blends into a stream of traffic, traffic filled with cars and minivans containing normal, ordinary, innocent people.

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE VAN

Quinn cranes his neck, trying to look through the front-passenger side window, looking for any sign of his promised rescue. None is forthcoming.

He lowers his head, thinking of his lost friends, hoping they're alright and haven't gotten into any trouble.

And then there's a STATIC BURST from the front of the vehicle and a voice:

WILKINS (OVER THE RADIO)
Alert. Alert. There has been a
disruption in power on the James
Lick Freeway. Do not enter. Repeat.
Do not enter.

The guard in the passenger seat looks to the back, and to Agent Warren.

GUARD

Agent?

AGENT WARREN

Turn south and use Central!

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - EVENING

We see the prisoner transport van and the row of cars execute a sharp left turn down a different street.

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE VAN

Quinn, helplessly handcuffed, starts to grow anxious.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - EVENING

We see the prisoner transport approaching what looks like a MASSIVE TRAFFIC JAM. An endless line of what looks like three lanes of traffic in a two-lane street is blocking entry to the Central freeway. And the streetlights and traffic lights up ahead are going dark and shutting down.

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE VAN

The driver is shaking his head and Agent Warren is leaning forward to see what's in front of the transport.

AGENT WARREN

Alright, hang east! There's got to be another --

And then there's another STATIC BURST:

WILKINS (ON THE RADIO)

Traffic alert: please be advised that Parkway through Johns is clear. Repeat: Parkway through Johns is clear.

AGENT WARREN

There's our route!

CUT TO:

WILKINS HOLDING A MICROPHONE.

We pull out wider to see that Arturo, Rembrandt, Wade and Wilkins are sitting in a van.

WILKINS

If that van leaves the four-block range, we've lost it. Unless you can boost the EMP pulse -- ?

WADE

Your EMP generator's hooked up a single cell tower instead of the citywide setup you planned. Four blocks is all we get. But if we can't isolate civilians from the fight, we can isolate the fight from the civilians --

ARTURO

No confrontation of this nature can
be bloodless.

CUT TO:

INSIDE QUINN'S VAN

He tries again to look outside the windows. He knows something's going on, he just doesn't know what.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - EVENING

We see Quinn's prisoner transport, finally finding a free road and speeding along. All the cars along this street are parked and OUT OF THE WAY, leaving the path clear --

The prisoner van and its escorts speed EAST along Parkway. They go through Parkway's intersection with Johns -- and then a RED JEEP speeds from the SOUTH END of the Parkway/Johns intersection and drives STRAIGHT INTO QUINN'S PRISONER VAN.

The black sedan behind Quinn's van clips the rear bumper of the Jeep, but the Jeep continues to propel the prisoner van STRAIGHT INTO the side of a PARKED CAR. The van is pinned.

The four black sedans pull over. As the agents get out and move towards the jeep, ARMED REBELS IN SKI-MASKS burst out of the many PARKED CARS that the prisoner transport thought it could speed past.

GUNFIRE ERUPTS. The rebels fire on the agents. The agents take cover behind their sedans, returning fire. TWO REBELS are cut down. One agent is shot.

And as this exchange is taking place on the SOUTH END of the intersection, we see BRICE in a vest coming from the NORTH END, heading towards the VAN PINNED BY THE JEEP.

As she approaches, we see that there is NO DRIVER in the Jeep. We see Brice pulling out a phone and briefly tapping a command. The ignition of the Jeep shuts down.

CUT TO:

INSIDE QUINN'S VAN

The guards are unconscious. Agent Warren is slumped forward, unmoving, and Quinn is struggling with his handcuffs when the door of the van slides open to reveal Brice standing there.

She raises a lockpick.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - EVENING

Gunfire can be heard from the south end, while Quinn and Brice run north. As they hurry, Brice pulls out her phone and dials.

BRICE

I've got him! He's alive!

She keeps the line open but focuses on running with Quinn struggling to keep his pace. They turn down a side street and approach a small gray car. Brice moves towards the driver's side, handing Quinn the phone.

QUINN

Hello?

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE REBEL VAN

Wade is holding the phone to her ear.

WADE

Quinn! We're going to see you soon!

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - EVENING

Quinn exhales with relief.

QUINN

Wade! Is Rembrandt okay? Is the Professor --

WADE (PHONE)

They're fine, they're --

AGENT WARREN (OFF CAMERA)

Freeze!

Quinn goes rigid. Behind him Agent Warren, her forehead and hands bloody, is aiming a gun at him.

AGENT WARREN (CONT'D)

Turn around slowly.

