



Pi

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FROM WHITE CRASH CUT TO:

EXTREME CLOSE-UP of Maximilian Cohen's eyes popping open.

1 INT. MAX'S APARTMENT, CHINATOWN FLAT, NEW YORK CITY -- NIGHT 1

Max jolts his head from his desk and tries to orient himself in the darkness. He has intelligent eyes set in an exhausted, good-looking face.

Then, he notices the blood dripping from his nose. Max wipes it.

MAX'S VOICE-OVER BEGINS:

MAX (V.O.)

9.13. Personal note: When I was a little kid my mother told me not to stare into the sun. So once, when I was six, I did.

CUT TO:

2 INT. BATHROOM -- DAWN 2

A pull-string light flips on. Max examines his bloody nose in the mirror.

MAX (V.O.)

The doctors didn't know if my eyes would ever heal. I was terrified. Alone in that darkness. Slowly daylight crept in through the bandages and I could see.

Max drinks from the sink and splashes a generous amount of water on to his head and face, cleaning his nose.

He wipes his nose and examines the last remnants of blood on his fingertip. Then, he dips his finger under the tap. But something else had changed inside me. That day I had my first headache.

TIGHT SHOT on Max's hand as three unmarked, circular pills hit his palm. Then, he slams the pills into the back of his mouth. Max replaces the cap on a plastic bottle of unmarked prescription drugs.

CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: 2

3 INT. MAX'S APARTMENT, MAIN ROOM -- DAY 3

Max's room is constantly dark because the windows are blacked out. He flips on his desk lamp.

A tiny ant crawls across his desk. He looks at it for a moment before getting angry and squashing it.

Sitting on the desk are three computer monitors, which Max flips on.

Then, he pops on more lights and more switches. We pull back, revealing that Max's apartment looks more like the inside of a computer than a human's home.

The room is knee-high in computer parts of all shapes and sizes. The walls are covered by circuit boards. Cables hang from the ceiling like vines in a Brazilian rain forest. They all seem to be wired together to form a monstrous homemade computer.

This is Euclid, Max's creation. The computer is alive with sounds and lights.

Max works on Euclid with his solder and drill. He cares for the machine as if it were his dream car.

MAX (V.O.)

Heat's been getting to Euclid. Feel it most in the afternoon when I run the set. Have to keep the fans on all night from now on. Otherwise, everything is running top notch. The stack of 286s is now faster than Columbia's computer science department. I spent a couple hundred dollars. Columbia's cost? Half a million?

(small snicker)

Ha...

Max checks the peep-hole on his front door. No one is there. He unbolts the five locks and slides into the hall.

CUT TO:

4 INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY -- DAY 4

As he secures his apartment, a young girl named Jenna runs up to him. Her mom looks apologetic down the hall.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

Jenna's eyes light up and she pulls out her Fisher Price calculator.

JENNA

Max, Max! Can we do one?

MOM (O.S.)

(over and over again)

Jenna! Jenna!

MAX

Oh, no.

JENNA

What's three hundred and twenty-two times four hundred and ninety-one.

Jenna types it into her calculator. Max finishes locking his door.

MAX

(instantly)

One hundred fifty-eight thousand, a hundred two. Right?

JENNA

(eyes light up)

Right.

Max heads down the staircase.

MOM

Jenna...

Jenna screams after him.

JENNA

OK, seventy-three divided by twenty-two.

MAX

(instantly again)

Three point three one eight one eight one eight...

CUT TO:

5 EXT. CHINATOWN -- DAY

5

Max watches people bustle through the busy intersections of Chinatown. The streets are clogged with people.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

MAX (V.O.)

12.45. Restate my assumptions. One:
 Mathematics is the language of nature.
 Two: Everything around us can be
 represented and understood through
 numbers. Three: If you graph the
 numbers of any system, patterns
 emerge.

CUT TO:

6 EXT. ELECTRONIC MEGA DUMP -- DAY

6

Max scavenges electronic parts as he carefully navigates an
 endless dump for old and rotting computers.

He unscrews a random IBM board from a keyboard and slides it
 into his pocket.

CUT TO:

7 EXT. PLAYGROUND -- DAY

7

MOVE IN on Max looking up at something as he reclines on a
 public bench.

MAX (V.O.)

Therefore: There are patterns
 everywhere in nature. Evidence: The
 cycling of disease epidemics. The
 wax and wane of caribou populations.
 Sunspot cycles. The rise and fall of
 the Nile.

MOVE IN on a tree branch -- shaking gently in the wind.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

EXTREME CLOSE-UP of stock ticker --

Bright stock quotes drift across the screen. So what about
 the stock market? A universe of numbers that represents the
 global economy. Millions of human hands at work... billions
 of minds... a vast network screaming with life. An organism.
 A natural organism.

CUT OUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7

8 INT. MAX'S APARTMENT -- DAY

8

Max watches the right edge of the screen where the numbers appear. He wants to see what's before that edge...

MAX (V.O.)

My hypothesis: Within the stock market, there is a pattern as well. Right in front of me, hiding behind the numbers. Always has been. 12.50: Press return.

Max slaps the return button on his computer.

The phone starts ringing. Max eyes it suspiciously.

Just then, Euclid starts printing results on an old dot matrix printer.

Max suspiciously answers the phone. Hello?

WOMAN'S VOICE

(on phone)

Maximilian Cohen, please.

MAX

Yeah?

WOMAN'S VOICE

(on phone)

Hi, it's Marcy Dawson. You might remember me, I'm a partner with the predictive strategy firm Lancet-Percy.

MAX

I told you already...

The printer finishes printing.

MARCY DAWSON

(on phone)

I'm sorry I haven't kept in touch but I was hoping that we could have lunch tomorrow, say one o'clock?

But before Marcy finishes, Max hangs up. He rips off the print-out and heads to the front door.

He checks the peep-hole. His landlady, Mrs Ovadia, is sweeping the hallway stairs humming a turn of the century (the last one, not this one) tune.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

Max waits a moment. He tousles his hair. Then, he checks again. She's gone. He opens his locks and releases several bolts.

CUT TO:

9 INT. MAX'S BUILDING, HALLWAY -- DAY

9

Max locks his front door. Meanwhile, his next-door neighbor, Devi Minstry, a sexy young Indian woman, is just getting home. Max looks away and tries to get his door locked.

She's weighed down by a bunch of bags filled with food.

DEVI

Max, good!

MAX

Hi, Devi.

DEVI

I grabbed you some samosas.

MAX

Great.

Devi heads over to Max with her bags of food. She looks up at Max.

DEVI

Your hair.

Devi hands the bags to Max. Then, she goes to pat down his hair. Max retreats.

MAX

What are you doing?

DEVI

Your hair, you can't go out like that.

MAX

It's fine.

DEVI

Don't worry.

MAX

It's fine.

Devi pats down his hair. Max is humiliated.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

9

DEVI

You need a mom.

Max hands back the bags and heads quickly for the stairs.

MAX

I have to go.

DEVI

Max, wait! Your samosas!

An embarrassed Max takes the bag.

MAX

Thanks.

CUT TO:

10 INT. COFFEE SHOP -- DAY

10

At the counter, Max stirs cream into his coffee. Then, he takes three pills from the plastic bottle and drops them in his coffee.

Max flips past a full-page ad in the paper that reads: 'LANCET-PERCY 86% ACCURACY (ONLY GOD IS PERFECT).' Max flips the page before he or we can absorb it.

He compares stock quotes in the Wall Street Journal against his print-out.

MAX (V.O.)

16.23. Results: Euclid predicts NTC will break a hundred tomorrow... good bet. Other interesting anomalies. Euclid predicts PRONET settling at sixty-five and a quarter, a career high.

Max marks up the paper with lines and diagrams as he ponders his hits and misses.

Then, a puff of cigarette smoke drifts by and succeeds in bothering Max. He fans it away, when --

VOICE FROM OFF-SCREEN

Am I bothering you?

Max shrugs and looks over.

The Voice belongs to Lenny Meyer -- a bearded man in his late twenties sucking on a cigarette.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

On closer inspection, something is off. It seems that Lenny is an Orthodox Jew. His yarmulke sticks out slightly from his wide-brimmed hat and the fringes from his tsi-tsis hang out from the bottom of his untucked shirt.

LENNY MEYER
I'm sorry, I'll put it out.
(which he does)
The name's Lenny Meyer.

Lenny sticks out his hand. Max responds with a small nod. And you are?

MAX
Max.

LENNY MEYER
Max?

MAX
Max Cohen.

LENNY MEYER
Cohen!?
(judging)
Jewish?

Max shrugs and turns back to his work.

LENNY MEYER
It's OK.
(joking)
I'm a Jew, too.
(serious)
Do you practice?

MAX
No, I'm not interested in religion.

LENNY MEYER
Have you ever heard of Kabbalah?

MAX
No.

LENNY MEYER
Jewish mysticism.

MAX
Look, I'm kinda busy right here.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: (2)

10

LENNY MEYER

I understand... it's just that right now is a very exciting moment in our history. Right now is a critical moment in time.

MAX

(sarcastic)

Really?

LENNY MEYER

Yeah, it's very exciting. Have you ever put on tefillin?

Max has no idea what Lenny's talking about. Lenny pulls a leather box with black leather straps from his pocket.

LENNY MEYER

You know tefillin. Yeah, I know it looks strange. It's an amazing tradition. It has a tremendous amount of power. It's a mitzvah for all Jewish men to do. Mitzvahs, good deeds.

And then, Max notices that his thumb is twitching. He grabs it self-consciously.

LENNY MEYER

They purify us and bring us closer to God. You want to try it?

TIGHT SHOT on Max's hand as three unmarked, circular pills hit his palm. Then, he slams the pills into the back of his mouth. Max replaces the cap on a plastic bottle of unmarked prescription drugs.

MAX

Shit...

LENNY MEYER

You all right? You all right, Max?

CUT TO:

11 INT. MAX'S BATHROOM -- NIGHT

11

Max splashes water on his face.

