

Sliders: Slide Effects

a story by Tracy Tormé

Logline: Quinn Mallory wakes up to find himself home. In fact, it's like he never left. Time has been rewound to the *Pilot* and the original quartet is alive and well. Wade's working at Doppler Computers, Arturo is teaching, Rembrandt is working on his career and only Quinn remembers sliding and all their adventures.

Haunted by memories that no one else shares, Quinn must find out if he's losing his mind or if something else has gone terribly wrong...

This story is set after the events of *The Seer*.

Screenwriter's Notes: *Slide Effects* was conceived in 1996 by series co-creator Tracy Tormé, imagined as his Season 4 premiere. This fan-created screenplay, written by Ibrahim Ng in 2011, brings Tormé's concept to life in a 46-page script.

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For anyone who has ever longed for one more slide with Quinn, Wade, Rembrandt and Arturo, this story is for you.

We open on a distant view of the Milky Way galaxy, majestic and vast. But a YOU ARE HERE sticker and glimmers of light against the black of space show we're looking at a giant wall poster.

Our gaze moves along the wall, past the poster. Past a miniature basketball net mounted to the wall. Past a hockey jersey, and now we brush past a telescope, featuring an I BRAKE FOR ASTEROIDS sticker on it.

Behind the telescope is a desk covered with scattered papers. Resting against the desk is a surfboard. Next to that is a dresser where some dinosaur models stand, dominating a baseball mitt.

And across from the dresser (and a sea of unwashed laundry lying on the floor) is a bed. A black cat sits on the bed, nestled comfortably, sharing the bed with a YOUNG MAN stretched out on top of the covers, asleep with his glasses on and a book called Hyperspace left open on his chest.

He mumbles in his sleep.

QUINN

What do we do now... ?

Abruptly, Quinn Mallory sits up with a gasp. The book goes flying as he reaches out, trying to grab onto something that isn't there.

QUINN (cont'd)

Remmy, no!!! Don't --

Quinn looks around, sees the laundry on the floor, the dinosaurs on the dresser and his cat, Schrödinger, in front of him.

QUINN (cont'd)

Where the hell am I?

The cat meows and Quinn recoils like he's been shocked. He pulls himself off the bed, staring at the cat, who only offers another meow of familiarity. Quinn backs into the dresser, and one of the dinosaurs falls over. He turns.

Picks it up. Lets his fingers skim the surface of the model. Confirming the reality. He puts the dinosaur down and walks to a nearby mirror, hesitantly looking into it.

FLASHCUT TO:

Mallory (Robert Floyd) stands in the mirror.

FLASHCUT TO:

Quinn -- looking into the mirror and seeing himself. His own face. His lengthy hair. His gray golf shirt. He takes off his glasses. He

touches his nose and the scar above his lip. He looks around the room again, suspicious and untrusting. Schrödinger yowls.

QUINN (cont'd)
I don't believe this.
(to the cat)
I don't believe you.

Schrödinger the cat is indifferent. Quinn yanks open his bedroom door and steps out.

CUT TO:

QUINN'S LEGS -- Running down the stairs of his house. Then he abruptly stops.

Quinn touches the bannister of the stairs, the floral wallpaper. He slows his pace, walking down the stairs, not knowing what's ahead. He's tense, braced for action. He reaches the foot of the stairs, makes a right turn, heading towards the kitchen.

He stops for a moment to look at the chandelier lighting the front hallway, and stares hard, looking for discrepancies. Then he keeps moving, stepping into the kitchen with cautious anxiety.

He's stunned by what he sees.

QUINN
No --

Quinn's mother, Amanda Mallory, stands by the toaster, with two slices of toast on a plate.

MRS. MALLORY
Morning!

QUINN
What is this?

MRS. MALLORY
Oh, rye. I bought white bread just in case you didn't like it, but --

QUINN
(enraged)
This is impossible!!

Mrs. Mallory is taken aback.

MRS. MALLORY
Quinn?

She moves towards him, but when Quinn flinches, she stops in her tracks.

MRS. MALLORY (cont'd)
Quinn, I'm sorry about last night.

Quinn tries to process the words. But they're meaningless.

QUINN
Last night?

MRS. MALLORY
(agitated)
You knocked out the power!
(takes a calming breath)
But I shouldn't have told you
to stop working on your father's
equations.

Quinn's suspicion, anger and fear begin to fade, as he stares at his mother, unharmed, untraumatized, loving --

QUINN
I --

MRS. MALLORY
I talk to him too.

She reaches over to a chest of drawers with a flat counter surface, and picks up a photograph. It shows herself, her late husband, Michael, and Quinn, standing next to each other.

MRS. MALLORY (cont'd)
I just think you could find ways to

keep your father in your heart that
don't involve hundreds of dollars
in electrical repairs.

Quinn says nothing, but his eyes are welling with tears. Mrs. Mallory moves towards him, and this time, Quinn doesn't retreat. She gently, but firmly, wraps her arms around him.

QUINN

Mom --

(a choking sob)

I'm sorry. I was afraid -- I
thought I'd never see you again.

MRS. MALLORY

Oh, come on! It wasn't our first
fight. Won't be our last.

Quinn holds his mother tight, never wanting to let go.

MRS. MALLORY (cont'd)

In other news, your friend Wade
called.

QUINN

Wade -- !

He breaks the hug.

QUINN (cont'd)

She's alright?

Mrs. Mallory releases Quinn, moving back towards her toaster.

MRS. MALLORY

She wanted to ask you if all of
those new computers at Doppler had
hard drive failures or if she'd
just been unlucky with two?

Delight and confusion fight for space across Quinn's face.

QUINN

Wade!

He turns, running towards the front door.

Halfway to the front door, Quinn stops. Turns around. And he moves to the door in the hallway, the door to his basement.

He pulls the door open and runs down the stairs.

INT. QUINN'S BASEMENT. MORNING

Descending, Quinn switches on the lights and anxiously looks around his workroom.

The basement is as it should be. An astounding scientific laboratory with several shelves, looking like stereo racks, full of complex wiring, computers, keyboards, oscilloscopes showing fluctuating wave patterns on the screens.

There's an optical table, steel-topped with drilled holes, on which many refractive mirrors, a laser and an electron microscope are anchored. A doorless refrigerator is surrounded by small tanks, connected by multiple wires to a large stainless steel cylinder.

Several large, metal coils are also situated at various points of the room. And against one wall is the blackboard, covered with Quinn's calculations -- and a question mark at the end of the equation.

Quinn moves to the armchair in front of the television and

QUINN

My tapes -- where are they?

MRS. MALLORY (O.S.)

Quinn?

Quinn looks back to the stairs, at his mother.

MRS. MALLORY

I didn't mean what I said, but I do think you should get out of the house now and then. And if a girl needs your help with computers --

Quinn nods, and urgently moves towards the stairs.

CUT TO:

EXT. MALLORY HOUSE. MORNING

Quinn's blue BMW, with Quinn behind the wheel, backs out of the driveway. We go to Quinn in the driver's seat, his expression frantic. He grips the steering wheel, steps hard on the gas. The car practically leaps down the street.

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE CAR: Quinn speeding down a street. A park can be seen passing the windows of the car.

An upcoming traffic light goes from green to yellow. Opposite Quinn's vehicle, a red car is in the left-turn lane ahead of Quinn. The red car is preparing to make the turn.

Quinn sees the red car about to move into his path. But his racing mind won't let him slow down.

As the left-turning car inches into the turn, Quinn slams his foot on the gas pedal, intending to speed through the yellow light.

But the left-turning car accelerates as well and finds itself on a direct collision course with Quinn's BMW.

Quinn yelps and abruptly swings his wheel all the way to the right.

At the last second, he manages to avoid a nasty crash and the two cars end up parallel to each other on the side street.

Gasping, Quinn brakes his car, and rolls down his window. He leans out to the other car, which has stopped. The window is rolling down too.

QUINN

Sorry -- I'm sorry -- I --

The other car's window rolls down completely to reveal PROFESSOR MAXIMILIAN ARTURO's snarling face behind it.

ARTURO

You thoughtless, inconsiderate --
Mallory?!

QUINN

Professor -- ? You're alive!

ARTURO

I very nearly wasn't, you
blistering idiot! You clearly have
no business driving a car. Get a
scooter. Ride a bike. Stay off the
roads!!

QUINN

Oh my God. It's you. Professor. I
can't believe you're --

ARTURO

Mr. Mallory!!!!

(deceptively calm)

I am already coping with my own
shock. Refrain from adding yours to
my burden. I will see you in class,
provided I make it to campus alive!

Arturo's car speeds off, leaving Quinn behind. Quinn leans back
against the driver's seat, breathing hard.

SOUND FX: The sound of a hand banging on a door.)

CUT TO:

A CLOSE UP OF A FRONT DOOR TO A HOUSE

Quinn's fist pounds on the door urgently. It opens.

Wade Welles' hair is tousled and standing on end, her eyes are bleary,
her robe is an unflattering faded blue and her acne scars are
unadorned by makeup.

WADE

Quinn? What's going on? Did I --
did I give you my address?

Quinn gazes at Wade wordlessly, drinking in the sight of her.

Wade touches her hair, embarrassed. She rubs her eyes.

WADE (cont'd)
Quinn?

QUINN
I needed to see you.

WADE
Don't we have a shift later? I'm
not at my best right now.

QUINN
You look beautiful.

Wade doesn't know what to make of that, but she doesn't object, either. Quinn's presence makes her awaken. Her eyes widen. She stops touching her hair.

She returns Quinn's gaze, and doesn't recoil when Quinn hesitantly reaches out a hand to stroke her cheek.

WADE
I... always wanted you to...

Quinn moves closer. He barely believes in this moment. His hands go to her shoulders, stroking them lovingly. Wade. He hasn't seen her in so long. He thought she was --

FLASHCUT TO:

Wade Welles, inside the Kromagg sliding machine, her expression vacant in the bath of green liquid.