Quinn does. Agent Warren sweeps the gun between Quinn and Brice, who already has her hands up.

QUINN

Kelly -- Kelly, wait!

Madness flares in Agent Warren's face at her name from Quinn's lips.

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE REBEL VAN

Wade is shocked by Quinn's words. She presses the cell phone to her ear.

WADE

Kelly? You're with Kelly?

Wilkins tenses at this new development and Arturo and Rembrandt look anxious.

QUINN (PHONE)

Agent Warren, don't shoot! I'm not -

-

And then the sound of a SINGLE GUNSHOT blasts from the speaker of Wade's phone.

Wade drops the phone. Her fingers scrabble for it, struggling to work in her frenzied state. She screams into it the phone:

WADE

Quinn?! Quinn!!

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - EVENING

We see Agent Warren gripping her gun, a wisp of smoke coming from the barrel.

A wider angle shows BRICE's lifeless body lying next to the car, her fingers reaching for a gun holstered at her waist.

Quinn keeps his hands raised, still holding the phone as Agent Warren advances on him, gun aimed at his chest.

QUINN
Agent Warren -- please --

AGENT WARREN
Shut up.

QUINN
I was talking to Wade --

AGENT WARREN
I don't believe you.

QUINN
She's on the phone!

He drops his left arm with the phone, trying to extend it to Agent Warren, and she cocks the gun for another shot.

QUINN (CONT'D)
Please -- I'm not armed. I'm just asking you to listen.

Hatred and revulsion mark Agent Warren's face. But Quinn's shaking hands still grasp the phone and --

WADE (PHONE)
Kelly?

The speaker's loud enough for Agent Warren to hear Wade's voice coming from it.

WADE (PHONE) (CONT'D)
Kelly, is that you? It's Kathleen!

Agent Warren snatches the phone from Quinn's grasp.

AGENT WARREN
Who is this -- who are you?

CUT TO:

THE REBEL VAN

Wade tries to be calm.

WADE
I'm Kathleen Welles. I was born in San Francisco -- to Don and Ellen Welles. My sister Kelly came four years earlier.
(MORE)

WADE (CONT'D)

(a breath)

I was a sick kid. Trapped in my room and away from the world. My sister tried to bring the world to me.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - EVENING

Agent Warren is furious.

AGENT WARREN

This is impossible -- you died eight years ago --

WADE (PHONE)

Eight years ago, I'd recovered. I was going to the outdoor science exhibit at the Presidio for a school field trip --

AGENT WARREN

This can't be --

CUT TO:

THE REBELS' VAN

WADE

My sister met me there! It was a school trip, but she went there early and met me, and after school hours were up, she took me dancing and --

AGENT WARREN (PHONE)

Kathleen?

We hear her voice break.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - EVENING

We see Agent Warren's eyes are red. Her hands are shaking.

AGENT WARREN

I waited all morning. You never came. Then I heard that the Bridge had been bombed and you were --

WADE (PHONE)
*That didn't happen on my world.
 It's me. I'm not the Wade you knew,
 but I'm still your sister -- and
 Quinn's my friend.*

And as Agent Warren lowers the gun, Quinn lowers his hands. And Agent Warren looks at him, for the first time seeing him for what he is.

CUT TO:

INSIDE BRICE'S CAR

Agent Warren is at the wheel. Quinn is holding the phone to his ear. The car is speeding down a moderately-busy city street, staying in the right lane.

AGENT WARREN
 Where's our rendezvous point?

QUINN
 Wilkins says to stay north, and
 he'll give me the next turning when
 we hit Montcrest.

AGENT WARREN
 Is she healthy?

QUINN
 (talking on the phone)
 What? Oh, I'll look.

He opens the glove compartment in response to whatever Wilkins said and finds a small envelope inside.

QUINN (CONT'D)
 (to Agent Warren)
 She's in great shape. You -- the
 other you -- always makes her do a
 lot of running.

AGENT WARREN
 Is she still allergic to cheese?

QUINN
 She doesn't love it, but she can
 eat it.
 (listening on the phone)
 Right turn here, then stay in the
 left lane.

Agent Warren makes the turn.

CUT TO:

THE REBEL VAN

We see the streets speeding by: the van is in motion. Wilkins is driving, his face grim.

WADE
I'm sorry about Brice.

WILKINS
She was brave.

WADE
If Kelly --
(a pause)
If Agent Warren brings Quinn, are
you going to --

WILKINS
We're not in the business of
revenge.

Arturo, behind them, looks relieved, as he fiddles with the timer.