He pulls a metal vaccination gun out of the medicine cabinet. Then, he loads it with a small bottle of medicine. He rolls up his sleeve, dabs alcohol on his arm, and fires the gun into his arm.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

MAX (V.O.)

17.55. Personal note: Second attack
in under twenty-four hours.
Administered eighty milligrams
promazine HCl and six milligrams
sumatripan orally as well as one
milligram dihydroergotamine mesylate
by subcutaneous injection.

Max slaps himself in the face a few times.

He watches his thumb twitch. And then, pain shoots through
him. He grabs the right side of his head, massages it, and
pushes it in with his fingers.

In the mirror, he examines the right side of his scalp. He
sees nothing. Ahh...

Max walks back into the --

12 MAIN ROOM

12

-- and sits down in a chair. The lamp is blinding so he snaps
it off. Only the bathroom light illuminates the room. He
takes a few breaths.

Leave me alone.

Max gags and rubs his head.

Then, the pain seems to disappear. Max looks at his hand
which was rubbing his head.

Then, he looks at the front door. The door seems to move.

Something begins knocking on Max's door. The knocking gets
louder and louder. Then, the locks begin to unlock.

Now, something starts pounding on the door. The door knob
quivers. The locks unbolt. The chains are the only things
keeping out the intruder. The door shakes and the chains are
strained.

Max is paralyzed with terror. No! No!

And then the door smashes open. Blinding light fills the
room and we crash into the --

13 BLINDING WHITE VOID.

13

A moment of silence, then we --

CUT TO:

14 INT. BATHROOM -- DAWN 14

A phone rings incessantly. Max's eyes pop open. He's scrunched up in a corner of the room, squashed beneath the sink.

His nose is bleeding.

Max crawls into the --

15 MAIN ROOM 15

-- and picks up the phone. He pinches his nose and tilts his head back.

MARCY DAWSON

(on phone)

Mr Cohen. Marcy Dawson here again, from Lancet-Percy. I was just looking over my schedule and I realized I'll be in Chinatown tomorrow around three.

Max heads to the --

16 FRONT DOOR 16

-- and checks the locks. He is barely listening to Marcy.

The locks seem secure.

MARCY DAWSON

(on phone)

I would love to stop by and see you. I am so anxious to meet you. It will be worth it -- for both of us. How's three sound?

MAX

How'd you get my address?

MARCY DAWSON

(on phone)

Oh, don't worry, I got your address from Columbia. So three it is. Looking forward to it.

Max tries to stop her but, before he can, Marcy hangs up. A bewildered Max slowly hangs up.

Max checks the peep-hole -- all clear.

Then, he opens his --

17 CLOSET 17

-- which is filled with random computer parts and boxes.

He pulls a thick neuroscience book from a shelf in the back of the closet. He almost knocks over an old dusty brass microscope on the shelf.

Max flips through the book. It contains old plates illustrating the brain. Max examines some of the diagrams.

CUT TO:

18 EXT. SOL'S HALLWAY -- DAY 18

Max rings the bell on an apartment door.

A few moments pass, and then, Sol Robeson opens the door.

Sol is a wise-looking man in his early seventies. He walks with difficulty, leaning, out of breath, on a wooden cane.

His arms are covered with faded Russian prison tattoos and he speaks with a thick Eastern European accent. He's happy to see Max.

SOL

Max!

Max is happy to see Sol, but he's a bit bashful and intimidated.

CUT TO:

19 INT. SOL'S STUDY -- MOMENTS LATER 19

Tight on the Japanese game of Go being played. Sol is white and Max is black. Sol's moves are secure and controlled while Max is hesitant.

Sol's study is packed with worn books and soft sunlight. A bowl of goldfish sits prominently next to the Go board.

Dave Brubeck tunes groove out of antique speakers.

SOL

Stop thinking, Max, just feel. Use your intuition.

(beat)

So what did you think of Hamlet?

MAX

I didn't get to it.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

SOL
 It's been a month.
 (knowingly)
 You haven't taken a single break.

MAX
 I'm so close.

Sol changes the subject. He feeds his goldfish and points to one of them.

SOL
 Have you met the new fish my niece bought me? I named her Icarus. After you. My renegade pupil. You fly too high you'll get burned.

Max looks up at Sol.

SOL
 I look at you, I see myself thirty years ago. My greatest pupil. Published at sixteen, PhD at twenty. But life isn't just mathematics, Max. I spent forty years looking for patterns in Pi, I found nothing.

MAX
 You found things...

SOL
 I found things, but not a pattern.

CUT TO:

20 INT. MOVING TRAIN -- DAY

20

Max sits in the corner of a rickety New York City subway car. The train is almost completely deserted.

Max looks down at his hand. He opens his palm and reveals a black Go chip.

MAX (V.O.)
 Not a pattern. II.22. Personal note:
 Sol died a little when he stopped
 research on Pi. It wasn't just the
 stroke, he stopped caring. How could
 he stop when he was so close to seeing
 Pi for what it really is?

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

Max notices a Skinny Man in a business suit staring at him. The man catches Max's eye and looks away, but then, he quickly looks back, making Max turn away.

Max looks down at his Wall Street Journal and draws a circle with its diameter. Then, he writes ' $A = r^2$ ' and ' $C = 2r$ '. Next, he writes, ' $\pi = 3.14159. . .$ '

MAX (V.O.)

How could you stop believing that there is a pattern, an ordered shape behind those numbers when you were so close?

We see the simplicity of the circle. We see the maddening complexity of the endless string of numbers.

MAX (V.O.)

3.14 off into infinity.

Suddenly, Max hears someone singing. Max looks up. It is the skinny Man and he's singing with passion. It's all very strange to Max who nervously looks away.

Max continues with his work.

And then, the singing stops -- mid-verse. Max looks up and the man is gone. Vanished. Max looks around -- no one in sight.

CUT TO:

21 INT. APARTMENT STAIRCASE -- DAY

21

Max heads up the stairs to his apartment. Just then, a toy Slinky appears from nowhere marching down the stairs.

Max stops and waits until the Slinky hits his foot. He picks it up and looks at it.

He looks around, wondering what's going on. Then, Jenna leans out over a railing and starts laughing at Max.

CUT TO:

22 INT. COFFEE SHOP -- DAY

22

Max sits at the counter frantically looking at the Wall Street Journal. He pops three pills into his coffee.

He draws circles and other shapes across the page.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

Max is interrupted by a puff of smoke. At the same time, someone touches his shoulder and says:

LENNY MEYER

Hey! Max! Lenny Meyer.
 (motioning to the
 cigarette)
 Sorry, I'll put it out.
 (which he does)
 So, what do you do?

MAX

Um, I work with computers... math.

LENNY MEYER

Math? What kind of math?

MAX

Number theory. Research mostly.

LENNY MEYER

No way, I work with numbers myself.
 I mean, not traditional...
 (points to his yarmulke)
 I work with the Torah.
 (awed by the
 coincidence)
 Amazing.

MAX

(passing it off as a
 coincidence)
 Yeah...

LENNY MEYER

Yeah. You know Hebrew is all math.
 It's all numbers. Did you know that?

MAX

Hm.

Lenny pulls out a worn, dog-eared Bible from his pocket. There are paper slips marking what seems like every other page. When he opens it up, Max sees that the pages are marked up by highlighter pens, notes and diagrams.

Lenny points to the text.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP of Hebrew letters.

(CONTINUED)

LENNY MEYER

Here, look... the ancient Jews used Hebrew as their numerical system. Each letter is a number.

Lenny pulls out a pen and grabs Max's Journal. He writes on it as he talks:

LENNY MEYER

Like the Hebrew `A', Aleph, is one. `B', Bet, is two. You understand? But look at this. The numbers are interrelated, like take the Hebrew word for father, Ab. Aleph, Bet. One and two equals three. All right? Hebrew word for mother, Ame. Aleph, Mem. One and forty equals forty-one. Sum of three and forty-one: forty-four. Now, the Hebrew word for child is Yellen. That's ten, thirty, and four... forty-four.

The waitress refills Max's coffee.

LENNY MEYER

The Torah is just a long string of numbers. Some say that it's a code sent to us from God.

MAX

(mildly impressed)
That's kind of interesting.

LENNY MEYER

(proud)
Yeah, that's just kid's stuff. Check this out, OK? The word for the Garden of Eden, Kadem. Numerical translation: one forty-four. Now the value of the tree of knowledge... in the garden, Aat Ha Haim, two thirty-three. One forty-four, two thirty-three. Now you can take those numbers and...

MAX

They're Fibonacci numbers.

LENNY MEYER

Huh?

MAX

You know, like, the Fibonacci sequence.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED: (3)

22

LENNY MEYER

Fibonacci...?

MAX

Fibonacci is an Italian mathematician
in the thirteenth century.

Lenny lights up a cigarette and takes a drag.

MAX

If you divide a hundred and forty-
four into two hundred and thirty-
three the result approaches theta.

LENNY MEYER

Theta?

MAX

Theta. The Greek symbol for the golden
ratio. The golden spiral.

Lenny exhales the smoke. Max draws a spiral.

LENNY MEYER

Wow, I never saw that before. That's
the series you find in nature. Like
the face of a sunflower.

MAX

Wherever there's spirals.

SLOW MOTION: Max looks down at his coffee cup. He pours cream
into his coffee. It shoots up and mixes with the black coffee
forming spirals in the mug.

LENNY MEYER

You see, there's math everywhere.

Lenny's smoke drifts by Max's eyes.

SLOW MOTION: Max's POV of smoke spirals spinning in front of
him.

NORMAL SPEED: Suddenly, Max stands up and leaves. Whoa, hey,
Max!

CUT TO:

23 INT. MAX'S APARTMENT -- DAY

23

Max draws spirals all over his Wall Street Journal. Then he
takes a thick black marker and draws a giant spiral across
the entire page.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

Max is ecstatic as he pounds code into the computer, takes moments to wake up, drops pills and drinks a ginseng soda.

MAX (V.O.)

13.26. Restate my assumptions. One: Mathematics is the language of nature. Two: Everything around us can be represented and understood through numbers. Three: If you graph the numbers of any system, patterns emerge. Therefore: There are patterns everywhere in nature.