FLASHCUT TO:

Back to Wade Welles now. Disheveled, alive and well.

Quinn leans forward and so does Wade. His lips brush against hers, a gentle kiss of longing and regret.

She kisses him back. Quinn moves his mouth to Wade's cheek, wanting his lips to touch every inch of her skin.

QUINN
(whispering)
I thought I'd lost you --

Wade abruptly shoves Quinn back, severing the connection.

Her face tightens.

WADE
Wait, what?

CUT TO:

INT. DINING ROOM. DAY

Quinn and Wade sit at the dining room table. Wade's hair is damp, as though she's run some water through it to get it in place. A coffee pot and two cups are before them.

WADE
That's quite a story.

QUINN
You think I'm crazy.

WADE
I think you had a dream.

QUINN
The two aren't mutually exclusive.

Wade laughs. Quinn warms at the sound. Wade reaches for a packet of cards on the table and starts pulling out the cards.

QUINN (cont'd)
Tarot cards?

WADE

I'm betting you don't believe
in the supernatural. I like to think
it exists whether we believe in it or
not.

She begins separating the cards into small stacks.

WADE (cont'd)

But I also think that it can be a
way of converting our thoughts to
symbols and images.

She turns over a card. The Magician.

WADE (cont'd)

You wanted to build a hovercraft
with string theory. It's part of
how you relate to your dad.
You knocked out the fuse box. You
had a fight with your mom.

She smiles. The next card is the Hermit.

WADE (cont'd)

Maybe this dream was just your way
of working through some issues.

QUINN

It's detailed, Wade. And I know
things from my dream that I
couldn't possibly know --

WADE

Yeah?

QUINN

You've got a friend, Sabrina, who's
a Wiccan. You shared a bedroom with
Kelly until you turned 19. When you
were 6, she told you what all your
Christmas presents were before you
opened them.

Wade weighs this thoughtfully. The next card is the World.

WADE

Maybe you overheard me once and forgot. Who knows?

The next card is the Tower.

WADE (cont'd)

Forget about the interdimensional monkeys or my head being in a box. Look at the ideas. A journey. Losing a sense of home and a father figure. Losing the chance to tell someone how you feel. This was on your mind even before the nightmare.

QUINN

I'm having trouble remembering what came before it. Everything seems so far away, so distant. I wasn't even in my body.

WADE

You don't always have motor functions when you're dreaming. And if your dad's work is important, that'll make it more intense.

QUINN

I'm sorry. I must be losing my mind.

Wade touches his hand. Holds it.

WADE

I'll always help you find it. Mostly because I can't put up with Michael Hurley without you to split his attention.
(nods reassuringly)

But it might be good to talk to a
professional mind finder.

And she slides another card across the table to Quinn. Quinn picks it up.

CUT TO:

QUINN, SITTING IN A CHAIR, HOLDING A BUSINESS CARD

Wider angle: we see Quinn sitting in a waiting room in a doctor's office, alone, holding the card that Wade gave him. We get a look at the card.

It's a business card for a psychotherapist named Dr. Matthew Liebling whose name we once saw in the opening of *Post Traumatic Slide Syndrome*.

An office door opens. A woman in a smart suit ushers a teenager out the door.

WOMAN

I'll see you soon, Rodney.

(pausing to look at Quinn)

You're here for Dr. Liebling?

(as Quinn nods)

He'll be with you in a few minutes.

As the woman returns to her office and her patient leaves, Quinn shifts in his seat.

Then the door at the entrance to the waiting room opens. A girl with dirty-blonde hair and a perpetually nervous expression enters.

She takes a seat on the opposite side of the waiting room from Quinn, not making eye contact.

But Quinn recognizes her. It's --

QUINN

Gillian?

Gillian Mitchell. The girl from *Gillian of the Spirits*. The girl who sees ghosts and spirits.

She nearly jumps out of her chair.

GILLIAN
Do I know you?

QUINN
I --
(a pause)
I've eaten at your diner?

GILLIAN
Oh! Okay. Sorry. I don't like
people to know I come here.

She wraps her arms around herself. Quinn's anxiety begins to return.

QUINN
Gillian, do you --

At that point, the entry-door to the waiting room opens again, and someone else walks in.

A man in a needlessly reflective purple suit walks in. He has a positive expression that doesn't quite reach his eyes.

QUINN (cont'd)
Rembrandt?!

REMBRANDT BROWN turns to Quinn.

REMBRANDT
Ohhhh. This isn't helping. I come
to these sessions to cope with not
being rich and not being famous.
But I appreciate it. I gotta be
honest, the Topps ain't my fondest
memory. But the Cryin' Man's always
got a special place in his heart
for his fans.

He sits down, oblivious to Quinn's emotions, dismissing him as being star-struck.

QUINN

You're a singer. Your name is Rembrandt Brown. *Cry Like A Man* was a hit, then you quit the Spinning Topps, which charted 13 number one hits without you. You had a stint as a cook in the Navy, but you can't swim.

Quinn suddenly stops, realizing the incongruity of the statement. Then --

QUINN (cont'd)

You hate kids. When you were Little Rembrandt with the Shandells, you grew your first mustache. Your favourite shaving cream is Old Spice sensitive. You bought your Cadillac in 1979 from a man named Dale Summers. You thought you were a Gemini because you misread the astrology chart and you were actually --

GILLIAN

Holy hell! Stalker much?

REMBRANDT

You're creeping me out. And I ain't never been a cook for nobody! But how the heck do you know about my Caddy?

Quinn is now uncaring as to how he appears. He turns to Gillian --

QUINN

And you -- Gillian. You hear voices. You see things that aren't really there?

GILLIAN

(mortified)

How -- did my classmates send you here? Is this some kind of joke?

Quinn gets up and moves towards the door.

QUINN
I'm not laughing.

He walks out.

INT. QUINN'S BASEMENT. DAY

Quinn descends the stairs into the laboratory, determined and angry. He wants answers. His cat, Schrödinger, trails behind him.

MRS. MALLORY (O.S.)
Quinn!

Quinn looks back up the stairs at his mother. She holds a plate with a sandwich on it.

MRS. MALLORY
Mr. Hurley called. He said psychotherapy was no excuse for absence without notice.

QUINN
I didn't. I thought I should, but I didn't.

Mrs. Mallory hands Quinn the plate.

MRS. MALLORY
(gesturing to the basement)
You won't always find your answers down here, you know.

Quinn accepts the plate with a smile breaking through his confusion. Mrs. Mallory leaves and Quinn returns to the laboratory. He sets the plate down on a table.

He pulls down the lever on one of the breakers to bring power to the sliding machine. The coils hum with energy and Quinn rubs his hands together. He moves towards the work table.

His hands snap components and circuits into place. He works fast and from memory, glancing briefly at drawings only to remember he doesn't need them.

We're past mid-day and close to evening by the time Quinn has a timer in his hands.

He flips it open, sets the timer and presses the button.

It sparks in his hands and a wisp of smoke comes from inside. He drops it with a cry of surprise.

Schrödinger makes a noise of fright and hides behind a table. The timer makes a whining sound internally and then the lights go dead. Quinn prods at it with his foot, picks it up with a pair of tweezers and puts it on his work table. He snaps it open.

The internals are burnt and scorched.

Baffled, Quinn turns to his chalkboard. The equation is complete except for after the equals sign. Instead of the answer, there's only a question mark.

Quinn carefully erases the question mark, and writes in the missing piece with chalk. $Xr12\tilde{A}\dots/X$. He even adds a happy face at the end.

Then he stops and looks at the equations as a whole.

QUINN

Hang on. This... doesn't add up properly.

He reviews each part of the chalkboard, every line, every symbol, every letter, every digit. He pulls out a scientific calculator from a drawer and redoes every calculation. He opens various reference books, comparing them to what he wrote on the board.

And then he reaches over to the chalkboard and draws a line through the EQUALS SIGN next to the missing piece he just wrote in.

QUINN (cont'd)
It used to be right.

Quinn shakes his head in consternation. He gets the plate with his mother's sandwich on it, and drops into his armchair. He nibbles at his food, then breaks off a piece and holds it out to entice his cat. Schrödinger comes to him and Quinn pets his cat thoughtfully.

QUINN (cont'd)
I don't understand, Schrödinger.
According to this, sliding isn't possible. There's no such thing as alternate dimensions. No unified field theory.

Schrödinger meows in response.

QUINN (cont'd)
But if the math never added up to begin with, I'd never have built anything down here at all.
What could have changed?
(beat)
You're right, Mom. I can't solve this on my own.

And Quinn comes to a decision.

INT. HOUSE. CLOSE TO DUSK

The doorbell rings. Arturo, still in his suit, sighs and moves towards it. He opens it to find Quinn.

ARTURO
How do you know where I live?

QUINN
Need your help here, Professor!

ARTURO
What you need is some discipline
and a day planner. Vehicular

manslaughter is one thing. Absence
from my class? That has crossed the
line!

QUINN

Professor! I need to talk to you.

ARTURO

Which you could have done during
class and office hours. Good night.

Just as Arturo is about to shut the door, Quinn holds up
four pieces of legal-sized paper he's taped together and
written his calculations on.

ARTURO (cont'd)

Oh my God. The unified field
theory. The missing proof. You
solved it.

QUINN

Actually, no. That's why I need
help.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN. EVENING

Arturo and Quinn have rewritten the calculations on an easel of chart
paper and are studying it intently.

ARTURO

You say you solved this earlier
today --

QUINN

It was five or six years ago. I
think. It's hard to tell right now.

ARTURO

Yes, yes, your doppelganger from a
parallel universe -- I am sorry. I
hear the words in my own voice, and

I cannot justify breathing them. A parallel universe. Merely a mathematical concept for examining the universe through numbers and symbols. Abstract.

Arturo jabs a finger at the middle of Quinn's calculations.

QUINN

And yet you're hearing me out.

ARTURO

Only because *Jeopardy* was pre-empted tonight, Mr. Mallory.

QUINN

Because you remember me!