REMBRANDT
(to Arturo)
Are you actually doing anything or
are you just fidgeting?

CUT TO:

BRICE'S CAR - EVENING

Quinn has lowered the cell phone for a moment. He opens the envelope to find a plastic packet of three pills inside.

As Agent Warren drives, Quinn tears open the packet and holds up one of the pills, as the car pulls to a stop in the right-side lane of the street.

And then suddenly, there's the click of a pistol and Agent Warren is aiming her weapon directly into Quinn's face.

AGENT WARREN
How'd you do it?

QUINN
What? What are you doing?

AGENT WARREN

Did you get voice samples of her when she was a kid? Enhance and extend them?

QUINN

I don't --

AGENT WARREN

Was that an actress? Did you find a good mimic? You must've had a good researcher --

QUINN

Why are you doing this?

AGENT WARREN

Because of what's in your hand.

Quinn studies the pill, baffled.

AGENT WARREN (CONT'D)

That's an emetic. To induce vomiting. They gave you something to swallow while you were in the Federal Building. They want what you're carrying. That's why they rescued you.

QUINN

That's true, but Wade is --

The cold metal of the gun slams into Quinn's temple. He cries out as his head hits the window of the passenger door.

AGENT WARREN

Shut up -- !

And Quinn can see in her face that Agent Warren is beyond reason. She keeps the gun trained on his face as she unlocks the driver's side door.

AGENT WARREN (CONT'D)

-- don't move.

She steps out of the car, gun aimed directly at him and Quinn seems to crumple with bleak despair. He'll never get home.

And then a passing motorcycle CLIPS Agent Warren as it speeds past her and knocks her to the ground. Instantly, Quinn unbuckles his seatbelt and throws the passenger door open. He leaps for the pavement. He turns to see if Agent Warren is alright.

She's spread on the concrete of the street, her gun six inches from her fingers. She looks up at Quinn with absolute loathing and her hand creeps towards her gun.

Quinn runs. He hurls himself down a side street.

And we see Agent Warren's fingers come just a few inches short of the gun before she goes limp.

CUT TO:

QUINN: RUNNING AS HARD AS HE CAN.

We see him raise the phone to his ear, getting directions from Wilkins.

FADE TO:

EXT. PARK - EVENING

We focus on a plaque showing the Golden Gate Bridge. But the plaque shows a Golden Gate Bridge that is intact and unbroken and standing tall above the water of the San Francisco Bay.

The plaque is mounted on a tall stone, and underneath the image of the Bridge is a list of names inscribed. Candles and scribbled notes have been left at the base of the stone.

We widen to see that the stone is in a sedate park area in the evening, overlooking the San Francisco Bay itself. The plaque on the stone seems to defy the destruction it faces in the distance of the Bay.

At a distance, we see Wilkins' van parked, alongside two other cars. Arturo, Rembrandt and Wade stand together, nervous and worried. Arturo checks the timer. Wilkins is with Altman, Johnson and Reynolds, the four of them conferring quietly and uncertainly. Wilkins is talking on the phone.

WADE

They were driving. They should have been here ten minutes ago.

Wilkins hears that and casts a saddened look at Wade.

And then we see Quinn, running up the street and towards the rebels and his friends.

REMBRANDT

Q-Ball!

ARTURO
Mr. Mallory!

Wilkins advances towards Quinn to greet him, and Quinn responds to this overture by throwing up over Wilkins' boots.

QUINN
Hnnghhnn -- sorry.

WILKINS
(picking up the pill with
the micro-SD inside)
The emetic shouldn't be working as
fast as that --

QUINN
But my stomach does. This has been
a really bad day.

FADE TO:

THE MEMORIAL PLAQUE

We see Wade and Quinn standing next to it. (Arturo is holding the timer, talking to Rembrandt and Wilkins at a distance.)

Quinn has found his name on the plaque, and Wade finds hers as well.

WADE
This world is so angry, so afraid.
And who knows if that super-secret
spreadsheet will change that.

QUINN
I tried to talk to your sister --

A look of protest forms on Wade's face.

QUINN (CONT'D)
I tried to talk to Kelly, but
nothing you or I said changed her
mind.

Wade pulls out her borrowed phone. She removes the micro-SD and puts it in her shoulder bag. But she finds herself looking down the LENS of the CAMERA in the phone.

WADE
I wonder...

We pull back to see Wade holding the camera up to her own face, but we don't hear what she's saying.

CUT TO:

ARTURO, REMBRANDT AND WILKINS

They're still talking.

WILKINS

I'd ask you four to stick around,
but I hear you've got a world to go
home to.