Max works feverishly: sketching, pounding out code, and downing ginseng soda.

MAX (V.O.)

So what about the stock market? A universe of numbers that represents the global economy. Millions of human hands at work... billions of minds... a vast network screaming with life. An organism. A natural organism. My hypothesis: Within the stock market, there is a pattern. Right in front of me, hiding behind the numbers. Always has been. 10.18: Press return.

Max is about to slap RETURN but he stops himself -- he's nervous.

Next door, Devi and her boyfriend are making love. He looks at the wall with disdain. Then, he looks back at the screen, shrugs and confidently slaps RETURN on his keyboard.

Stock prices float across the screen. Max can't believe his eyes -- the quotes are absurd.

Suddenly, a number flashes on to the screen. It blinks on and off a couple of times.

MAX

What the...

And then, Euclid crashes. The electricity in Max's room flips off. The numbers on Max's screen fade to black.

IN DARKNESS:

MAX (O.S.)

Shit!

CUT TO:

24 TIGHT ON A FUSE BOX

24

Max removes a fuse. He replaces it with a penny.

MAX (V.O.)

10.28. Results: Bullshit. Euclid predicts AAR at six and a half. AAR hasn't been beneath forty in twenty years. Explanations for anomaly: Human error.

CUT TO:

25 MAX'S ROOM

25

Max tries to reboot Euclid, but nothing happens. He tries a second time, he tries repeatedly, but nothing happens.

Max puts on a pair of latex gloves. He dons a surgical mask. He climbs up to a loft above his monitors. A glass case, fed cool air by a vent tube, encases some computer parts. He carefully removes the front glass cover.

When he gets it off he's stunned. Not only have the chips melted down, but a strange gooeey, gel-like substance covers the board.

MAX

Shit.

Then, Max spots a single ant crawling over the chips. Max crushes it between his fingers.

Max grabs his face, frustrated.

Suddenly, he angrily throws Euclid's mainframe on to the ground. It lands with a smash!

Then, he jumps on the smashed mainframe. He collapses on to his bed and covers his face. A moment later:

MAX (V.O.)

11.11. Results: Failed treatments to date...

DISSOLVE TO:

26 EXT. PLAYGROUND -- DAY

26

TIGHT ON a tree branch shaking manically in the wind.

Max sits on a park bench watching the branch shake. It terrifies him.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

He pulls out the print-out of his picks and examines them.

MAX (V.O.)

... Beta-blockers, calcium channel blockers, adrenalin injections, high-dose ibuprofen, steroids, trager metasititics, violent exercise, cafergot suppositories, caffeine, acupuncture, marijuana, percodan, Midrin, Tenormin, Sansert, homeopathics. No results. No results.

He crumples up his picks and tosses them into a public trash can.

CUT TO:

27 INT. SOL'S STUDY -- DAY

27

Sol and Max play Go. Sol is peaceful while Max is distant.

Max plays a piece absently. Sol counters with a deafening atari. Max whispers:

MAX

Euclid crashed. I lost all my data, my hardware.

SOL

Your mainframe?

MAX

Burnt...

SOL

What happened?

MAX

First I got these crazy picks. Then, it spit out this long string of numbers. I never saw anything like it and then it fries. The whole machine just crashed.

SOL

You have a print-out?

MAX

Of what?

SOL

Of the picks, the number?

(CONTINUED)

MAX

I threw it out.

SOL

What was the number it spit out?

MAX

I don't know, just a long string of digits.

SOL

How many?

MAX

I don't know.

SOL

(intense)

What is it, a hundred, a thousand, two hundred and sixteen!? How many?

MAX

Probably around two hundred.

(wondering)

Why?

SOL

(beat)

... I dealt with some bugs back in my Pi days. I was wondering if it was similar to one I ran into.

Sol begins to feed his fish. He points to one.

SOL

Have you met Archimedes? The one with the black spot. You see?

Max reluctantly looks down at the fish.

SOL

You remember Archimedes of Syracuse? The King asks Archimedes to determine if a present he's received is actually solid gold. Unsolved problem at the time. It tortures the great Greek mathematician for weeks. Insomnia haunts him and he twists and turns on his bed for nights on end. Finally, his equally exhausted wife, she's forced to share a bed with this genius, convinces him to take a bath,

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED: (2)

27

SOL (CONT'D)
to relax. While he's entering the
tub...

Sol places his pinky finger into the fish tank...

SOL
Archimedes notices the bathwater
rise. Displacement. A way to determine
volume. And thus, a way to determine
density, weight over volume. And,
thus, Archimedes solves the problem.
He screams 'Eureka!' and is so
overwhelmed he runs dripping naked
through the streets to the King's
palace to report his discovery. Now,
what's the moral of the story?

MAX
That a breakthrough will come...

SOL
Wrong. The point of the story is the
wife. You listen to your wife, she
will give you perspective. Meaning,
you need a break, you have to take a
bath, or you will get nowhere. There
will be no order, only chaos. Go
home, Max, and you take a bath.

CUT TO:

28 EXT. PUBLIC BENCH -- LATER

28

Max waits for his train on an empty platform.

Just then, he hears a dripping sound. Max looks up and notices
something across the tracks on the other platform. He can't
quite make it out because his vision is blocked by columns.

He gets up and spots a Young Hasidic Man staring at him.

Blood drips from his hand. Max doesn't know what to make of
it.

A train swishes by --

CUT TO:

29 INT. MOVING TRAIN -- LATER

29

He checks out a few of the other passengers. Then, he notices
a Skinny Man reading a newspaper across from him.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

The headline reads: `MARKET TAKES A NOSE-DIVE'. Max jumps up and approaches the man.

MAX

Excuse me, can I take a look at the paper?

Max grabs the paper. He scans the article. Then, he quickly turns to the listings. His finger barrels down a column. It stops at ABR.

MAX

(out of breath)

My God. My God. Six and a half.

SKINNY MAN

Hey! Hey, the paper please!

Max hands the paper back and looks at the man for the first time. It is the Skinny Man he saw earlier.

Max gets suspicious and moves into the next car.

30 AT GRAND STREET:

30

Max exits. He notices that the Skinny Man gets off -- one car down -- as well.

He hustles towards the exit. As he's about to turn a corner he looks back. The man seems to be following him.

He dodges around a corner and heads up a staircase.

CUT TO:

31 EXT. TRAIN STATION -- DAY

31

He seems to have lost him, when he notices a businesswoman with a pretty face heading right towards him. This is Marcy Dawson.

MARCY DAWSON

Mr Cohen! Perfect timing.

Marcy sticks out her hand. Max, not knowing what else to do, shakes it.

MARCY DAWSON

I was just waiting for you but I thought you stood me up, so I was going to head home.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED:

31

MAX

Who are you?

MARCY DAWSON

Oh... Marcy Dawson. From Lancet-Percy.
We were supposed to meet at three.

MAX

It's really not a good time...

Marcy hasn't let go of Max's hand. She guides him towards a large black stretch limo that's just pulled up.

MARCY DAWSON

I can't tell you what a pleasure it
is to finally meet you. I've studied
your papers for years.

Max looks behind him. Coming up the stairs is the Skinny Man.

Max gets nervous.

MAX

Excuse me but I...

MARCY DAWSON

Listen, why don't we take a spin in
the limo?

MAX

I can't, I'm sorry.

MARCY DAWSON

Mr Cohen, please...

Max attempts to pull away but Marcy is firm on leading him to the car. Meanwhile, the Skinny Man is heading right at them.

Max yanks his arm free and runs away. He whips around a corner.

CUT TO:

32 INT. BODEGA -- DAY

32

Max barrels into the grocery store and buys a Journal. He heads to the back of the store and lays the paper across the juice section. Max checks the listing.

MAX

Yes! Yes!

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

32

Then, he notices one of the bodega owners staring at him.

CUT TO:

33 EXT. PLAYGROUND -- LATE AFTERNOON

33

Max sifts through the trash can where he threw out his picks from yesterday. Frustrated, he dumps the trash on to the sidewalk and starts looking through it.

Mrs Ovadia watches him. Max sees her, and is embarrassed for a moment.

MAX

I just... threw out something. I didn't realize I needed it.

MRS OVADIA

Humph.

MAX

Just a print-out, I, uh, lost my data...

Max looks back at the trash as Mrs Ovadia runs off. Max kicks the trash can and heads home.

CUT TO:

34 EXT. OUTSIDE MAX'S BUILDING -- LATE AFTERNOON

34

Max watches Marcy get out of the limo and call to Mrs Ovadia.

Max backs away and smacks into someone. It's Lenny Meyer -- the young Jewish man.

Max jumps back in fear.

LENNY MEYER

Whoa, Wha-Hey! How you doing? Lenny Meyer.

Max tries to pass him quickly.

LENNY MEYER

Where you going?

MAX

Just up there.

LENNY MEYER

You gotta minute? You want to try tefillin?

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

34

MAX

No, not right now.

Max turns around and notices Marcy talking to Mrs Ovadia. Mrs Ovadia points up the street towards him.

LENNY MEYER

I gotta car, right over here. It'll take one second, we can cruise over to the shul...

MAX

You gotta car?

LENNY MEYER

Yeah, yeah, right over there. See. That's my friend, Ephraim.

We swing around with Max and see a station wagon. Ephraim sits in the passenger seat. He's a big-boned, bearded, Orthodox Jew.

MAX

All right, let's go.

LENNY MEYER

Great...

They head for the station wagon.

CUT TO:

35 INT. BASEMENT, SHUL -- NIGHT

35

The synagogue is a claustrophobic, fluorescent-lit room in general disarray. Two rooms of imitation-wooden pews face a makeshift altar and ark. Young Hasidic men study texts. Some work alone, reading and dovening. Others are in small groups sharing in heated discussions.

Lenny wraps the tefillin around Max's arm. Max just wants to get out of there. Ephraim prays in the background.

LENNY MEYER

When you told me your name was Max Cohen, I didn't realize you were the Max Cohen. Your work's revolutionary, you know that? It's inspired the work that we do.

MAX

It has?