ARTURO

Of course I remember you. You nearly killed me today! And you nearly destroyed a car I refurbished with my own hands.

QUINN

I mean you remember our adventures together. We were sliders.

Arturo stares at Quinn, his face unreadable.

QUINN (cont'd)

You saved one Earth by giving them antibiotics. You saved another by creating the atom bomb. You ran for Mayor on another Earth and moved gender politics ahead by ten years. You taught me to be curious and bold. You were like a father to Wade, and Rembrandt... he loved you. We all did.

ARTURO

Rembrandt?

A pause.

QUINN

Please -- can't you remember?

Arturo doesn't speak. He looks back at the chart paper.

ARTURO

Everything on that paper tells me
you've lost your mind, Mr. Mallory.

He looks at Quinn, and a tremor enters his voice.

ARTURO (cont'd)

But I find myself thinking of you almost as...

Arturo shakes his head.

ARTURO (cont'd)

If this is madness, it has the
benefit of being mentally
stimulating.

Quinn nods, disappointed. But this is the best he'll get for now.

QUINN

Alright. Let's try something --

Quinn reaches over to the chart paper. Writes in the part of the equation that Smarter Quinn added for him.

ARTURO

Meretricious. Would that it were
the missing piece that provides
proof of a unified field theory.
But it is not.

QUINN

That's just it. It was before. So
what would have to change to make
it true?

Arturo studies the chart again.

ARTURO
Herbert Van Meer.

QUINN
Oh, no.

ARTURO
I'm sorry?

QUINN
Nothing, go on.

ARTURO
Well, as I was saying --

Arturo circles one set of variables and numbers --

ARTURO (cont'd)
Van Meer's theorem formed a partial
basis of the Podolsky proofs when
converted to propositional
calculus. Hence, this specific
subset of the equation.

QUINN
But if it were the inverse...

Arturo picks up a piece of paper. Rewrites the set of variables and numbers in the form of a fraction and tapes the paper over the subset of the calculations on the chart.

QUINN (cont'd)
It works.

ARTURO
And our inequality becomes an
equality. Proof...

QUINN
But it doesn't work. How can it not
work?

ARTURO

Because -- for some reason, the
very nature of the existence we
know, the reality we presently
inhabit --
(beat)
Has been altered.

QUINN

So -- the theorem was flipped --
but it didn't change any
subsequent mathematical model.
The only measurable result --

ARTURO

Was to prevent the likelihood of
interdimensional travel, with no
other effect on our field of
knowledge. And that is impossible.

QUINN

Do you -- do you believe me now,
Professor?

Arturo gives Quinn an appraising gaze.

Then someone bangs on Arturo's front door.

ARTURO

Oh, very good. Perhaps our new
visitor will have proof that the
moon is made of green cheese.

Arturo ventures to the door. Quinn studies the chart some more, while
we move down the hallway to see Arturo opening the front door.

Two police officers stand on Arturo's front porch.

We go back to the kitchen, in close on Quinn's face.

CONSTABLE SIMMS (O.C.)

I'm Constable Ryan Simms, sir, and

this is Officer Sidney Morgan.
We're looking for a Mr. Quinn
Mallory? His car is parked outside.

Quinn looks up, worried.

ARTURO

Yes, of course -- what's this all about?

CONSTABLE SIMMS (O.C.)

We received complaints that Quinn
Mallory has been harassing two
different people. A Rembrandt Brown
and a Gillian Mitchell. We'll need
to speak with him.

ARTURO

He's in the bathroom. One moment.

Quinn tenses, backs into the kitchen as Arturo returns.

ARTURO (cont'd)

Closet. Now.

Without waiting for Quinn's response, he shoves Quinn into a nearby
storage closet. Then Arturo carefully opens the back door in his
kitchen. He turns back to the kitchen table and knocks over one of the
chairs.

ARTURO (cont'd)

Arrggghhhh!! Quinn! Stop!!

Arturo throws himself down against the oven as the police officers
charge in, guns drawn.

OFFICER MORGAN

Sir?

Arturo gestures at the open back door.

ARTURO

That lunatic attacked me and ran!
After him! He could be dangerous!

The police officers burst out the door. Arturo recovers and pulls open the closet.

QUINN

Gee -- thanks.

ARTURO

Leave your car. Go on foot, north, and use the cover of the hedges on Morton. Take the bus to campus. As you did not attend my class this morning, you will be present in class tonight, and I will join you there in an hour.

QUINN

Professor, thank you for -

ARTURO

(a loud whisper)

No time, boy! Go!

And as Quinn runs out of Arturo's house, the professor returns to his seat and takes another look at the calculations.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET. EVENING

We see QUINN'S FEET pounding the pavement, running down the street. He gasps. Breathes hard. He sees a phone booth ahead and stops.

CUT TO:

QUINN IN A PHONE BOOTH

The receiver to his ear. Quinn speaks quickly.

QUINN

Please. Meet me there. It's more important than anything. One hour. I have to go somewhere else first.

He hangs up and walks towards a nearby bus stop.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS. EVENING

Quinn sits aboard the bus, wrapped in his coat, his face taut and tense. As other passengers walk past him, Quinn averts his face, looking out the window.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET. EVENING

The bus stops, and Quinn disembarks.

CUT TO:

DOWN THE STREET

Quinn is now walking away from the bus, walking urgently, but he knows where he's going. And ahead of him is a steakhouse called Baton Orange.

CUT TO:

INT. STEAKHOUSE. EVENING

Quinn walks in, shakes his head at a hostess and walks past into the area of tables. He walks towards one table and sits down across from REMBRANDT, who is polishing off a steak.

REMBRANDT

You! You looking for more trouble,
kid? I already called the cops.
That poor girl has enough problems
without you hassling her.

QUINN

Just hear me out. Aren't you
curious about how I knew you'd be
here?

REMBRANDT
You're a stalker?

QUINN
Rembrandt, get real! You've been singing at weddings and funerals for almost two decades. Who'd want to stalk you?

Rembrandt grunts in pain.

QUINN (cont'd)
We're friends, Rembrandt. We've known each other for years, you've just forgotten.

REMBRANDT
Son, most of my friends, I've known since I was 25. You'd've been an infant and I don't forget faces.

QUINN
Well, I haven't forgotten you, Rembrandt. I haven't forgotten how you told me about your evening plans.

REMBRANDT
What?

QUINN
You always told me -- after the Giants game, you were coming here to celebrate. Just you. This is where the Topps celebrated their first big hit.

REMBRANDT
How -- I didn't tell anyone I was coming here tonight. No one.

QUINN
You told me lots of things, Remmy.

How you were 17-years-old. Little Rembrandt and the Shandells. Violet was your 29-year-old backup singer. And how you loved her with all your heart.

REMBRANDT

The only people who know that are in the grave by now.

(beat)

Who are you?

QUINN

Your friend. You must feel that, on some level. Look at me. Don't search your memory. Just tell me what you feel when you look at me.

REMBRANDT

I feel the need to slap you with one hand and strangle you with the other! I feel the need to take up a steakknife and give you another scar on your face! I feel --

He stops. Stunned. Stares at Quinn more closely than ever.

REMBRANDT (cont'd)

Q-Ball?!?

Quinn grins. His friend is back.

REMBRANDT (cont'd)

Q-Ball...

QUINN

Rembrandt --

Rembrandt reaches across the table and grabs Quinn by the collar.

REMBRANDT

What fine kind of mess have you gotten us into this time!?!?

Quinn flails and winces as his left elbow ends up in the butter.

CUT TO:

EXT. UNIVERSITY CAMPUS. EVENING

Wade paces back and forth in front of a faculty building, her breath showing in the cold air. She jumps up and down to keep warm.

WADE

Might as well be in Canada.

At a distance, she sees Quinn and Rembrandt approaching. She squints at Quinn's companion.

WADE (cont'd)

Who?

Quinn and Rembrandt are still far from Wade.

REMBRANDT

I remember now -- I was driving to
the game -- but then your giant
hole in the air sucked me and my
Caddy off into iceland! And I don't
mean the country!

QUINN

Yes -- yes!

REMBRANDT

But that's not what happened today.
How can I remember two different
versions of the same day?

They're closer to Wade now.

REMBRANDT (cont'd)

And who's this little pixie?

WADE

Don't call me that, Rembrandt!

Quinn is delighted even as Rembrandt and Wade are astonished.

WADE (cont'd)

Wait -- wait -- I've never seen you
before --

REMBRANDT

But I know you! I know you! Wade!
How can I --

ARTURO (O.C.)

It seems to be an epidemic, Mister
-- Mister Brown.

Arturo has arrived.

REMBRANDT

Oh no. Another one. You're --

QUINN

Come on, you can do it, just let
yourself --

REMBRANDT

Professor!

(beat)

Q-Ball, how many more old friends
do I not remember? This is worse
than the blackout I had in 83.

ARTURO

Let's take the discussion inside,
Mr. Brown. This bracing climate
isn't suited to intellectual
discourse.

As Arturo unlocks the door to the building --

REMBRANDT

I hope I don't owe any of you
people money.

CUT TO:

INT. ARTURO'S CLASSROOM. EVENING

The blackboard shows Quinn's calculations, reproduced in full, with a circle around the problematic subset. Arturo holds a yardstick and stands at the front of the class. Quinn, Wade and Rembrandt sit in seats.

Arturo jabs his stick at the circled section of the calculations.

ARTURO

This morning, I considered Mr. Mallory to be a menace behind the wheel. This afternoon, I considered him to be an absent layabout in need of a wristwatch. This evening, I found him annoying and intrusive.

REMBRANDT

How did I not remember you? Did you always talk this much?

ARTURO

But then Mr. Mallory wrote out his figures and showed me that there is something wrong with this world.

WADE

Yeah, it's running out of natural resources, a third of the world goes without --

ARTURO

Something wrong, Ms. Welles, with the very nature of reality itself. Our existence -- it cannot be.

He lowers the yardstick.