ARTURO

Yes, I suppose you did hear.

REMBRANDT

But why would you believe it?

WILKINS

Your friend there could take apart
cell phones down to the last screw,
but she didn't know what a Bio-D
chip was. And I did throw a little
cash into the Kathleen Welles
Memorial Fund at one point.

(beat)

Is the world you come from a better
world than mine?

Arturo chuckles at that, and Rembrandt laughs as well.

ARTURO

The same war with different battles
on different fronts.

And then we see Quinn and Wade moving towards this group,
Wade holding the camera phone. She hands it to Wilkins.

WADE

I left a message on that phone -- I
was hoping you could put it out
there for me.

WILKINS

After your help, it's the least I
can do.

(beat)

We're moving out, and I recommend
you four don't hang around here.

He nods them farewell and walks off towards his vans. The sliders turn in the opposite direction, and Arturo hands the timer back to Quinn.

ARTURO

Four minutes left, Mr. Mallory. And then we'll be heading towards what I hope is home.

They start moving away from the memorial.

FADE TO:

EXT. STREET - EVENING

We see the same street where Quinn fled from Agent Warren. There's an ambulance there now, parked in front of Brice's car. We go in closer to see Agent Warren sitting in the BACK, while a paramedic bandages her forehead and tends to her leg.

Agent Warren is holding her phone to her ear.

AGENT WARREN

He forced me to drive the car here, and then he ran -- wait, what?

(pause)

Send it to the server, I'll see it there.

She lowers her phone, and taps on the touchscreen display a few times. Onscreen text reads: PUBLIC VIDEO 304-A - STREAMING. And then a SMALL VIDEO WINDOW in the LOWER-RIGHT CORNER of our shot appears -- and we see Wade, standing at the memorial plaque.

WADE (IN THE VIDEO)

My name is Kathleen Welles and this is a message for my sister.

(a breath)

I'm 24-years-old, but on your world, I died at age-16 on January 4th, 2004.

(beat)

I come from somewhere else. A different world. A world where we were attacked -- just like you.

Agent Warren is stunned by the sight of her sister, alive at age 24.

WADE (IN THE VIDEO) (CONT'D)

*But we didn't forget our freedom
and our heritage, and we didn't
agree to hand it over in exchange
for empty promises of safety. I
look at the world you live in after
my death -- and it makes me sad to
see what's happened here.*

(holding the Bio-D chip)

I wouldn't ever want this.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE PARK - EVENING

We see the four sliders moving ahead, walking together. Rembrandt and Arturo lead the way and Quinn and Wade are behind them, holding hands.

WADE (VIDEO VOICEOVER)

*But whatever choices you've made up
to now, you can still choose to do
something else.*

We see Quinn seeing the timer hit zero. He raises the timer and aims it ahead of them.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - EVENING

We're back to Agent Warren watching Wade's video.

In the video, Wade looks at the memorial plaque and the list of victims.

WADE (IN THE VIDEO)

*You can stand up for your freedom.
Against those who would oppress you
and take your right to vote and be
free of a government that imposes
its will on private lives.*

(pointing at the plaque)

*Do that in my name -- in theirs --
I promise you, I'd be proud.*

And then Wade's video vanishes.

Agent Warren's phone goes blank and she gazes at it mutely. She touches the screen as though wishing she could pull Wade back to her.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE PARK - EVENING

Quinn triggers the timer and the vortex opens. A pinpoint of light expands into a rippling, glowing gateway to another dimension. It's smaller than the three-person gateway Quinn made before.

Arturo nudges Rembrandt to leap in first. Arturo is right behind him. Quinn, with a glance at Wade, dives in afterwards. And Wade, casting one final gaze in the direction of the memorial, throws herself into the vortex as well.

FLASHCUT TO:

INSIDE THE VORTEX: We see a POV shot: the glowing streams of energy that form the walls of the interdimensional tunnel, sailing past our perspective. We see a gap widen up at the end of the tunnel --

FLASHCUT TO:

EXT. ALLEY - EVENING

The vortex opens in an alley between buildings. Arturo flies out, barely landing on his feet. Rembrandt is thrown into Arturo's back. Quinn is hurled out to the ground but rolls with it. And Wade emerges on her feet. The vortex closes moments later.

REMBRANDT

Did we make it? Are we home?

WADE

We don't even have our cell phones to check!

The four of them step out into a busy downtown San Francisco street.

Pedestrians and cars pass by, taking no notice of the four travelers looking back and forth, trying to identify similarities and differences.

QUINN
It's almost eight PM -- and we're
five blocks from the restaurant!