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED:

35

LENNY MEYER

Yes, very much. The only difference is, we're not looking at the stock market. Now go ahead, wrap that around your hand. We're searching for a pattern in the Torah.

Lenny finishes wrapping Max's arm. He reaches for another box and strap.

MAX

What kind of pattern?

LENNY MEYER

We're not sure. All we know is that it's two hundred and sixteen digits long.

Max, stunned, looks at Lenny. All right, stand up.

MAX

(coolly)

Two hundred and sixteen?

LENNY MEYER

That's right. Stand up, Max. Come on, stand up. It's all right. This one just goes on your head.

MAX

Two hundred and sixteen?

Lenny places the other tefillin over Max's head. Max collects himself.

LENNY MEYER

Shhhhhh. Now we're going to say a little prayer together, repeat after me. Shema Yisrael.

Bewildered, Max does.

CUT TO:

36 EXT. SOL'S APARTMENT -- DAWN

36

Max firmly rings Sol's bell.

CUT TO:

37 INT. SOL'S KITCHEN -- MOMENTS LATER

37

Max sits at the kitchen table while Sol heats up a pot of tea. Max is shaking.

SOL

Now, what's up, Max?

MAX

What is this two hundred and sixteen number, Sol?

SOL

Excuse me?

MAX

You asked me if I had seen a two hundred and sixteen-digit number, right?

SOL

Oh, yeah. You mean the bug. I ran into it working on Pi.

MAX

What do you mean ran into it?

SOL

Max, what is this all about?

MAX

There are these religious Jews I've been talking to...

SOL

Religious Jews?

MAX

Yeah, you know, Hasids. The guys with the beards.

SOL

I know what they are.

MAX

I met one in a coffee shop. It turns out the guy is a number theorist. The Torah is his data set. He tells me that they're looking for a two hundred and sixteen-digit number in the Torah.

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED:

37

SOL

Really? What's it mean to them?

MAX

They say they don't know, but that's crazy. I mean, what are the odds...

SOL

Ah, c'mon! It's just a coincidence.

MAX

There's something else, though.

SOL

What?

MAX

You remember those weird stock picks I got?

SOL

Yesterday's stock picks?

MAX

Right. Well, it turns out that they were correct. I hit two picks on the nose. Smack on the nose, Sol.

SOL

(surprised)

Hmmm.

MAX

Something's going on, and it has to do with that number. There's an answer in that number.

SOL

Max, it's a bug.

MAX

No, it's a pattern. A pattern is in that number.

SOL

Come with me.

CUT TO:

38 INT. SOL'S STUDY -- MOMENTS LATER

38

Sol and Max sit on either side of an empty Go board.

(CONTINUED)

SOL

Listen to me. The Ancient Japanese considered the Go board to be a microcosm of the universe. Although when it is empty it appears to be simple and ordered, the possibilities of gameplay are endless. They say that no two Go games have ever been alike. Just like snowflakes. So, the Go board actually represents an extremely complex and chaotic universe. That is the truth of our world, Max. It can't be easily summed up with math. There is no simple pattern.

MAX

But, as a Go game progresses, the possibilities become smaller and smaller. The board does take on order. Soon, all moves are predictable.

SOL

So?

MAX

So, maybe, even though we're not sophisticated enough to be aware of it, there is an underlying order... a pattern, beneath every Go game. Maybe that pattern is like the pattern in the market, in the Torah. The two sixteen number.

SOL

This is insanity, Max.

MAX

Or maybe it's genius. I have to get that number.

SOL

Hold on, you have to slow down. You're losing it, you have to take a breath. Listen to yourself. You're connecting a computer bug I had, with a computer bug you might have had, and some religious hogwash. If you want to find the number two sixteen in the world you'll be able to pull it out of anywhere. Two hundred and sixteen steps from your street corner to

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED: (2)

38

SOL (CONT'D)

your front door. Two hundred and sixteen seconds you spend riding on the elevator. When your mind becomes obsessed with anything it will filter everything else out and find examples of that thing everywhere. Three Hundred and twenty, four hundred and fifty, twenty-two. Whatever! You've chosen two hundred sixteen and you'll find it everywhere in nature. But, Max, as soon as you discard scientific rigor you are no longer a mathematician. You become a numerologist. What you need to do is take a break from your research. You need it. You deserve it. Here's a hundred dollars, I want you to take it. If you won't take it, borrow it. Either way, take a break. Spend it however you like as long as it falls in the category of vacation. Real world stuff, OK. No math.

Max looks at his hands.

SOL

Just try it. In a week you'll laugh about this. C'mon, Max. Think about it!

Max gives a half nod.

CUT TO:

39 EXT. SOL'S APARTMENT -- MORNING

39

Max rushes to the subway when a honking horn stops him. A limo pulls up next to him. Marcy Dawson jumps out of the car.

MARCY DAWSON

Mr Cohen? Mr Cohen? Please stop for a second. Mr Cohen?

Max stops and faces Marcy.

MAX

Damn it already! Stop following me. I'm sick of you following me. I'm not interested in your money. I'm searching for a way to understand

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MAX (CONT'D)

our world. I'm searching for perfection. I don't deal with petty materialists like you!

MARCY DAWSON

I'm sorry. I'm very sorry. I admit I've been a bit too aggressive. But all I ask is for five minutes of your time. Here...

Marcy hands Max a metal stopwatch...

MARCY DAWSON

... a stopwatch. Already ticking. Allow me the four and a half minutes left. Let me tell you what I want. Let me tell you what I can offer you. Afterwards, if you don't want to talk to me, then fine, we part as friends and I promise that you will never see me again. That's fair, isn't it?

MAX

(after a moment, he looks at the stopwatch)
Go.

MARCY DAWSON

Good. It's funny, even though we have different aims and different goals we're actually incredibly alike. We both seek the same thing -- perfection. I know... clearly we're seeking different types of perfection, but that is what makes us perfect candidates for a fruitful partnership. If you let me, I can be your greatest ally. Take the acacia tree... in East Africa. It is the most prevalent plant in all of Kenya because it has managed to secure its niche by defeating its major predator, the giraffe. To accomplish this, the tree has made a contract with a highly specialized red ant. The tree has evolved giant spores which act as housing for the ants. In return for shelter, the ants supply defense. When a giraffe starts to eat the tree's leaves, the shaking branch

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MARCY DAWSON (CONT'D)
acts like an alarm. The ants charge out and secrete an acid on to the giraffe's tongue. The giraffe learns its lesson and never returns. Without each other, the tree would be picked dry and the ants would have no shade from the brutal African sun. Both would die. But with each other, they succeed, they survive, they surpass. They have different aims, different goals, but they work together. Max, we would like to establish a mutually benefiting alliance with you.

MAX
(handing back the
stopwatch)
I'm not interested.

MARCY DAWSON
Allow me to close.

The Chauffeur pulls a black suitcase out of the limo and brings it over.

MARCY DAWSON
As a sign of good faith we wish to offer you this.

MAX
I told you I don't want money.

MARCY DAWSON
The suitcase isn't filled with fifties or gold or diamonds. Just silicon. A Ming Mecca chip.

MAX
(yeah right!)
Ming Mecca. They're not declassified.

Max starts to move away.

MARCY DAWSON
You're right. They're not. But Lancet-Percy has many friends. Come here, take a look.

Marcy opens the suitcase. Max starts to look, his eyes go wide and he reaches to touch it. Can we work together?

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (3)

39

Max eyes the chip. Then, he eyes Marcy suspiciously. Max smiles:

MAX
(stuttering)
What do... do...

But then, Max notices that his thumb is twitching.

MARCY DAWSON
Beautiful, isn't it? You know how
rare... Mr Cohen, are you OK?

MAX
Yeah, I got to go.

MARCY DAWSON
Mr Cohen. Sir, are you sick?

MAX
Let me think about it...

Max trots off.

MARCY DAWSON
What? Mr Cohen!?

CUT TO:

40 INT. SUBWAY STATION, PUBLIC BENCH -- NIGHT

40

The station is strangely silent. It is also extremely run-down. The tracks are rusted and fucked up. All we hear is the sound of dripping water. The sound is warped and grows and morphs until it's downright scary.

Max sits on a bench sucking down pills. His head begins to hurt. He touches the right side of his scalp and rubs it.

As the blood surges through his head it brings him waves of pain. He gags several times. Then, the pain lets loose and all Max wants to do is die. He smashes the side of his head with his fist.

Across the tracks on the far platform he sees someone.

For a moment Max's pain dissipates. His view is obscured by the columns. Max gets up and sees the Young Hasidic Man -- from earlier -- staring at him.

The man stares at Max without any emotion. Max notices blood dripping from the man's right hand.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

40

Max looks at the man's face and sees for a split second his own face staring back.

MAX

Hey!

Max charges up a flight of stairs. He crosses a passage over the tracks and flies down the stairs to the other side of the platform.

The man is gone. A pool of blood sits where the man was. Max touches it with his toe. It's sticky. He notices a trail of blood leading off from the pool.

He follows it around a corner where it leads into another corner.

He notices something strange in the shadows. He carefully advances on it. Hiding in the shadows is what looks like a small piece of brain. It seems to be moving slightly.

Max uses a pen in his jacket to touch it carefully.

Suddenly, Max hears a train's honk honk behind him. Max spins around. Nothing is there but silence.

He turns back to the gray matter. He touches it again. Once again, he hears the deafening honk honk. Max spins around but nothing is there.

Frustrated, he pushes his pen deep into the brain -- fiber ripping apart.

Suddenly, a train is barreling down on Max. Seconds from impact, Max screams!!!

DISSOLVE TO:

41 BLINDING WHITE VOID --

41

We hear two deep, long, sleep-filled breaths and then we --

CUT TO:

42 INT. SUBWAY TRAIN -- DAY

42

Max's eyes pop open. A Transit Cop is sticking him with a night stick.

TRANSIT COP

Up, buddy. Coney Island, last stop.

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED:

42

Max sits up. His nose is bleeding. The Transit Cop hands him a tissue.

TRANSIT COP
Here, for your nose.

Max wipes his nose and looks around nervously.

He sees the rides of Coney Island in the distance.