ARTURO (cont'd)

The last 40 years of my life -- the papers I've written -- the theories

I've proposed -- they would be fundamentally different were Van Meer's theorem as we see it written here.

(beat)

Something has altered history, changing nothing but this set of calculations. To entrap us in a world where sliders cannot exist.

REMBRANDT

And we're supposed to just take your word for it that some blackboard nonsense shows us the world isn't real?

(taps desk)

Seems real enough.

ARTURO

Yes. It does. But so does what I feel.

He walks towards Wade.

ARTURO (cont'd)

I don't know you. But I know what I feel and I love you as a daughter.

Wade smiles.

ARTURO (cont'd)

I look at Quinn. I see a son I never had.

Quinn beams.

ARTURO (cont'd)

I look at Mr. Brown. I see a comrade I trust with my life.

(beat)

Mr. Brown, when you look at Quinn -- what do you see?

REMBRANDT

A smug college kid in dire need of
a good kicking, that's what I see.

Arturo seems disappointed.

REMBRANDT (cont'd)

Oh, don't get me wrong, I know who
he is. I wouldn't want to kick him
if I didn't.

QUINN

Thanks.

ARTURO

There we are. We must try to
remember as best we can. Mr.
Brown's memories have begun to come
to the surface thanks to the
presence of familiar faces. Quinn
tells me Wade experienced a sense
of the truth as well.

WADE

I look at all of you and -- I know
we're all connected somehow.

ARTURO

Mr. Mallory, you must tell your
story again. Tell us of how you
created sliding. Tell us of how we
came to travel with you.

And from there, we go to a montage of scenes. We see Quinn talking,
standing in front of the seated Wade, Rembrandt and Arturo. Quinn
gestures. The background of the scene fades to clips of the *Pilot*,
Summer of Love and *Eggheads*, showing various chase scenes.

We see various shots of the four leaping into the vortex, in the
background while Quinn, in the foreground, continues to narrate. We
see shots from *Luck of the Draw* with Quinn falling back onto the grass,
bloody from a bullet.

We see the gang putting their heads together in *Into the Mystic*. We see the dinosaur from *In Dino Veritas*. We see the fight between two Arturos in *Post Traumatic Slide Syndrome* as Quinn mimes some of the punches. We see Kromaggs firing laser beams at the four as they make a dash for it in *Invasion*.

We see the vortex depositing Quinn and the others in front of a phone booth in *As Time Goes By*.

And as these clips unfold in the background, Quinn narrates in the foreground. And the others nod, remembering.

We see the four sliding out onto an airplane in the background, represented through a clip from the third season premiere, *Rules of the Game*. Quinn gestures to narrate, but then --

REMBRANDT
Hang on!!

Abruptly, the airplane vanishes and we're back in the classroom, but the room is darker than it was before Quinn began telling his story.

WADE
As you told us about our slides, I
started remembering.

ARTURO
(too quickly)
As did I.

REMBRANDT
It was more than that. I felt like
we were reliving it.

ARTURO
Yes. And -- and I didn't want to
relive the world of nudists.

A gust of wind can be heard in the background.

QUINN
And the slide where we first landed
on a plane? Only it turned out to

be a flight simulator in an arena
filled with bombs and deathtraps
and --

WADE

I don't remember that.

QUINN

No?

REMBRANDT

As you told it, it all came back to
me, Q-Ball. But not this.

The lights in the classroom flicker.

ARTURO

Which leads us to the next
question. Why does Mr. Mallory
remember past that point while the
rest of us couldn't remember
sliding at all?

QUINN

You said this world was a lie.

REMBRANDT

Did we just find out where reality
ends and the lie begins?

WADE

Is it getting darker in here?

REMBRANDT

It's like the more we remember --

He looks around at the faded scene: the darkness seems to be
closing in around them.

WADE

-- the less real everything here
seems.

ARTURO

I believe the reality we presently
inhabit is subject to our
perceptions. We are rejecting the
world we see --

The darkness seems to enclose them, until the room is gone, and the four are simply standing against a black landscape.

And then there's a small amount of light, and Quinn, Wade, Rembrandt and Arturo find themselves standing in a darkened underground chamber with rocklike walls. There are five metal tables.

The sliders see themselves -- Quinn, Wade, Rembrandt and Arturo -- each of them are lying on one of the tables. Electrodes are attached to their heads. And there is a fifth table, and a figure lies on it, the face hidden in darkness.

ARTURO (cont'd)

We are within a simulation. Within
our minds. But now we perceive the
truth, although we remain trapped.

WADE

How do we get out?

OFFSCREEN VOICE (O.S.)

You don't.

The figure in darkness on the fifth table sits up. Rises, but somehow leaves a second version of itself lying on the table.

The figure steps out of darkness, revealing a voluptuous female figure in a tight green T-shirt, with a contemptuous expression framed in locks of red hair.

QUINN

Maggie!

WADE

Who?

Maggie Beckett smirks at that, and amused hatred burns in her eyes.

MAGGIE

Perhaps you'd prefer a different
face.

And then Maggie's face glows and blurs, and suddenly, her form morphs into QUINN MALLORY.

But not the Quinn we know. This Quinn has short hair, his face is unshaven, and he looks at least three years older. He's clad in a white and sleeveless undershirt. His face has none of Quinn's passion or life, only a cold emptiness that's then broken by a sneer.

WADE

You're not Quinn!

QUINN

I've seen that shapeshifting
pattern before.

(stepping forward)

I can feel the telepathic
distortion in my occipital
lobe. You're a Kromagg.

For a moment, the Kromagg-Quinn's face shifts, showing an inhuman face with a rounded brow, deep-sunken eyes that look like scars, a pair of slits for a nose, and an ape-like jaw, set in a rictus of cruelty. Then the face shifts back to the Kromagg-Quinn's face, but the expression is unchanged.

KROMAGG-AS-QUINN

But what is a Kromagg but a
shifting shadow...

His face morphs again. Now he looks like a younger relative of Quinn's, with long hair and a leaner face. Colin Mallory.

KROMAGG-AS-COLIN

A splinter in the soul...

The face changes again. And now it's Mallory (Robert Floyd).

KROMAGG-AS-MALLORY

A crack in the glass. A speck in
the ointment. Hiding in plain
sight. Waiting and watching,
gathering every fragment of
darkness within your hearts.

The Kromagg shifts back to the form of the unshaven Quinn.

KROMAGG-AS-QUINN
The sum of all your fears.

The Kromagg smirks with Quinn's face, and the four back away from him.

QUINN
You've put us all in some kind of
telepathic prison. You're in our
heads.

KROMAGG-AS-QUINN
Or you're the ones in mine.

QUINN
You kidnapped us all, wiped their
memories, made them think they were
home -- why?

KROMAGG-AS-QUINN
Because you gave up trying to find
a way back home.
(tapping his temple)
We placed a tracking device within
the miniscule cavity of your human
skull.

Quinn shakes. Touches his own head.

KROMAGG-AS-QUINN (cont'd)
And we waited for you to return to
your homeworld. The device would
signal us and we would come for
your Earth and its quantum
translocation technology.

Wade gasps. Rembrandt touches her shoulder. Arturo moves closer to them.

But Quinn stands his ground.

KROMAGG-AS-QUINN (cont'd)
But as time passed, your travels
remained random. You made no
efforts to control your journey.

The Kromagg morphs into a woman with wide eyes and a bob haircut. Diana Davis. She moves towards Quinn.

KROMAGG-AS-DIANA
And so my mission was given. A
single operative would track you to
your present location. Sedate you.
Bring you to this underground
chamber. Enter your minds and let
you see what you wanted most --
home.

The Kromagg leans right into Quinn's face and morphs into Colin Mallory.

KROMAGG-AS-COLIN
I was to wake you up after a time.
You wouldn't remember me. But you
would remember what I gave you and
devote yourselves to finding home
once more.

The Kromagg shifts again to Quinn -- the older, unshaven Quinn in the wifebeater.

KROMAGG-AS-QUINN
And then we'd take your world.

Quinn locks eyes with his own face.

QUINN
It worked on them. Didn't work on
me. Why not?

KROMAGG-AS-QUINN

Curious. The tracking device in your head has a component of exotic matter found in the folds between dimensions. Allowing the transmission of an interdimensional signal. But it was damaged.

(beat)

It had been exposed to a rip in time. It had absorbed a fragment of time itself.

Comprehension dawns on Quinn's face.

QUINN

The rip in time -- the rip in the universe on the world where time ran backwards.

KROMAGG-AS-QUINN

When I looked into your mind, the tracker interfered. It poured time itself into your mind. And instead of what I wanted you to see --

The Kromagg morphs into Colin. Then a red-haired Maggie. Then Mallory. Then Diana. Then Quinn again.

KROMAGG-AS-QUINN (cont'd)

Lying on that table, you saw every quantum possibility. The possible outcome of every choice on every world a Quinn Mallory might potentially visit.

QUINN

Possible futures -- ?

KROMAGG-AS-QUINN

No, you little fool --
(furious)

Every future. A storm of futures.

Bursts of light appear around the sliders and the Kromagg. And within the bursts of light, we see moments appear. Memories. Quinn in a leather jacket and blue T-shirt, standing in a cemetery (*The Guardian*).

Quinn in a dark space staring at a beaker holding a flickering flame (*The Fire Within*).

Quinn in a wooded area, crossing swords with an enemy (*The Prince of Slides*).

Quinn dressed as a Christmas elf in a shopping mall (*Season's Greedings*).

Quinn, Wade, Rembrandt and Arturo look at the real versions of themselves, lying on the tables, and they turn their attention to the fifth table. On it, they can now see the figure. It's a Kromagg.

KROMAGG-AS-QUINN (cont'd)
(spitting out the words)
Everything any double of you could
do, anything any one of you might
ever be -- all of it running
through your mind and mine. And me,
forced to endure an infinity of
worlds dominated by your species --
evolutionary deviants and filth.

The Kromagg glares at Quinn.