REMBRANDT
Restaurant -- ?

QUINN
Where I'm meeting my mother for her
birthday. Come on!

And Quinn breaks into a run, dodging pedestrians, dashing
across streets, his three companions right behind him.

CUT TO:

EXT. RYUKO'S RESTAURANT - EVENING

Quinn, Wade, Rembrandt and Arturo rush towards the front
window of the restaurant.

QUINN
I'm five minutes late -- but Mom's
always on time. If she's there,
then we're home!

The four reach the window. Quinn presses against the glass,
his eyes searching. The other three hang back.

REMBRANDT
Well? Do you see her?

Quinn is about to give up -- and then he sees his mother
returning from a hallway in the back and sitting down at a
table for two.

QUINN
That's her -- she's here!

Rembrandt whoops and cheers. Arturo smiles gladly and Wade
hugs Quinn.

Arturo claps Quinn on the shoulder and prods him in the
direction of the restaurant door. Quinn steps inside.

Wade, Rembrandt and Arturo turn away from the restaurant,
walking off.

ARTURO
Who's up for prime rib?

CUT TO:

INT. RYUKO'S RESTAURANT - EVENING

Amanda Mallory is studying the menu as Quinn drops into the chair opposite her.

QUINN
Sorry, Mom. I was running late.

AMANDA
Quinn!

She notes his messy hair, his rumpled clothes and some light bruising on his face from Agent Warren's assault on him.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
What happened to you!?

QUINN
Oh, stuff. Can we order first?

AMANDA
I'm sure this'll be a good story.

Quinn, looking at the menu, blinks in consternation.

QUINN
Weird -- it's all fried rice with pork and beef and different kinds of curry -- where's the raw fish?

AMANDA
We did Peruvian last year.

Quinn lowers his menu, dread filling his face.

QUINN
No -- we didn't -- we did Mexican.

AMANDA
What on Earth is a Mexican?

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET SIDE - EVENING

We are on a CLOSE UP of a BUS. This bus has a large banner-advertisement on the side. The letters on the ad read: COCA-COLA - ANTI-DEPRESSANT ENRICHED. "You can raise your spirits can by can!" the ad proclaims.

We see Wade, Rembrandt and Arturo standing on the pavement, watching the bus and its otherworldly advertisement pull away.

Arturo motions for Wade and Rembrandt to look at a television in a shopfront window.

NEWSANCHOR (ON THE TV)
And in financial news, imports of
human livers and kidneys from India
are at an all time low due to the
exchange rate...

Rembrandt face fills with disappointed frustration. And the newsanchor's words almost blend together in a melody of alien unfamiliarity.

NEWSANCHOR (ON THE TV) (CONT'D)
... Facebook's bankruptcy has
become Atari's gain, as the
software giant bought up the
remains of the Facebook
intellectual property and format to
be used as an internal
communications system...

Wade and Arturo watch the news with sinking hearts. And the three of them move away from the shop window, heading back the way they came.

CUT TO:

EXT. RYUKO'S RESTAURANT - EVENING

Arturo, Wade and Rembrandt rush towards the restaurant. Through the front window, they see Quinn inside, looking out at them from his table. They exchange looks of defeat.

Rembrandt rests his head against the glass of the window. Arturo and Wade look around at this familiar yet alien world.

And as we pull back to a wider shot, the restaurant and the sliders are obscured by passing pedestrians and cars. And we hear brief snippets of news:

NEWSANCHOR #1 (VOICEOVER)
The National Health Information
Center has released updated
guidelines for steroid dosage and
Gatorade will be one of the first
products to use...

A STATIC BURST. Then:

NEWSANCHOR #2 (VOICEOVER)
And will you believe, these Afghan farming initiatives, at first sponsored by Phil Hartman's charity, have become a full-blown 40-billion-dollar-a-year business. Squash and root vegetables are now American staples. Phil, you must be very proud of --

BURST OF STATIC, followed by:

NEWSANCHOR #3 (VOICEOVER)
The LAPD made fourteen arrests today and shut down four illegal grow-ops of ginseng and ginkgo biloba. These herbs, having been scientifically proven to have no effect, are curtailed under new anti-fraud legislation...

ANOTHER WAVE OF STATIC, then:

NEWSANCHOR #4 (VOICEOVER)
... former President John F. Kennedy was at last paroled after serving forty-years of his sixty-year sentence for electoral fraud and criminal conspiracy...

And we are now so far from the restaurant and the sliders that our view is filled with nothing but people -- ordinary people -- people who don't look any different from the ones on our world.

FADE OUT.