CUT TO:

43 EXT. CONEY ISLAND BEACH -- DAY

43

Max sits on a boulder on a Coney Island jetty. He watches the sea.

Then, Max sees an old man dressed like King Neptune scanning the shore with a rusty metal detector. The old man picks up something. He admires it for a moment before gently setting it back on the ground. Then, Neptune continues his search.

Max wanders over to the place where the old man examined the object. It is a nautilus shell. Max picks it up and looks at it. He sees its natural spiral shape.

Max takes a breath and stares out to the horizon.

CUT TO:

44 INT. MAX'S APARTMENT -- DAY

44

Max examines the smashed Euclid mainframe. He uncovers some of the strange filo-like substance. He carefully touches it. Then, he grabs a small pinch of it.

He examines it near a light bulb. He can't guess what it is. He sniffs it. He carefully tastes it with the very tip of his tongue. He still doesn't have a clue.

Max opens his closet. He pulls out his dusty, brass microscope. He dusts it off. Next, he pulls out a slide kit.

Max places the instrument on the window sill. He grabs an old glass slide and puts some of the gooey stuff on it. He slides it under the microscope. He looks into the lens, but doesn't see anything.

He gets up quickly and heads for the --

45 HALLWAY

45

-- where he looks at Devi's door nervously. He smoothes out his hair, gathers his courage and knocks on her door. Through the door he hears:

DEVI (O.S.)

Farrouhk?

MAX

Um, no, it's Max from next door.

Devi opens the door wearing a sexy nightshirt.

DEVI

Max, is everything all right?

MAX

Do you have any iodine?

DEVI

(concerned, she reaches
for Max's hands)

Iodine...did you cut yourself?

MAX

(pulling his hands
away)

No. I just need it to stain a slide.

DEVI

Ah, science, the pursuit of knowledge.
One second.

She heads to her bathroom. Max waits impatiently.

DEVI (O.S.)

You surprised me, I thought you were
Farrouhk. Here we are. What are you
examining --

(at the door)

-- a potato!?

She hands Max a bottle of iodine.

MAX

No, just something from my computer.

CUT TO:

46 INT. MAX'S ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

46

Max uses his pinky to drip a drop of iodine on the slide. Then, he slips the glass under the turret.

Max catches the low-hanging sun in the microscope's mirror and reflects it through the sample and up the turret into his eye.

Max's POV down the turret of some strange substance.

Max pulls out the slide and looks at it.

Then, an idea comes to him. He takes out his brain book. He looks through it until he finds a picture of neurons. He compares the image to the view through the turret. They look different but there are similarities.

He changes the magnification. At a weaker magnification the mathematician sees that the cells are grouped in spirals.

Max is stunned. He grabs the phone and pulls a business card out of his pocket. He quickly dials a number.

Someone answers with a `Shalom' on the other end of the line. Max asks for Lenny Meyer and is put on hold.

LENNY MEYER

(on phone)

Hello, this is Lenny?

MAX

Lenny, it's Max Cohen.

LENNY MEYER

(on phone)

Max! Hey! What are you doing now?
Come down, we'll hang out.

MAX

I've was thinking about our
conversation the other night.

LENNY MEYER

(on phone)

That's good...

MAX

I want to help.

CUT TO:

47 INT. MAX'S APARTMENT -- DAY

47

Euclid's innards.

Max uses a drill to rip out some old parts. He lays new wire and does some soldering.

He rips down a bunch of old papers and does a general house cleaning.

He also goes to school on the ant population in his apartment. He plants some ant motels and sprays the room with a pest killer.

MAX (V.O.)

4.42. New evidence: Remember Pythagoras. Mathematician, cult leader, Athens, circa 500 BCE. Major belief: The universe is made of numbers.

TIGHT ON Max writing $a:b::b:a+b$.

MAX (V.O.)

Major contribution: The Golden Ratio. Best represented geometrically as the Golden Rectangle. Visually, there exists a graceful equilibrium between the shape's length and width. When it's squared, it leaves a smaller golden rectangle behind with the same unique ratio. The squaring can continue smaller and smaller and smaller. To infinity.

TIGHT ON Max carefully measuring out a golden rectangle.

A knock at the door draws Max to look through the peep-hole. Devi is outside with a bag of food. Max doesn't answer the door. He just watches her. She knocks again before leaving.

Max returns to his desk.

He draws the rectangle over a copy of Da Vinci's famous drawing of man's anatomy.

The rectangle fits perfectly over Da Vinci's man.

MAX (V.O.)

11.18. More evidence: Remember Da Vinci. Artist, inventor, sculptor, naturalist, Italy, fifteenth century.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED:

47

MAX (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Rediscovered the balanced perfection
of the Golden Rectangle and penciled
it into his masterpieces.

TIGHT ON Max squaring rectangle after rectangle. Then he
draws the Golden Spiral through the rectangles.

MAX (V.O.)
Connecting a curve through the
concentric Golden Rectangles, you
generate the mythical Golden Spiral.

DISSOLVE FROM DA VINCI TO:

TELESCOPE IMAGE of the Milky Way.

START IN TIGHT ON the epicenter and PULL OUT TO REVEAL the
entire galaxy.

MAX (V.O.)
Pythagoras loved this shape for he
found it everywhere in nature. A
nautilus shell, ram's horns,
whirlpools, tornadoes, our
fingerprints, our DNA, and even our
Milky Way.

DISSOLVE TO:

48 EXT. CHINATOWN -- DAY

48

Max wanders through the crowded streets of Chinatown.

MAX (V.O.)
9.22. Personal note: When I was a
little kid, my mother told me not to
stare into the sun. So once, when I
was six, I did. At first, the
brightness was overwhelming, but I
had seen that before. I kept
looking, forcing myself not to blink.
And then the brightness began to
dissolve. My pupils shrank to pinholes
and everything came into focus. And
for a moment. I understood. My new
hypothesis: If we're built from
spirals, while living in a giant
spiral, then everything we put our
hands to is infused with the spiral.

DISSOLVE TO:

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED:

48

MONTAGE: of mathematical images.

CUT TO:

PAN ACROSS new Euclid.

WE START ON the stock ticker and PULL OUT TO REVEAL a leaner, meaner and more exciting machine.

MAX (V.O.)

10.15. Personal note: It's fair to say, I'm stepping out on a limb. But I am on the edge and that's where it happens.

But something is missing. Max holds two wires apart from each other as he contemplates what will connect them.

CUT TO:

49 EXT. ELECTRONIC MEGA DUMP -- DAY

49

Max wanders helplessly through the dump. There's nothing but junk and more junk.

CUT TO:

50 EXT. PUBLIC PAY PHONE -- DAY

50

Max eyes Marcy Dawson's business card suspiciously. He dials the number. A Man answers.

MAN'S VOICE

(on phone)

Three, eight, two.

MAX

Marcy Dawson.

MAN'S VOICE

(on phone)

Who's calling.

MAX

Max Cohen.

MAN'S VOICE

(on phone)

Hold on.

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED:

50

Max is put on hold. He notices a Man in a business suit watching him. Max turns away.

MARCY DAWSON

(on phone)

Mr Cohen? I'm so happy.

MAX

Look, what do you want for the chip?

MARCY DAWSON

(on phone)

You tech guys. I think you know what we want.

MAX

No, I don't.

MARCY DAWSON

(on phone)

C'mon, Mr Cohen. We can work together. We can both profit from this information. We both need each other to get it, so why not work with us?

MAX

I don't know if I'll find anything useful.

MARCY DAWSON

(on phone)

We're willing to take the risk.

MAX

OK. First, I want you to call off the surveillance.

MARCY DAWSON

(on phone. Beat)

Done. Anything else?

MAX

Yeah, I'm a very private person. Knock on my door and leave the suitcase outside. I don't want to talk to anybody.

MARCY DAWSON

(on phone)

How do I know you're home?

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED: (2)

50

MAX
I'll knock back.

CUT TO:

51 INT. COFFEE SHOP -- DAY

51

Max sits at the counter. The Post headline in front of him reads: `MARKET DOOMED. PRESIDENT IN PANIC, WORLD LEADERS MET'.

Max flips to the stock quotes. He can't believe how far things have dovetailed. He shakes his head in disbelief when an envelope appears in front of him. It belongs to Lenny Meyer.

LENNY MEYER
The Torah.
(orders from waitress)
Coffee.

MAX
What is it?

LENNY MEYER
In Hebrew characters and numbers.

MAX
No, the two hundred and sixteen
number.

LENNY MEYER
I don't know.
(beat)
If you get it, maybe we can figure
it out.
(changing subject)
Can you really find it?

MAX
If the number's in there I'll find
it.

CUT TO:

52 INT. MAX'S APARTMENT -- DUSK

52

At his desk he rips open the envelope Lenny Meyer gave him. He pulls out a black disk and eyes it expectantly.

Just then, there's a knock on the door. The knock startles him.

A knock again.

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED:

52

Max looks out the peep-hole and sees nothing. Confused, he looks down at his thumb. It's not shaking.

There's a knock again. Max angrily unlocks the door and whips it open.

53 IN THE HALL WAY --

53

-- is Jenna with her calculator.

JENNA

Max.

MAX

Jenna!?

JENNA

Can we do one, Max?

MAX

Not now, Jenna.

JENNA

Please, Max.

Max shuts the door.

TIGHT SHOT of an ant crawling around Max's desk. Max smashes it with a pencil.

Max paces until there's another knock at the door.

Max peeks through the peep-hole. Two well-dressed large men, Brad and Abe the Babe, wait for the signal. Max knocks and the suits leave.

Then, Max slyly opens up his front door and quickly grabs the black attaché case in front of his door.

Donning a surgical mask and latex gloves, Max opens the case. Sitting in foam is a tiny but beautiful chip. Max studies it with awe.

Max carefully carries the chip over to the new, leaner Euclid. He welds it into Euclid's waiting wires.

Then, Max fires up Euclid. The newly toned machine whirls to life, buzzing like an eager puppy.

MAX

Happy birthday, Euclid.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

53

Then, Max carefully slips the disk into Euclid's drive. Hebrew characters pop on to Euclid's screen. Max pounds in several strings of code lightning fast.