KROMAGG-AS-QUINN (cont'd)
Intolerable. My consciousness split
in half, inhabited by vermin. I
couldn't stop the storm, but I
could strain it --
(a sadistic smile)
And while you were receiving an
infinity of possibilities, I could
decide which ones you saw.

QUINN
What --

KROMAGG-AS-QUINN

And I made sure you saw only the
worst.

The Kromagg shifts into the form of Dr. Oberon Geiger.

KROMAGG-AS-GEIGER

I found the 37 Quinn Mallorys who'd
suffered most. Including a Quinn
who'd lost his teacher. One whose
best friend was taken away. One who
no longer had a body of his own.
One who watched his last companion
slide to his death. I combined
their lives. Added in details from
the minds of your friends. Then I
made you live it out.

(with relish)

And I saw you in your wretched
state and laughed.

The Kromagg becomes Maggie with red hair.

KROMAGG-AS-MAGGIE

Finally, the tracker burnt out from
the temporal stream and you joined
your friends. Yet I remain trapped
in this half-life you consider
home.

(beat)

But watch.

And then suddenly, the scene around the gang and the Kromagg is
replaced by the underground floor of a military base.

The sliders find themselves watching a FLASHBACK from *The Exodus Part 2*
unfold before them, seeing THEMSELVES from a third person point of
view.

In the flashback, Quinn, Wade, Rembrandt and Arturo are standing
together, seemingly frozen in time as a gunshot bursts from the barrel
of a gun.

Our sliders watch as Arturo in the flashback cries out and falls.

Our Arturo covers his mouth in horror as he watches the three remaining sliders gather around his own body.

REMBRANDT

No!!

KROMAGG-AS-MAGGIE

The worst of your worlds. The
best of mine. And none of you will
ever make it home.

Arturo watches the scene of his own death unfold, sees the sliders begging him not to die.

KROMAGG-AS-MAGGIE (cont'd)

You trained your pupil to be a
scientist.

The scene shifts again: the sliders now watch Quinn and Rembrandt running over a grassy hill, carrying guns (in footage from *Dinoslide*). And the gun-toting Quinn sprays gunfire with a look of psychotic rage on his face. Hungry for blood.

KROMAGG-AS-MAGGIE (cont'd)

Look at him, Professor. With your
death, he became a killer obsessed
with revenge.

Arturo is shocked by the aggressive, murderous Quinn firing his weapon madly. He shakes his head in denial, but he can't look away.

And the scene shifts again: now our heroes and the Kromagg are watching a scene of Quinn and Wade in a medical bay. Quinn screams abuse at Wade (in footage from *The Breeder*). The dialogue is unintelligible, but Quinn is clearly angry and Wade is clearly hurt.

KROMAGG-AS-MAGGIE (cont'd)

Not much of a leader without his
Professor. Which means that you
were a failure as a teacher.

Arturo casts a saddened look at Quinn and Quinn turns away.

KROMAGG-AS-MAGGIE (cont'd)
But the Professor's fate was
nothing compared to poor little
Wade.

She turns her attention to Wade. And then the Kromagg changes form again -- still Maggie, but with black hair.

Now the scene around everyone shifts again, to a gray and bleak cell. The sliders watch another scene unfold: in this flashback, Wade is being hauled out of a cell by Kromaggs, screaming for Rembrandt (in footage from *Requiem*).

In the flashback, Rembrandt sits in his cell, unresponsive, covering his ears.

WADE
(watching the scene)
No. Rembrandt, please, do
something!

The Rembrandt of *Requiem* does nothing as Wade is taken away. And the Rembrandt watching can't look on. He buries his head in his hands.

KROMAGG-AS-MAGGIE
(to Wade)
They never missed you, you know.
They never even *looked* for you.

The scene changes to show Quinn, Maggie and Rembrandt laughing as they come out of a theatre in *World Killer*.

KROMAGG-AS-MAGGIE (cont'd)
You're in a rape camp, and there
your friends are, not a care in
this world or any other

The scene is altered once more: now it shows a flashback from *Mother and Child*.

Quinn, Wade, Rembrandt and Arturo observe a scene with Quinn, Rembrandt, Colin Mallory and Maggie standing on a hilltop.

REMBRANDT-IN-FLASHBACK
(grabbing Quinn's arm)
If Wade is back there, we gotta do
something!

Quinn-in-the-flashback shows no reaction beyond indifference, and pulls his arm from Rembrandt's grasp.

QUINN-IN-FLASHBACK
I don't know if we have enough
time.

And Quinn-in-the-flashback walks off without a single glance behind him. This Quinn walks right past our Wade, and an agonized Wade looks on, stricken.

She stares at this future Quinn as he turns his back on her and moves away. She reaches out to him, but he's too far away now. She turns to our Quinn, accusatory and enraged.

KROMAGG-AS-MAGGIE
He never loved you. He just felt
guilty. But out of sight -- out of
mind.

WADE
(choking on grief and
anger)
Quinn -- how could you -- no. I
won't believe it.

KROMAGG-AS-MAGGIE
He won't deny it.

And then Quinn approaches Wade.

QUINN
You're right. I won't. That is what
I did.

Rembrandt and Arturo are stunned.

QUINN (cont'd)
Because somehow -- I must have
known -- that whatever was
happening wasn't real.

The Kromagg-in-Maggie's form suddenly steps back, as Quinn moves forward and faces her.

QUINN (cont'd)
You're pathetic. Infinite
possibilities in both our minds --
and all you could use it for was
torture.
(beat)
And you got sloppy. You combined my
lives in ways that didn't make
sense. I stopped believing in the
life you gave me.
(looking at Wade,
Rembrandt and Arturo)
And I ended up in theirs.

Quinn lays a hand on Arturo's shoulder. His fingers brush against Wade's and she grips his tight. Wade takes Rembrandt's hand.

QUINN (cont'd)
We took our memories back from you --
and now we'll take the rest.

He glares at the surrounding scene. And from his will, reality seems to crack. The hillside is gone, replaced by better memories. Around the sliders, moments of the past unfold.

Among these moments, we see Quinn hugging Wade (from *Pilot*). Then Quinn and Wade comforting a stricken Rembrandt (from *The King is Back*).

We see Rembrandt and Arturo fishing (from *Luck of the Draw*). We see Wade wrapped in a blanket, carried warmly in Quinn's arms (from *Obsession*). Followed by a memory of Quinn and Wade in front of the Mallory house, kissing (*Post Traumatic Slide Syndrome*).

We see Quinn shaking the Professor's hand (*As Time Goes By*).

And we see a vision of Rembrandt and Arturo rushing to meet Wade and Quinn. Wade hugs Arturo and Arturo lifts her into the air as he embraces her (*The Young and the Relentless*).

The scenes fade to reveal the four sliders now. Standing in the room with five tables, facing the Kromagg.

QUINN (cont'd)

You're no match for the four of us.

The Kromagg-as-Maggie howls with rage and shifts back into his natural form.

His hideous teeth bared, he launches himself at Quinn, his hands ready to tear Quinn to shreds. His cry of fury chills the bone. His fingertips are within an inch of Quinn's face.

QUINN (cont'd)

No.

Before the Kromagg can make contact, the scene shifts slightly, and the Kromagg vanishes.

Only the Kromagg on the fifth table remains, sedated and still.

Quinn looks to his three friends.

QUINN (cont'd)

We brought our memories back to us,
we can wake ourselves up too. Tell
yourselves. This isn't real. We're
lying on the table.

WADE

This isn't real. We're --

ARTURO

-- lying on the table.

REMBRANDT

This isn't --

QUINN
Real. We're lying on the table.

ARTURO
This is not --

CUT TO:

REMBRANDT SITTING UP

And pulling the cables from his head.

REMBRANDT
Real?

Next to him, Quinn, Wade and Arturo are sitting up as well.

QUINN
Yes.

They're all sitting on tables in a SHADOWY CAVE, dimly lit by some lighting apparatus next to the tables.

Quinn pulls himself off the table and walks to the fifth table with the Kromagg lying on it. The others trail behind him.

WADE
He's still asleep.

Then suddenly, the Kromagg's form on the table shifts, and the Kromagg looks like Quinn.

KROMAGG-AS-QUINN
(mumbling)
Time to put... a slug on the barbie...

The Kromagg shifts again, turning into Maggie.

KROMAGG-AS-MAGGIE
(mumbling)
Get your stinkin' paw off me.

Shifts to Colin.

KROMAGG-AS-COLIN
(muttering)
Oh, this is truly inspired.

Shifts to Diana Davis.

KROMAGG-AS-DIANA
(a mumble)
It's one of the predicted
algorithms in the EPR paradox.

Shifts to the form of Mallory.

KROMAGG-AS-MALLORY
(a whisper)
I'd call that a major fluctuation.

The sliders watch, fascinated, as the Kromagg continues to switch forms, delivering quotes from Season 3 - 5 episodes in a sleepy voice.

WADE
What's wrong with him -- what's
wrong with it?

Quinn turns away.

QUINN
He gave me the worst of all worlds
he could find. Now he's going to
live through all of them --
forever.

Quinn finds the timer on a small table. He flips it open.

QUINN (cont'd)
Leave him. We've got 15 minutes to
the slide.

He looks about and spots an opening in the cave wall. And he glances back at the Kromagg muttering its strange remarks.

QUINN (cont'd)
(gesturing to the tunnel)
This leads to the surface. Let's
get the hell out of here.

The four of them move through a mouth in the wall, and into a tunnel.

They start walking up the path. A glimmer of light is visible at a far distance from where they are. They advance towards it.

WADE
I feel like I was home just a
minute ago. And before that -- I
think we were getting dinner?
(frowning)
The timer said we had two weeks.

QUINN
And we've been unconscious for most
of it. That Kromagg must've used
his telepathy to adjust our bodily
functions to keep us from --

REMBRANDT
Really don't want the details,
Q-Ball!
(shaking his head)
I thought we were home for real
this time and I didn't even know
I'd been away. And now we're lost
again.