The Hebrew letters suddenly switch to their numerical counterparts. Max toggles between Hebrew and numbers a few times -- impressed. He pounds in some code. Beautiful.

Then, he lifts his hand to slap the return button, but a sudden wave of fear stops him.

MAX (V.O.)
18.30. Press RETURN...

He gets up and grabs a ginseng soda from the fridge. He takes a sip from the soda and places it on the counter.

Max can hear Devi and Farrouhk starting to make love. Their gentle sounds drift through the wall. Max paces around the room.

MAX M (V.O.)
18.30. Press RETURN...

Max darts over and smacks RETURN. Moments later we see what Max sees:

ON THE SCREEN is a long string of zeros.

AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SCREEN Euclid's cursor blinks, waiting for instructions.

Max smacks RETURN again. He gets the same empty result.

Euclid's CURSOR BLINKS, waiting. Max yanks out the disk, crumples it up and throws it behind him.

But then, he notices his thumb twitching. He rubs his scar.

MAX
Ah God...

His neighbors' love sounds start to get rough. They're having fun.

Max almost throws up.

CUT TO:

54 THE BATHROOM --

54

-- where Max dry-heaves in the sink. Then, he forces himself to stand in front of the mirror.

(CONTINUED)

MAX

Help!

He grabs the gun and tries to roll up his sleeve. He can't get it to roll up. Suddenly, he's overwhelmed by pain. He quickly rips his shirt and fires the gun into his arm.

Nothing happens. He checks the barrel -- it's empty. Ohhh...

He goes to grab a bottle of medicine but knocks all the bottles into the sink.

He cuts his finger as he grabs one of the broken bottles. He loads the gun and fires the medicine into his arm. A wave of pain and nausea floods in. He grabs another bottle and fires it into his arm. Then, he fires another and another.

Frustrated, he collapses into the mirror. Stop, please stop.

Slightly sobbing he examines his scalp, pulling his hair apart. He sees something:

So he takes out a pair of scissors and starts removing some hair.

Meanwhile, his neighbors' lovemaking gets more intense. Their screams carry into Max's head.

Max finishes removing a patch of hair from the right side of his head. He has uncovered a light scar on his scalp. He examines it in the mirror.

Then, his neighbors' lovemaking turns outright evil. It sounds like Sodom and Gomorrah next door and Max can barely stand it.

A jolt of pain surges into his head. He grabs his scar as he vomits blood into the sink.

He starts banging his head against the mirror. He bangs his head again and again until the mirror CRACKS!

His neighbors are cumming and their cries of joy are twisted and agonizing. Fuck You! Fuck You! Fuck You!

The mathematician looks at himself and begins to sob. He reloads the gun and fires it right into the scar on his head, where the pain is coming from.

Max collapses to the ground in complete agony until the bare bulb in the bathroom starts blinking on and off. Suddenly, the pain is gone.

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED: (2)

54

Then, he hears something. It's Euclid, buzzing with life. He gets to his feet and heads into Euclid.

The main monitor is screaming with numbers. The lights in the room flicker on and off like on a disco dance floor. A filo substance billows out of Euclid.

And then, a number pops on to the screen. Max estimates how many digits are on the screen.

It appears to be THE number. Max whacks the PRINT button. Nothing happens. He tries again. Nothing.

So, Max grabs a piece of paper and a pencil. He starts writing down the number. He mumbles each digit as he sees it.

But then, he stops writing. Power surge! He stares at the number. Something clicks in his head. His eyes go wide. He barely musters an -- Oh...

WE MOVE CLOSER and CLOSER into the number, DEEPER and DEEPER into the screen. Until finally a SINGLE PIXEL fills the screen and we're in the --

55 BLINDING WHITE VOID

55

-- where we hear several deep peaceful breaths.

Then, a fuse blows.

BLACKOUT.

A phone ringing...once...twice...then we hear --

MRS OVADIA (O.S.)

He's alive. His eyes are moving.

DEVI (O.S.)

Yes hello?

56 FADE BACK INTO THE MAIN ROOM.

56

Max's eyes slowly open.

DEVI (O.S.)

He's busy right now. I'm sorry.

Max is sprawled out in front of Euclid. A large amount of blood, from his nose, is semi-dried out on his chin and chest. Devi hangs up the phone.

Mrs Ovadia and Farrouhk, brandishing a crowbar, stand over him.

(CONTINUED)

MAX

What happened?

DEVI

You were screaming...

MRS OVADIA

Who told you you can put extra locks
on the door, Mr Cohen?

FARROUHK

(to Mrs Ovadia)
Shhh!

MAX

(suddenly jolting up and remembering)
The number, the number.

Max looks at Euclid. The screen is blank. He looks at the mainframe. It is covered with the filo substance. Then he looks at the piece of paper he wrote the number on. Only a few dozen numbers are on the page. The last number he wrote is barely a scribble.

MRS OVADIA

You're out, you hear me, you're out
of here. I've had it with you. Look
at all this junk.

Max starts reciting the numbers. Then, he suddenly realizes something. He continues reciting the numbers from memory.

MAX

Four...zero...seven...it's in my
head, it's in my head. Somehow I
memorized it. I got it up here!

He points to his head. But what is it?

Mrs Ovadia starts looking at all the junk in the room.

DEVI

Are you OK?

MRS OVADIA

What is this stuff? What does it do?

Max finally realizes that all these strangers are in his womb. He flips.

MAX

Out, out, you have to get out. Get
out, get out, it's my room!

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED: (2)

56

FARROUHK
 (to Devi)
 Let's go.

The phone starts ringing, again.

MRS OVADIA
 That's it, no way. You're the one
 out of here, mister.

MAX
 Out! Out!

The three neighbors retreat to the front door.

DEVI
 Are you OK?

MAX
 Out! Get out!

Max slams the door in their faces.

Max rubs his chin and looks around the room. He starts saying the number to himself. He gets more and more excited as he recites each digit.

CUT TO:

57 INT. COFFEE SHOP -- NIGHT

57

Max stirs cream into his coffee. Then, he pulls out the Journal.

In the clouds of a Lancet-Percy ad -- in the Journal -- Max writes down the two hundred and sixteen-digit number. He studies it, examines it, draws on it, tries to figure out what it is.

Frustrated, Max pops a handful of pills and crumples the paper.

CUT TO:

58 INT. MAX'S BATHROOM -- LATER

58

Max stares at his bald head in the mirror. All of his hair has been removed. A fleshy scar sits on his scalp above his right ear.

Max ignores the incessantly ringing phone.

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED:

58

Max flips through an old neuroscience book. He examines a few illustrations and finds the part of his brain that's killing him.

MAX (V.O.)

Must be an explanation, must be a reason. Must.

With a thick black marker, he carefully outlines the part of his head that is causing the pain.

CUT TO:

59 INT. MAX'S APARTMENT -- LATER

59

Max sits in his chair staring at the stock market monitor. The phone continues to ring.

Numbers drift by.

A single beam of sunlight leaks through the window and shines on the edge of the screen. Walking along the edge in the sunlight is a tiny ant.

MAX

Bastard.

Max gets up to squash it. But as he gets closer he suddenly feels mercy. He looks at the ant in awe.

And then, his attention switches to the ticker. Nineteen and a half. Thirty-nine and a half. Six and three-quarters. Seven and a half. Twelve and a quarter.

Max states the numbers right before they enter on to the screen. I know these...Seven and a quarter. Two and a half...oh...oh...

Max strains to figure out what is going on. Suddenly, he's overwhelmed with fear. They're going down, down, down. My God. It's gonna crash, it's gonna fucking crash.

CUT TO:

60 INT. SOL'S APARTMENT -- DUSK

60

Max charges into the room. Sol is looking at his Go board. Sol looks up when Max comes in.

SOL

You're early. I was just studying our...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED:

60

SOL (CONT'D)
(noticing Max's head)
What did you do to yourself?

MAX
You lied to me.

SOL
I thought you were going to take a
break.

MAX
You found the two sixteen number in
Pi, didn't you? You saw it.

Sol doesn't respond.

MAX
I saw it, Sol. I don't know what
happened, but I know things. The
market is going to crash. It's going
to crash. It hasn't yet, but I know
it will. I saw it, Sol. What is it,
Sol? What's the number?

Sol sighs. He looks down at the board and collects himself.

SOL
You have it?

MAX
It's in my head!

SOL
(leveling with Max)
OK, sit down.

Max does.

SOL
I gave up before I pinpointed it.
But my guess is that certain problems
cause computers to get stuck in a
particular loop. The loop leads to
meltdown, but right before they crash
they...they become 'aware' of their
own structure. The computer has a
sense of its own silicon nature and
it prints out its ingredients.

MAX
The computer becomes conscious?

(CONTINUED)

SOL

In some ways...I guess...

MAX

(to himself)

Studying the pattern made Euclid
conscious of itself. Before it died
it spit out the number. That
consciousness is the number.

SOL

No, Max, it's only a nasty bug.

MAX

It's more than that.

SOL

No it's not. It's a dead end. There's
nothing there.

MAX

It's a door, Sol. A door.

SOL

A door in front of a cliff. You're
driving yourself over the edge. You
need to stop.

MAX

Stop? How can I stop? I'm this close.

SOL

The bug doesn't only destroy
computers.

MAX

What are you saying?

SOL

Look what it did to your computer.
Look what it's doing to you.

Max doesn't respond. It's killing you. Leave it unknown.

MAX

(clarity)

You were afraid of it. That's why
you quit.

SOL

Max, I got burnt.

(CONTINUED)

MAX

C'mon, Sol.

SOL

It caused my stroke.

MAX

That's bullshit. It's math, numbers, ideas. Mathematicians are supposed to go out to the edge. You taught me that!

SOL

Max, there's more than math! There's a whole world...

MAX

That's where discoveries happen. We have to go out there alone, all alone, no one can accompany us. We have to search the edge. We have to risk it all. But you ran from it. You're a coward.

SOL

Max, it's death!

Max stands up and screams down at Sol.

MAX

You can't tell me what it is. You don't know. You've retreated to your goldfish, to your books, to your Go, but you're not satisfied.

Sol grabs his cane and whacks the Go board.

SOL

Get out! Max, get out!

MAX

I want to understand it. I want to know!

Sol swings his cane as Max heads for the door.

SOL

Out!

CUT TO:

61 INT. SUBWAY, PORT AUTHORITY -- NIGHT

61

Max paces on a downtown train as it pulls into 42nd Street.

Through the open doors, Max notices a Young Photographer in jeans and a leather photographing him from the uptown platform.

Max is enraged and screams at him. The man ducks behind a column but a few moments later he's back snapping pictures.

MAX

Hey!

The doors start to shut, but Max uses his body to get off the train.

The Photographer sees him coming and flees.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Hey! Stop!

Max follows the man's movement on his platform. When the young lad shoots up the exit stairs, Max does so as well.

Max catches a glimpse of his foe entering the catacombs heading towards Times Square. Max pursues.

Max chases him down a looooong passage.

But, he loses him at an underground five-way fork in the road. One staircase is Uptown and Queens...another is Brooklyn...one other is unlabeled.

Still enraged, Max marches forward. Just then, he catches a glimpse of the Photographer exiting the station.

SMASH CUT TO:

62 EXT. TIMES SQUARE -- NEON NIGHT

62

In the heart of New York, Max spins around searching for his foe.

His frustration mounts until out of the corner of his eye he sees a strange reflection. Not knowing what it is of, he turns around to see the source. The reflection is from a giant brilliant stock ticker -- fifty yards long and luminous.

Max stares at the quotes. They are hypnotizing and Max is suddenly calm.

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED:

62

Then, Max has a premonition. He turns and spots the Photographer in front of a porn shop on 8th and 42nd.

CUT TO:

63 EXT. PORN SHOP, 42ND STREET -- NIGHT

63

Max whacks the Photographer against a backlit image of a Hustler Centerfold. The man screams.

MAX

Who are you working for?

PHOTOGRAPHER

Here, here.

The Photographer hands Max his wallet.

MAX

I don't want your wallet. Who sent you?

Max grabs the kid's camera.

MAX

Who the hell sent you!?

PHOTOGRAPHER

Wha... I'm sorry...

MAX

Who are you?!

PHOTOGRAPHER

I'm... a... student. I've got an assignment for class.

The Photographer pulls out his student ID. Max looks at it. Then, he rips out the film -- exposing it.

MAX

Leave me alone, damn it. Leave me alone.

Max hands the man back his camera and leaves.

CUT TO:

64 EXT. MAX'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

64

Max heads home in a furious state. Suddenly, he sees two of Marcy's men blocking his path. It's Brad and Jake and they

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED:

64

don't look happy. Max spins around and sees Marcy Dawson blocking his exit.

MAX

Marcy? What's the matter?

Max retreats.

MARCY DAWSON

Let's take a ride, Max.

MAX

I can't, I got work...

Max looks back at the tough guys who are almost on top of him.

MARCY DAWSON

We had a deal! Now get in the car!

Marcy releases a vicious slap that nearly knocks Max down. Max whimpers:

MAX

Don't ever hit...

He pushes Marcy aside and darts.

65 EXT. CITY STREETS -- NIGHT

65

Max flees. Jake and Brad charge after him. They're right on him -- he has a meter or so on them. Max screams for help.

He scurries through a construction site and over a footbridge.

Then, he runs into an all-night --

66 -- BODEGA.

66

The tough guys chase after him and he gets a bit of a lead in the narrow aisles. He pleads with the owners for help -- nothing doing.

Jake heads him off and uses his body to block the aisle. But Max grabs a can of beans and slams it down on the tough guy's nose. The guy goes down and Max shoots out the exit.

CUT TO:

67 EXT. UNDERNEATH CAR -- NIGHT

67

Max dives under a car and crawls for terror. He sees two sets of feet run by. Max starts to relax when he notices a

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED:

67

pair of heels on the other side of the car. Marcy bends down and looks at him.

MARCY DAWSON

Max. Enough is enough...

MAX

Leave me alone. I don't know anything.

Max retreats in the opposite direction. Suddenly, Jake and Brad grab him and drag him out.

MAX

Hey! Hey! Help me!

They search him, taking his wallet, keys, everything.

Marcy looks at the guys who shake their heads. She walks over to Max and shows him the front page of the Wall Street Journal. It reads, 'MARKET CRASHING'.

MARCY DAWSON

Didn't your mother ever tell you not to play with matches? The market is going to crash, Max.

MAX

I didn't do anything. I didn't play the market.

MARCY DAWSON

But we did.

Marcy pulls out a folded, worn piece of paper. She opens it. It's Max's stock pick that he threw out. Part of THE number is on the page.

MARCY DAWSON

You have to be careful where you throw out your trash.

MAX

How could you do that?

MARCY DAWSON

You gave us faulty information. You dangled the carrot, the right picks, but then you only gave us part of the code.

MAX

You selfish, irresponsible cretins. How could you be so stupid!?

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: (2)

67

Marcy jabs Max in his stomach. Max falls to the ground. The tough guys sit on him.

MARCY DAWSON

C'mon, Max. This isn't a game anymore. We're playing on a global scale. We used your code. Foolish... I admit. But we can fix things if we make some careful picks. Give us the rest of the code so we can set things right.

MAX

C'mon! I know who you are. You're not gonna save the world.

MARCY DAWSON

Look, Max...

Marcy nods to Jake who pulls out a gun and points it at Max's head.

MAX

My God, what are you doing?

MARCY DAWSON

Information is the private language of capital. We tried to establish a symbiotic relationship but if you choose to compete and enter our niche we are forced to comply with the laws of nature.

Max thinks for a second. Max thinks hard. He realizes he can't give them the number.

MAX

You can't kill me!

MARCY DAWSON

C'mon, Max. You don't get it. I don't give a shit about you. I only care about what's in your fucking head. If you won't help us help yourself then I'll have only one choice. Destroy the competition. I'll take you out of the game. Survival of the fittest, Max. And we've got the fuckin' gun.

Jake cocks the gun. Max starts to cry.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: (3)

67

MAX

You bastards! You stupid bastards!

Suddenly, Jake is whacked with a sawn-off baseball bat. He smashes into the sidewalk. It is Lenny Meyer.

Just then, a station wagon screeches up to the curb. Ephraim and a bunch of other burly Jews jump out.

LENNY MEYER

Max!

Max looks at Lenny. Ephraim grabs Max and pulls him towards the station wagon.

LENNY MEYER

C'mon! C'mon! C'mon!...

Ephraim helps Max into the back seat of the wagon and climbs in after him.

Lenny Meyer jumps into the passenger seat and the graybearded Yisrael slams on the gas pedal.

68 INT. LENNY MEYER'S CAR, MOVING -- NIGHT

68

Yisrael yanks the steering wheel to the left, the old station wagon skids around a corner.

LENNY MEYER

Stay down!

Ephraim pushes Max's head down. Yisrael takes another corner sharply.

LENNY MEYER

We've been looking for you.

MAX

What's going on?

LENNY MEYER

Do you have the number?

MAX

What is it?

LENNY MEYER

Do you have the number?

MAX

Yeah, I have it!

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED:

68

LENNY MEYER

You have it! Where is it, Max? Where is the number?! You have it written down?

MAX

What is it?

Lenny nods to Ephraim who starts scavenging through Max's pockets. Max resists. The other guys hold him down.

MAX

What are you doing!? What the hell are you doing!?

LENNY MEYER

We're not joking around, Max? Where's the number?

MAX

(pushes Ephraim away)
It's not on me. It's in my head.

LENNY MEYER

You memorized it. Did you give it to them?

MAX

Who?

LENNY MEYER

Who!? Those Wall Street bastards.

MAX

Why do you care?

LENNY MEYER

Just answer me!

MAX

Screw you!

LENNY MEYER

(in Hebrew)
Hit him!

Ephraim pounds Max in the ribs hard -- really fucking hard.

LENNY MEYER

(in Hebrew to the driver)
Stop the car!

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED: (2)

68

MAX

What are you doing? Let me go.

Yisrael screeches the car to a halt. Lenny spins around in his seat and looks Max in the face.

LENNY MEYER

C'mere. You listen to me! You're dealing with something really big now, Max. I don't want to hurt you, so answer me. Did you give it to them?

MAX

They've got part of it. Now, get off me!

LENNY MEYER

Damn it! Damn it! They're using it.

MAX

Using what?

LENNY MEYER

Shut up!

MAX

Let go!

Max chews into Ephraim's hand which is pinning him. Ephraim screams and lets loose a punch to Max's jaw.

LENNY MEYER

No, don't!

But Lenny is late, and Max's world -- as well as ours -- goes black.

CUT TO:

69 INT. MAX'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

69

Max stares suspiciously at the bathroom. He slowly picks up his drill. Wielding it like a hammer, he carefully advances into the --

70 BATHROOM

70

-- where he looks into the sink. He almost vomits when he sees a piece of human brain sitting above the drain. Ants swarm across its surface.

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

70

Max becomes furious. He whacks it with the drill. Blood flies up into his face. In a wild rage, he smashes it and punches it.

Then, he drops the drill and uses his bare hands to shove the brain down the drain. Screaming like a madman, he jams it until it is gone.

CUT TO:

71 INT. BASEMENT, SHUL -- DAY

71

A wise-looking, bearded Hasidic man with benevolent, piercing eyes stands tenderly over Max. He wears traditional black clothes. Lenny Meyer paces nervously in the background.

As Max comes through, Rav Cohen speaks.

RABBI COHEN

Max, Max. You're all right. I'm Rabbi Cohen. Cohen like you. I'm sorry for what Lenny did, he's been reprimanded. It is not our way. Are you OK?

MAX

Yeah, yeah.

RABBI COHEN

Everything will be fine, Max. You need to give us the number. Do you have it?

MAX

What is it?

LENNY MEYER

(charging over)
I told you we don't know.

MAX

You wouldn't be so flipped out if you didn't know. What's happening to me?