ARTURO
Remember, Mister Brown, that home
isn't just a place, it is the
people that you're with.
(after a moment)
There are some advantages to this
incident. The tracking device in
Mr. Mallory's head has been
destroyed.
(adding)
And of the four of us, he's the one

who suffered most. I'd say that's
only fair.

Rembrandt smiles at that. They keep walking. The light ahead is
getting closer.

WADE

Quinn -- we just have a day of new
memories. But you have three new
years of sliding in your head.

QUINN

It's not staying. It's already
beginning to fade away.

ARTURO

I would consider that a gift.

WADE

It just scares me. What Quinn
experienced? All of us getting lost
or dying? How do we know that won't
happen as we keep sliding?

ARTURO

Ms. Welles -- our captor wanted to
show Quinn the worst his doubles
could experience. And of an
infinite number of Quinns, he only
found 37 suited to his purpose.
Which means the rest have futures
brighter than we can imagine.

QUINN

Let's hope.

ARTURO

(a smile)

And whatever happens, we will face
it together. We should be --

Arturo trips over a stone in the tunnel and falls on his face.

Quinn's eyes narrow in a calculating way.

WADE
Professor!

Wade and Rembrandt rush to the Professor, but Quinn waves them off.

QUINN
Give the man some dignity, would
you? We'll meet you at the top.

Wade wants to protest, but then Quinn hands her the timer. She takes it and turns away, looking back reluctantly.

REMBRANDT
I can see the light at the end of
the tunnel. We're almost out of
here!

He and Wade set off. Their voices can be heard at a distance.

REMBRANDT (O.S.)
Too bad our trip here got
interrupted. For a world where you
go to jail for talking out loud,
the music was really good.

WADE (O.S.)
Might be for the best. I don't
think the Professor could've made
it two weeks without hearing the
sound of his own voice.

As Wade and Rembrandt's voices fade away, Quinn helps the Professor up. He watches Wade and Rembrandt pass out of sight.

ARTURO
A moment to catch my breath, if you
please. Thank you, my --

And then Quinn slams Arturo against the wall of the tunnel. Before Arturo can call out, Quinn slaps a hand over Arturo's mouth, silencing him.

Quinn puts a knee into Arturo's stomach. Arturo chokes and Quinn lets him drop to the ground.

ARTURO (cont'd)
-- what -- ?

QUINN
That Kromagg was feeding details from your minds into mine. And in my mind, he added this little factoid -- he said that Rembrandt had been in the Navy. Where would he get an idea like that? Remmy can't even swim.

Arturo is breathing hard, trying to recover, not responding.

QUINN (cont'd)
(leaning down to Arturo)
He'd get that detail from someone from a world where Rembrandt actually was in the Navy.
(a cold whisper)
From you. You're not our Professor.
You're the double.

Quinn grabs Arturo by the shirt. Hauls him up.

QUINN (cont'd)
That Kromagg tried to steal our lives, but you stole the Professor's first!

ARTURO
I'm sorry -- I never thought --

QUINN
Shut up and listen.

And he whispers angrily in Arturo's ear.

QUINN (cont'd)

I saw the future. I remember all of
it. I've seen what happens without
you.

(beat)

This team needs its Professor
Arturo. And now that's you.

Quinn releases Arturo.

QUINN (cont'd)

Wade and Rembrandt. They can never
know. Do you understand me?

Arturo is shaken. Frightened. But he holds up his hands in a placating
manner, and nods.

QUINN (cont'd)

The Professor left you big shoes to
fill.

(giving Arturo a moment)

Go on. They're waiting for us.

Arturo, shamed and grateful, begins moving up the tunnel.

Quinn stands still for a moment, glancing back one last time at the
chamber he's leaving behind.

FADE TO:

EXT. HILLSIDE. MORNING

It's a beautiful morning. The hillside overlooks a bay of water that
stretches out to the horizon. Wade and Rembrandt admire the sunrise,
whispering, chuckling. They bask in the warmth.

Arturo emerges from the cave and joins them. Wade runs to him,
brushing dirt from his clothes like he's a boy, and he smiles, letting
her. Rembrandt looks on and grins.

Quinn comes from the cave, calm and serene. He looks at his friends,
happy, united, together once more. Having never been apart.

Wade raises the timer. She presses the button and triggers the vortex, and its silver and blue light flashes across their faces.

REMBRANDT

I've never been so happy to see
that thing!

WADE

Oh, please. You say that every
week!

Rembrandt laughs and dives into the vortex. Wade gives Quinn a smile and then skip-jumps after Rembrandt, disappearing in a flash of light.

Arturo casts an uncertain expression at Quinn. Quinn inclines his head towards the vortex, urging him on, and Arturo hurls himself into the void, vanishing.

And as Quinn himself runs towards the gateway --

QUINN

We're back.

And he leaps...

Only the beginning.

"This show is flawed. It's entirely a product of the time it was created. Its concept is great, but it never decided how it wanted to follow through with it. At the end

of it all, when we carve through the things that make the show terrible, we're left with Quinn, Wade, Rembrandt and Arturo. Eventually, we're left with even less.

"But these four people struck on a chemistry that was frankly magical. It was warm and loving but never alienating. You could be friends with them if you wanted. And we are friends with them in a way. We care about them, and we want to stay with them through thick and thin whether that refers to what's going on in the show or behind it."

- Annie Fish in [Think of a Roulette Wheel](#)

"I have a very trippy, surrealistic show in mind involving the Kromaggs. It wouldn't be us landing in the middle of another invasion; it would start in a way that you wouldn't know it was a Kromagg show.

"We must be careful that it's handled with taste and doesn't devolve into some kind of monster show sequel. And, yes, we will eventually find out which slider was implanted."

- Tracy Tormé on a sequel to "Invasion"

"Slide Effects": The Officially Hypothetical Series Finale of Sliders

Review by Darren Mooney (in some parallel universe out there)

*The following is an exercise in self-reflection where the screenwriter of ["Slide Effects"](#) criticizes his own writing in the voice of reviewer Darren Mooney of [them0vieblog.com](#), who did **not** actually write this review.*

The *Sliders* screenplay, "Slide Effects," is a relatively lean beast.

Quinn wakes up to find himself home. It's 1994; sliding doesn't exist; Wade, Rembrandt and Arturo are alive and well. Only Quinn remembers sliding and the last five seasons and he thinks that he's losing his

mind. The scenario is revealed as a Kromagg simulation, the Sliders escape and slide off to new adventures.

It is a direct and focused story, tightly plotted in a way *Sliders* so singularly wasn't throughout its run, and that focus is both to its credit and a major flaw.

Scattered Attention

Sliders always seemed to struggle to map out a clear direction or identity for itself. Threads like the FBI searching for the Sliders or the Professor's son never amounted to anything. This problem was most obvious in Seasons 4 and 5 as Marc Scott Zicree, Bill Dial and David Peckinpah rewrote the mythology from one story to the next.

All the elements introduced in "Genesis" with the Kromaggs setting a trap for Quinn were dismissed with a line of dialogue in "Mother and Child." Freeing Earth Prime was reduced to a footnote in "Revelations" and "Strangers and Comrades." Even "Requiem," a story presumably about the fate of Wade Welles, didn't commit to killing her off.

Six Hundred and Seventy Three

In contrast, "Slide Effects" has a very clear idea of where it is going and has no room for distractions in its 46 pages of script. This is even more apparent when looking at the original version of "Slide Effects" which is a total of 673 words from series co-creator Tracy Tormé; a note he wrote in 1996 and later he sent to EarthPrime.com as part of the 2009 interview.

Tracy Tormé wrote:

*A Kromagg follow up. But FOX doesn't want a Kromagg show. Make it look like it isn't.
Title: Possible/Temporary Slide Effects/Slide Effects.*

Start the episode: it looks like the Sliders got home. Everything is exactly the way it was. It's still even 1994. Extremely surreal. Wade's at Doppler, Rembrandt is working with his agent, the Professor is teaching.

Quinn is the only one that remembers sliding. He feels like he's losing his mind. Ryan, Gillian, Sid, Logan, all familiar and important characters are here. Quinn is relentlessly trying to prove to his friends that they actually went sliding. Make it look like it's not a Kromagg show. Then bring the Kromaggs back in the end.

From these generalities, *Sliders* fan writer Ibrahim Ng wrote a 46 page script that reflects the taut, trim plot of the series co-creator. There is no time for exploration or improvisation. Everything in the "Slide Effects" script serves a single purpose: resurrecting Quinn, Wade, Rembrandt and Arturo and restoring the original premise of the show. This affords "Slide Effects" a purity and energy that was severely lacking in Seasons 3 - 5 as cast members and writers left or lost interest.

Tribute

Notably, "Slide Effects" is specifically a tribute to Tracy Tormé. As a follow-up to the Season 5 cliffhanger, "Slide Effects" doesn't address the events of "The Seer." And yet, "Slide Effects" resolves everything -- and nothing -- by offering a bridge from the fifth season back to the second season and back to the version of *Sliders* that Tracy Tormé built and would want restored.

Every page of the script basks in this thrill of apparent canonicity, in the validation that comes from being a script that originated from the co-creator of the series and carries out his wishes. The title page of Ng's document declares that "Slide Effects" is "a story by Tracy Tormé" and Ng buries his own writing credit in the summary. It's an overture urging fans to accept the subsequent pages as a step above fan fiction or media tie-in novels (not that *Sliders* has any novels).

"Slide Effects" declares itself canon to *Sliders* and counts on fans to accept it so.

Legitimacy

The 46 page script was written in 2011, a time of increasing appetite for legitimacy within fan communities particularly as it related to licensed products. Perhaps owing to the ever-increasing importance of "the canon" in popular culture, fans expected significance and importance to their media tie-ins.

These expectations of canon come in all shapes and sizes, but they mostly tend to place an emphasis on the "worthiness" of the content for an adult audience. There had to be a sense of weight and heft to *Doctor Who* audioplays and *Star Trek* novels in order to justify the audience's interest and expense, either through being decreed canonical or in being canon in lieu of any new TV shows or movies.

That appeal for legitimacy is reflected in the way "Slide Effects" claims significance through its (passingly) direct involvement by the co-creator.

It is a stamp of approval, marking "Slide Effects" as vital to *Sliders* fans and tangibly essential regardless of its quality or artistic value, although in this case, it was the fan writer and not the creator who labelled "Slide Effects" so.

By Association and Authenticity

To be fair, Ng may seek to declare canonicity through a paltry association, but he also makes tremendous effort to assert "Slide Effects" as important through the voices of the characters. The attention given to recreating a print approximation of performances from Jerry O'Connell, Sabrina Lloyd, Cleavant Derricks and John Rhys-Davies is astonishing, detailing the specific intonations and line deliveries of each actor with the script providing not just the words that the actors would speak, but the deliveries and the body language and the acting.

At points, Ng inserts pauses and breaks into Quinn Mallory's dialogue to capture O'Connell's precise pausing and takes the time to describe a scar on the actor's face. The lyricism of Cleavant Derricks' voice

is present in Rembrandt with a slight exaggeration that was never in the teleplays but certainly in the performance. John Rhys-Davies' booming voice can be heard in every line for Arturo.

Interestingly, Ng expressed difficulty with writing dialogue for Wade Welles.

Ibrahim Ng wrote:

I watched "As Time Goes By" and "The Guardian" for Quinn's voice, I watched "The King is Back" to get Cleavant's intonations, I watched "Eggheads" for John's measured tone and also his annoyance. I wrote all the dialogue in the script with whatever sentiments and plot details were needed, then I went back and started rewriting each line for each actor, although I barely had to change anything for Quinn and Professor Arturo.

Rembrandt, I was careful with. I was worried that he might seem a racist caricature. I focused on trying to make him the most normal member of the group with a normal person's reactions to everything, filtered through Cleavant's comedic sensibilities.

But I couldn't get Wade's voice in my head; I couldn't quite identify what made her lines or line deliveries distinct. I needed more of Sabrina Lloyd's voice, so I ordered a DVD of her movie Universal Signs in which she's a lead, thinking I could listen to her voice with my eyes shut and then hear Wade through her. The DVD arrived and it was a silent movie with no spoken dialogue, so I had to go back to the drawing board. Eventually, I found the film Dopamine and identified that Sabrina had a certain open gentleness in her performance, but also an open defiance in crisis or conflict.

It was really important to get all the voices right because if you can read the dialogue and hear the actors saying it as you read it, the script seems genuine and real.

Altered Purpose

That is wise, because despite "Slide Effects" being a supposedly faithful adaptation of Tracy Tormé's story idea, the "Slide Effects" screenplay makes a noticeable divergence from the creator's intentions.

Ng has given his own separate account of receiving the "Slide Effects" plot. Tormé shared it with him in an informal online conversation via instant messaging in 2000, shortly after the cancellation of the series.

Ibrahim Ng wrote:

I asked him how he would resolve the cliffhanger of "The Seer." Tormé said he preferred not even knowing what the cliffhanger was; he hadn't watched the show since Season 3 and didn't want to. Production sent him scripts for Seasons 4 and 5; he put them away and didn't even open the envelopes because he knew reading them would just make him angry. So -- I asked him what he would do if he had one more episode of Sliders.

He said he'd open with Quinn waking up in his bedroom, time rewound to the Pilot. All the original Sliders are home, time's been reset to before sliding and only Quinn remembers it. The entire scenario turns out to be a Kromagg trick along with every episode after Tormé left the show, so everything after "The Guardian" is erased.

"Slide Effects" doesn't actually wrap up the Season 3 - 5 plots and the reason why is clear: Tracy Tormé had no idea what those plots were nor was he interested in finding out, nor could he have had advance knowledge of episodes from 1997 -- 2000 when conceiving this outline in 1996.

Repurposed

Instead, Tormé's plot was focused on creating a pitch for a second Kromagg episode that would not explicitly mention the Kromaggs when pitching it to the Kromagg-averse FOX Network. FOX would have refused to approve any Kromagg story. But they might have approved a pitch that asked: what if the Sliders find that time has been rewound to the Pilot? And what if only Quinn remembers sliding?

Tormé had no familiarity with the latter seasons, had no interest in watching them, and no version of "Slide Effects" scripted by Tormé would have hinged upon confronting those latter seasons in any fashion.

Framework

As such, there is something endearing watching Ng struggle within a pre-existing plot to achieve aims for which it was never intended. In spite of its adulterated origins, there is a clarity to "Slide Effects" that resounds. There is no parallel Earth explored in this script: it's set on Earth Prime and the only parallel universe that features, a world where verbal communication was stigmatized against, is referred to only in a few lines of dialogue.

Everything else is very consciously building towards the Kromagg explanation for Seasons 3 - 5 and how those episodes fit within the larger tapestry of *Sliders* continuity while ensuring that Quinn, Wade, Rembrandt and Arturo are front and center.

At times, the story can feel truly overstuffed with the sheer quantity of plot content in "Slide Effects." It addresses the Kromagg invasion, the dead characters, the Kromagg Prime backstory and even throws in addressing the question of which Professor slid, none of which was ever intended by Tormé's plot.

Three Visions, One Story

Compounding the issue, there is the simple fact that *Sliders* was effectively three radically different television shows during its five season run. The first two seasons were an anthology series akin to *The Outer Limits* and *The Twilight Zone* albeit with a regular cast. The third season was a horror-action series. The fourth and fifth were a studio-bound cable action series. Any follow-up has to address these discontinuities and this is the biggest challenge that Ng faces with "Slide Effects."

Is the script to reconcile the different aspects of the show? Or will it put one above the others? When it comes to scripting a follow-up or sequel, how does one decide what constitutes the "real" version of the show? It seems a fool's errand to try to fashion them into a cohesive arc. As such, "Slide Effects" faces a considerable handicap.

37 Lives

In order to fit all of these details together, Ng offers an explanation with careful setup, so much so that it feels like his 46 pages exist to rewrite the series rather than expanding or continuing its story. The explanation is that Seasons 3 - 5 were the amalgamated experiences of 37 Quinn doubles, each with disparate and contradictory experiences in sliding, and with the most traumatic experiences brought to the forefront. This is why Seasons 3 - 5 showed the Sliders dying one by one with any discrepancies declared to be the result of merging 37 lives into a single Quinn's story.

It is a very dismissive approach to a complicated mythology, separating Seasons 1 - 2 from 3 - 5 and declaring the last three seasons to be other Sliders' problems and no business of the 'real' Sliders.

Simplified Shorthand

The emphasis on recategorizing the history of *Sliders* finds "Slide Effects" employing a sort of shorthand in its invocations towards the past. There are references to the Kromaggs and allusions to their shapeshifting, but no acknowledgement of how their appearances were revised for Season 4. The script is careful to describe an "Invasion" era Kromagg with no further comment on the matter.

There is no concern raised that the Rembrandt of the possible futures, the Rembrandt of "The Seer," remains without resolution in his arc. There is no direct acknowledgement of the Professor's terminal illness in "The Guardian" which this Professor could still develop.

In fact, the script for "Slide Effects" sharply diverges from the notes and Tormé's wishes in two areas: the breaking point at which the Kromagg simulation began is "As Time Goes By" in the script. Tormé intended for the separation to be after "The Guardian." The script also omits any mention of Logan St. Clair despite Tormé specifying her presence in his outline.

It is a clear effort on Ng's part to omit two unresolved threads: Logan's pursuit of the Sliders and the Professor's terminal illness -- without referring to either one.

Self-Serving

This simplification is not necessarily a bad thing. Ng draws from the most iconic and recognisable elements of *Sliders* that permeate the show's five season run. All the Season 3 - 5 regulars appear in "Slide Effects," but as imagery created by a Kromagg's telepathic powers creating illusions instead of in-character and in-person, which really helps to keep the story tight. Perhaps anything more would weigh the story down. This efficiency also helps to declutter the mythology somewhat. Seasons 3 - 5 were dominated by unresolved plots and "Slide Effects" sets them aside.

"Slide Effects" is centered on the original cast, but it can seem somewhat self-serving.

Even as a potential Season 4 premiere, the plot alone is a way for Tormé to assert that only his tenure on the show is the 'real' version of *Sliders* and that any episodes aired during his departure are doubles and alternates. Ng's script pages magnify this with dialogue specifically to indicate those futures that aired on FOX and the Sci-Fi Channel could never happen to Tormé's versions of Quinn, Wade, Rembrandt and Arturo; that could never happen to the one, true *Sliders*.

A Tangled Web

As "Slide Effects" cuts through three years of *Sliders* continuity, it feels like continuity porn. At the halfway mark, Ng stops using Tormé's "Slide Effects" plot to tell a story, but as a means to retroactively "tidy up" storylines that everyone (from broadcaster to viewer) would rather forget.

I'm a bit wishy-washy on the issue of continuity -- I don't believe that basic continuity excludes an audience, but I don't believe that it makes for a good story crutch. It's nice to build on what came before, but exposition and elaboration over events that happened in the past are unnecessary at the best of times.

Minutia

Including a throwaway line which explains that Arturo likes *Jeopardy* adds personality and doesn't detract from the story at hand. On the other hand, devoting 23 pages of a 46 page script to explaining how every crazy event in the *Sliders* history was the result of a Kromagg plot serves to kill momentum and would have likely confused viewers if this script as Ibrahim Ng writes it had ever been filmed.

I've argued before and I'll argue again that this focus on specific minutia is damaging to science fiction television, playing to diehard fans and locking out a general audience.

If a kid asked me to recommend a *Sliders* episode and I had them read "Slide Effects," I can assure you that they'd probably never go near the show again in their life. "Slide Effects" isn't intended as an episode for new viewers. It's for fans who know their episodes inside out and that is in stark contradiction to Tracy Tormé's plot which made this story a season premiere, an introduction for new viewers by taking them back to the beginning of the show.