LENNY MEYER

Give us the number!

MAX

Screw you!

RABBI COHEN

OK, OK! Lenny, easy!
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED:

71

RABBI COHEN (CONT'D)

Max, I'll tell you what's going on.
Just calm down.

(deep breath)

The Talmud tells us it began two
thousand years ago, when the Romans
destroyed the Second Temple.

MAX

What are you...

RABBI COHEN

Just, give me a chance. You'll
understand everything if you listen.

Max takes out his pills and starts feeding himself some.

RABBI COHEN

The Romans also murdered all of our
priesthood -- the Cohanim --the
Cohens, and with their deaths they
destroyed our greatest Secret. In
the center of the great Temple was
the holy of holies which was the
heart of Jewish life. This was the
earthly residence for our God. The
one God. It contained the Ark of the
Tabernacle which stored the original
Ten Commandments that God gave to
Moses. Only one man could enter this
space once a year on the holiest day
of the year -- Yom Kippur. On the
Day of Atonement all of Israel would
descend upon Jerusalem to witness
the High Cohen's trip into the holy
of holies. If the holy man was pure
he would re-emerge a few moments
later and Israel was secured a
prosperous year. It meant that we
were one year closer to the Messianic
Age. Closer to the return of the
Garden of Eden. But if he was impure
he would die instantly and it meant
that we were doomed. The High Cohen
had a single ritual to perform in
the holy of holies. He had to intone
a single word.

Rav Cohen takes a dramatic pause. Max is anxious to hear the
end of the story.

MAX

So?

(CONTINUED)

RABBI COHEN

That word was the true name of God.

MAX

Yeah...

RABBI COHEN

The true name, which only the Cohanim knew, was two hundred and sixteen letters long.

A long beat.

MAX

(incredulous)

You're telling me that the number in my head is the name of God!?

Wondrously, Max rubs the scar on his head.

RABBI COHEN

(passion building)

Yes... it's the key into the Messianic Age. As the Romans burnt the Temple, the Talmud says, the High Cohen walked into the flames. He took his secret to the top of the burning building. The heavens opened up and took the key from the priest's outstretched hand. We've been searching for the key ever since. And you may have found it. Now let us find out.

MAX

That's what happened. I saw God.

RABBI COHEN

No, no, Max. You're not pure. You can't see God unless you're pure.

MAX

It's more than God... it's everything. It's math and science and nature... the universe. I saw the universe's DNA.

RABBI COHEN

You saw nothing. Only a glimpse.

MAX

I saw everything.

(CONTINUED)

RABBI COHEN

There's much more. We can unlock the door with the key. It will show God that we are pure again. He will return us to the Garden.

MAX

Garden? You're not pure. How are you pure? I found it. I'm the one who has the number.

RABBI COHEN

Who do you think you are? You are a vessel from our God. You are carrying a delivery that was meant for us.

MAX

It was given to me. It's inside of me. It's changing me.

RABBI COHEN

It's killing you. Because you are not ready to receive it.

LENNY MEYER

It will kill you!

MAX

And what will it do to you?

LENNY MEYER

We're pure. Give us the number!

MAX

The number is nothing. You know that!

RABBI COHEN

We can use it. We can wield it.

MAX

It's just a number. I'm sure you've written down every two hundred sixteen number. You've translated all of them. You've intoned them all. Haven't you? But what's it gotten you? The number is nothing. It's the meaning. It's the syntax. It's what's between the numbers. If you could understand you would. But it's not for you! I've got it. I understand it. I'm going to see it!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED: (4)

71

MAX (CONT'D)
 (whispers to Rav Cohen)
 Rabbi... I was chosen.

CUT TO:

72 EXT. CITY STREETS -- DAY

72

Max races through the streets of New York. He is wide-eyed.

MAX (V.O.)
 17.13. Personal note: Getting faster,
 something in the story within the
 story, if you stare into space like
 that, you could go blind, because
 what can the eye see without the
 brain? Nothing... if the brain can't
 make a picture and image of what
 it's seeing... it sees nothing... it
 must be just beyond the edge of what
 I can see, because my brain -- my
 brain is too far behind... but my
 eyes can feel it, and I know that
 when It happens I will be ready to
 see past this edge... because that's
 why I came here, and I think, I even
 think that these headaches, with
 each drop that has fallen on my brain,
 the drops that hit so goddamn hard,
 what if, maybe, they may have been,
 somehow, a distillation of that...
 ability to see. A little further...
 and I will... already I am beginning
 to see...

People fly by Max in a spiraling whirlwind.

73 EXT. SOL'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

73

A pumped and excited Max paces the hall as he rings the bell.

The door opens. But it isn't Sol. It's a young beautiful woman wearing a simple black dress. Her name is Jenny Robeson and she is Sol's niece.

JENNY ROBESON
 Can I help you?

MAX
 (confused)
 Sol?

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED:

73

JENNY ROBESON
Were you a friend?

MAX
What do you mean?

JENNY ROBESON
He had a second stroke.

MAX
Where is he?

Jenny's eyes drop. No.

Max rushes into Sol's study. The room is covered with Sol's Pi research books. It seems Sol had recently come out of retirement. Max looks at a few of Sol's books. Then, he finds a piece of paper with Sol's handwriting on it. On the paper is THE number. Max slides it into his pocket.

Max looks at the Go board. The pieces are arranged in a giant spiral across the board.

DISSOLVE TO:

74 INT. MAX'S APARTMENT -- DAY

74

Max sits on his bed staring at Sol's handwritten number. Then, he notices that his thumb is twitching. He drops Sol's note.

MAX
Stop it, please!

He dumps the contents of the bottle of pills into his hand.

Max stops as he prepares to shove the pills down his throat. He looks at the pills. Then, he looks at Euclid around him. He throws the pills and the bottle to the floor. They fall to earth in slow motion.

The room rushes in on Max and so does the pain. It throws him to the ground and he bashes his head against the floor.

MAX
(courageously)
No. No. I'm ready. I'm ready! Show me!

Max recites THE number and uses it to get to his feet. The pain rips apart his voice.

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED:

74

Max's pain and anger transform into violence. He attacks Euclid furiously. He recites the number with rage in his voice. THREE, SEVEN, TWO...

He smashes the old computer apart. He tosses his step stool through the mainframe.

Then, he goes to the window and tries to rip off the cardboard covering the glass panes. Nothing doing, so he yanks the entire window wide open.

Sunlight floods the room and throws Max into the --

75 BLINDING WHITE VOID

75

-- where Max looks around starry-eyed. The pain is gone. Everything is new to Max -- even his hands. The stress releases from his brow and his shoulders sag.

Max continues to recite the number. His voice becomes tender and peaceful. As he starts to become part of the void, his voice turns into a whisper and his eyes start to close.

Then, he hears Devi.

DEVI (O.S.)

Max. No, Max, no. Are you OK!? Oh my God, Max!

Her voice reaches into the void.

DEVI (O.S.)

Stay with me, Max! Breathe, Max. Breathe!

Max looks towards her voice.

DEVI (O.S.)

Yes, Max. Listen to me...

CUT TO:

76 INT. MAX'S MAIN ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

76

Devi leans over Max. Max's eyes are open while he continues to recite the number.

DEVI

Breathe, Max! Breathe. Focus.

Max turns away from Devi and we return to the --

77 BLINDING WHITE VOID 77

-- where Max continues to recite the number.

DEVI (O.S.)

No, Max. No. Stay with me, Max. Stay
with me. Touch me, Max.

CUT TO:

78 INT. MAX'S MAIN ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER 78

Devi grabs Max's palm. Max's fingers wrap around her hand.
We return to --

79 BLINDING WHITE VOID 79

-- where Max stops reciting the number. He suddenly opens
his fear-filled eyes.

MAX

No!!! Sol. Sol!

Max reaches out into the void.

MATCH CUT TO:

80 INT. MAX'S MAIN ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER 80

Max grabs Devi and hugs her. He gasps for air as he collapses
into her arms sobbing.

MAX

Sol! You were right, Sol! He was
right.

Max sobs. He holds on to her for dear life.

And then, he realizes that Devi is not in his arms. He is
holding on to himself.

Then, Max notices Sol's note on the ground. He looks at THE
number. He collects himself and catches his breath.

CUT TO:

81 INT. MAX'S BATHROOM -- DAY 81

Max looks at Sol's note. He lights a match and burns it.

Next, he prepares something in the sink.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED:

81

We hear the whine of a motor. Then, it stops. Max looks at himself in the mirror. He smiles. Then he gets solemn.

MAX (V.O.)

17.22. Personal note: When I was a little kid, my mother told me not to stare into the sun. So once, when I was six, I did.

He takes a deep breath. Then, we hear the motor again. Max lifts up his arm. He's holding a drill. He places the bit against the math section of his scalp.

He applies pressure and drills into his brain.

Max collapses.

QUICK CUT TO:

82 EXT. CITY PLAYGROUND -- DAY

82

TIGHT ON a tree branch gently blowing in the wind.

Max watches it with peaceful, understanding eyes. He wears a hat on his head.

He listens to the wind in the trees.

Just then, Jenna surprises him with her Fisher Price calculator on hand.

JENNA

Max, Max! Look!

Jenna hands Max a leaf.

JENNA

Pretty, huh? Can we do one Max, can we?

Max shrugs, not able to say no.

JENNA

How about two hundred and fifty-five times a hundred and eighty-three.

Jenna types in the number.

Max is about to say no to Jenna, but then he decides to give it a shot.

Max thinks, he really thinks.

(CONTINUED)

82 CONTINUED:

82

Jenna presses the equals button.

JENNA

I got it! I got it! What's the answer?

But Max doesn't have an answer. For a moment he smiles.

MAX

I don't know. I really don't know.
What is it Jenna?

JENNA

Forty-six thousand six hundred and
sixty-five.

MAX

Oh.

Max stares at the beautiful child.

JENNA

How about two hundred fifty-five
times one hundred eighty-three? I
got it! What's the answer?

Max looks up at the tree. It leaves blow gently in the wind.
Peacefully, we:

FADE TO BLACK.