Don't Dwell

Television shows make mistakes. Frequently. Unlike with movie series featuring James Bond or Batman, TV writers generally can't just reboot after a mistake. They have to work around the mistake that they've made in order to steer the story in a worthwhile direction. Even in comic books, Batman's abrasive personality is revealed as a nervous breakdown and Green Lantern becoming a mass murderer is explained as his being possessed by a primordial fear demon.

However, I don't see the benefit to anyone in dwelling on those mistakes or seeking to waste valuable time addressing gaps that nobody cares about. I'll bet *Sliders* fans would have been glad to see the end

of those particular storylines, and certainly didn't want to see them again -- and would have been just as happy if "Slide Effects" were the more character-oriented, introductory, general audience script that Tracy Tormé would have wanted.

Forward

Killing Arturo was a mistake. Making Quinn a mythical chosen one in an interdimensional war was a poor choice. Dispatching Wade was a wrong turn. Feeling that *Sliders* was out-of-touch with an 18 - 25 audience, FOX tried to clean out the cast. The producers turned Quinn Mallory into a sociopathic action star, introduced Maggie Beckett and had the *Sliders*' frame of reference with the audience -- Earth Prime -- turned into a Kromagg outpost.

All of this could have been forgotten even and especially with a more faithful version of the "Slide Effects" plot, filmed and aired as a season premiere. It could have been implied that Seasons 3, 4 and 5 were part of the Kromagg scenario without being overt. Those seasons were in the past, best forgotten about. After all, we don't spend a few hours everyday remarking on how stupid parachute pants were -- we just don't wear them anymore. Life moves on.

A Wizard Did It

"Slide Effects" makes a valiant attempt to retroactively "fix" bad decisions. And, in fairness, the detailed replays of Season 3 - 5 episodes are the right maneuver to attempt something like that. "Slide Effects" writes off those seasons as not 'really' being the *Sliders*' adventures but the adventures of their doubles. If you've watched *The Simpsons*, you'll recognise that he's pretty much saying "a wizard did it" -- which is just lazy writing.

However, that's not the problem. The problem is that "Slide Effects" spends 23 pages out of 46 explaining to us exactly which wizard did what. Quinn's out of character behaviour towards a captured Wade in "Mother and Child"? Quinn subconsciously didn't believe in the situation; any subsequent jerkiness was the result of his detaching from the Kromagg simulation. "I stopped believing in the life you gave me." Rembrandt suddenly having a Navy background? It came from the false Arturo's memories and was folded into Quinn's amalgamated timeline. "You got sloppy," says Quinn. "You combined my life in ways that didn't make sense."

It's exactly the kind of insular continuity obsession that alienates mainstream viewers from science fiction and fantasy television. Anyone reading my reviews of *The X-Files* will know that I have enough problems with storylines dependent on contradictory references to past episodes to make sense. Here the storyline is dependent on fragments from three seasons of *Sliders*. I'm not interested in the scheme of a master villain which exists in the form of a convoluted set of plots for a troubled TV show.

Storytelling Sacrifices

As much as "Slide Effects" feels tighter and focused than the three seasons that preceded it, it also feels like it sacrifices a lot of storytelling opportunities. In order to condense Tormé's plot and addressing all the unresolved arcs down to 46 pages, Ng has to make a number of storytelling sacrifices and cut off a

number of promising ideas at their root. There are any number of clever premises at work in "Slide Effects" that the script rushes past in order to get to that final confrontation between the Sliders and the Kromagg agent.

The most obvious of these forsaken premises is the very idea of Quinn remembering sliding where no one else does. The possibility of building a whole character arc around Quinn finding himself home and trying to rebuild sliding is intriguing. There is something dramatic and compelling about Quinn having to decide whether or not he might want to slide again and whether or not he should bring his friends with him on this second effort or leave them home and safe.

In addition, even within the first two seasons of *Sliders*, Wade, Rembrandt and Arturo had changed significantly. By resetting the clock back to the Pilot, "Slide Effects" invites them to contemplate whether or not their character development has been worth their nomadic and homeless situation in the multiverse.

The script fails to delve into these questions, leaving the premise of the Sliders finding themselves home somewhat underexplored.

Rush to Reset

The abbreviated length of "Slide Effects" undercuts its own premise significantly. There is no sense of Quinn struggling with finding himself home only to lose it again. Earth Prime is established in a single page of script that exists primarily to have Quinn quote Mallory's final line from "The Seer" and realize that he is home. The confrontation between the Sliders and the Kromagg pays no mind to the characters' development between the Pilot and "As Time Goes By" and is strictly concerned with the traumas of Seasons 3, 4 and 5.

"Slide Effects" never fully capitalises on the potential of its plot, hurrying towards a reset instead of exploring the characters' mindsets.

Passengers

There are other issues with this compressed pace. Most obviously, every Slider who isn't Quinn Mallory feels like something of a passenger across the arc. Wade's role is to send Quinn to a therapist; Rembrandt contributes nothing to the story beyond being part of the quartet and making numerous funny remarks. Both are granted little time to develop their own agendas or motivations. The Professor leads the charge in exposition, but aside from that, only Quinn Mallory seems to have any real agency.

No Soft Sell

In fact, there are a whole host of ideas that are broached and ignored. The Kromagg declares the Earth Prime illusion to be a gift of what the Sliders want most, their heart's desire -- and the emotional cost of rejecting it is never discussed except in a joke from Rembrandt. In fact, the idea of a softer sell with the Kromagg tempting the Sliders with the choice to stay in the illusion in exchange for helping the

Kromaggs invade the real Earth Prime never comes up at all, an odd lapse for these master manipulators.

No Reason

The rationale behind the Kromagg forcing Quinn to endure the most traumatic experiences of 37 Quinn doubles is also strangely non-existent. The desired outcome is clear: "Slide Effects" seeks to acknowledge Seasons 3 - 5 but then write them away. But the Kromagg telepathically inflicting Seasons 3 - 5 on Quinn is in direct contradiction to the Kromagg's stated mission: to give Quinn and friends happy memories of Earth Prime to spur them to stop sliding randomly and find a way to locate their home coordinates so that their homecoming would be followed by a Kromagg invasion fleet.

It's at this point that Ibrahim Ng's effort to rework Tracy Tormé's 672 word story idea into a resurrection for the original *Sliders* shows its greatest strain. The plot from Tormé only highlighted the Earth Prime in 1994 scenario as part of the Kromagg simulation. Ng attempts to extend that to every *Sliders* episode after Season 2 and Tormé's framework stretches at the seams with the effort to contain far more than it was ever meant to hold.

Likely, had Tormé's "Slide Effects" aired as a Season 4 premiere, any dismissal of previous episodes would have been done without specific references to the past, a level of vagary that Ng's script cannot countenance in its wish for closure.

Bait and Switch

And despite seemingly offering closure, "Slide Effects"' final pages work against any sense of an ending, instead leaving off with an extension of the original status quo: Quinn, Wade, Rembrandt and Arturo are still lost, still exploring the multiverse, still searching for a way back home -- albeit without the threat of the Kromaggs and their tracking device for Earth Prime invasion. And also without Logan St. Clair chasing them or the Professor dying from a fatal disease.

Readers could be forgiven for being surprised when "Slide Effects" declares itself to be a new beginning for a new run of *Sliders* episodes that will never be written. *Sliders* was not good at endings and even "Slide Effects" offers an amusing nod to this tendency.

Non-Ending Ending

In a very real way, "Slide Effects" might just be the most satisfying non-ending ending to *Sliders* ever written. There is a quick glimpse of episodes from Seasons 3 - 5 as the *Sliders* peer across the myriad realities, but the story effectively ends with the original *Sliders* resurrected and reunited (having never been dead or separated).

And three years of TV episodes are effectively erased, treated as more of the alternate realities that were so central to the larger mythology of *Sliders*, serving to offer a glimpse of a framework into which multiple versions of the canon might possibly be integrated.

One Step Forward, Two Steps Back

Meanwhile, the Sliders end the story with resuming their nomadic search for home, precisely where they were at the end of Season 2. No harm has been done, but no progress has been made.

To be fair, this seems to be the point. Ng argues that the Sliders traveling endlessly on amazing adventures is the happiest way to leave them while ruefully observing that compared to death and body horror, interdimensional homelessness is merciful.

It is a kinder fate than what later seasons offered and, in contrast to those seasons, a joyful coda while in no way a conclusion. It is a wry and self-aware non-ending ending, one that acknowledges *Sliders* as a truncated and abbreviated TV series in its first two seasons, overshadowed by the last three years of the show.

The Hypothetical Series Finale

All of this makes "Slide Effects" rather unique in the context of *Sliders*. This is a fan fiction screenplay that is also a story from the original co-creator of the series. It exists exclusively for the purpose of wrapping up arcs that were left unfinished, yet the only wrap-up it presumes to offer is sentiment, distance and reversal.

Ultimately, it serves as a version of *Sliders* that Tracy Tormé would want even if it isn't the script he would want. It presents a restoration that Tormé may have contemplated but may not have settled upon. And even if Tormé had chosen this route, no Tormé episode would have been as continuity-oriented as this screenplay.

Today

"Slide Effects" is short and rushed and is less authentic than it presents itself in its conception and creation. These are serious issues.

However, the story is genuine and heartfelt and provides a convincing depiction of all four Sliders and presents their friendship as overcoming all odds. The narrative also feels a lot tighter and more constrained than the stories it seeks to resolve. These storytelling sacrifices allow "Slide Effects" to build both plotting and emotional momentum as it rushes towards the finish line and it leaves *Sliders* redeemed and restored along with *the* Sliders themselves.

Setting aside the continuity fixation, it is the story that fans would expect from a season premiere: it lays the previous season(s) to rest, reaffirms the concept and clears the slate for new adventures.

In that respect, this 2011 screenplay from a 1996 plot is a very modern type of *Sliders* story.