

**Pi**

by

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TITLES EXPLODE TO WHITE

SLOW FADE TO:

EXTREME CLOSE-UP of MAXIMILIAN COHEN'S eyes popping open.

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

Max jolts his head from his desk and tries to orient him-self 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 voiceover begins:

MAX (V.O.)  
Monday, September first.  
Six-fifteen.

INT. BATHROOM - DAWN

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

MAX (V.O.)  
The alchemist awakes.  
(Imitating)  
"Turn lead into gold, Max,  
lead into gold." Today, I find it.

TIGHT 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. He drinks from the sink and splashes a generous amount of water onto 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.

INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - MAIN ROOM - DAY

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 with circuit boards. Cables hang from the ceiling like vines in a Brazilian rain forest. They all seem to be wired together forming 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 topnotch. The stack  
of 286's 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 peephole on His front door. No one is there. He unbolts the five lock and slides into the hall.

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - DAY

As he secures his apartment, a Young girl named JENNA runs up to him. Her MOM, down the hall, looks apologetic.

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

JENNA

Max, Max! Can we do one?

MOM

(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

Okay, seventy-three  
divided by twenty-two.

MAX

(instantly again)

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

EXT. CHINATOWN - DAY

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

MAX (V.O.)

Somewhere in there.  
Somewhere. I know it's right  
in front of me. The pattern.  
They say it's chaos, it can't  
be understood, too much  
complexity.

EXT. ELECTRONIC MEGADUMP - DAY

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

MAX (V.O.)

History it's there.  
Lurking, shaping.  
structuring, hiding, right  
beneath the surface.

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

EXT PLAYGROUND - DAY

MOVE IN

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

MAX (V.O.)

The cycling of disease epidemics,  
the wax and wane of Caribou populations  
in the Arctic, sunspot cycles,  
the rise and fall of the  
Nile and yes! the New York Stock  
Exchange, they are all the  
same.

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.

MAX (V.O.)

I'll find this structure,  
this order, this perfection.

INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - DAY

Max stares intensely at the ticker on the small TV that sits next to his monitors.

MAX (V.O.)

Turn lead into gold.  
The first. Right here. Right  
here. With math. The numbers  
of the stock market are my  
lead. When I find the  
pattern, then I will find  
gold.

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

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.

MAX

Hello?

WOMAN'S VOICE

Maximilian Cohen, please.

MAX

Yeah?

WOMAN'S VOICE

Mr. Cohen?

MAX

Who's this?

WOMAN'S VOICE

Hi. my name is Marcy Dawson.  
I'm a partner with the predictive  
strategy firm Lancet-Percy. Can I  
speak with Mr. Cohen, please?

MAX

I told you...

The printer finishes printing.

MARCY DAWSON

Mr. Cohen! How  
are you? It's been a long  
time. Sorry I haven't been in  
touch. But I was hoping you  
would allow me to take you to  
lunch tomorrow, say one  
o'clock?

MAX

Sorry, I can't.

MARCY DAWSON

We're very anxious to talk  
with you, sir

MAX

I can't.

MARCY DAWSON

I'm prepared to  
make you a generous...

Max hurries to wrap up the conversation.

MAX

I don't take offers for  
my research. You know that.

Sorry, I Couldn't help you.

MARCY DAWSON

Mr. Cohen, give  
me a moment...

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

He checks the peephole, His landlady. MRS. OVADIA, is sweeping the hallway stairs humming a turn-of-the century (the last one, not this one) tune.

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

INT.MAX'S BUILDING HALLWAY - DAY

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 weighted down by a bunch of bags filled with food.

DEVI

Max, good!

MAX

Hi, Devi.

DEVI

I grabbed you some  
somosas.

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. Don't worry.

MAX

It's fine. It's fine.

Devi pats down his hair. Max is humiliated.

DEVI

You need a mom.

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

MAX

I have to go.

DEVI

Your somosas!

An embarrassed Max takes the bag.

MAX

Thanks.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

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 printout.

MAX (V.O.)

Sixteen, twenty-seven. Results: Euclid shows tomorrow's Dow closing up by four points. Anomalies include PRONET at sixty-five and a quarter, a career high. Possible explanations, either A, an error in the June fifth algorithm, or B, Euclid's main processor is running a recursion...

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

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

VOICE FROM OFFSCREEN

Oh sorry, am I bothering you?

Max shrugs and looks over.

The voice belongs to LENNY MEYER—a bearded man in his late 20s sucking on a cigarette.

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'll put it out.

(Which he does)  
The name's Lenny Meyer

Lenny sticks out his hand. Max responds with a small nod.

LENNY MEYER

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 okay.

(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

I'm sorry, I'm very busy.

LENNY MEYER

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

MAX

(Sarcastic)

Really?

LENNY MEYER

Yes, 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

Tefillin. You know Tefillin.  
I know it looks strange.  
But it's an amazing  
tradition that has a  
tremendous amount of power.  
It's a mitzvah for all  
Jewish men to do. Mitzvahs,  
good deeds, are spiritual  
food for our hearts and our  
heads.

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?

Just then, Max pays his bill and prepares to leave.

MAX

I gotta go...

LENNY MEYER

Are you okay? Max? Max?

MAX

I'm sorry, bye.

LENNY MEYER

Well, maybe some other time.

INT. MAX'S BATHROOM - NIGHT  
Max splashes water on his face.

MAX

Please God, Let it be a  
small one.

He pulls a metal vaccinating 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.

MAX (V.O.)

Sixteen thirty-five.  
Second headache in under  
twenty-four hours. They're  
getting more frequent

now...more painful, too. Drugs  
 don't work, just take the  
 edge off of it. Just gotta  
 wait for the nosebleed.  
 Relief comes from my nose.

Next door, he hears Devi and her boyfriend talking.

FARROUHK (O.S.)  
 So I gotta make this drop off  
 in Harlem and on the way down  
 there's these three kids  
 hailing me.

Max slaps himself in the face a few times.

DEVI (O.S.)  
 You stopped?

FARROUHK (O.S.)  
 I was tight, so...

Max 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

MAX  
 Ahh...

Max walks back into the  
 MAIN ROOM

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

MAX  
 Leave me alone.

His neighbors conversation begins to build in volume  
 and distortion.

FARROUHK (O.S.)  
 So I drop them off in the  
 Village and they dart.

DEVI (O.S.)  
 Oh God...

Max gags and rubs his head.

FARROUHK (O.S.)  
 I get out, grab my bat and  
 start running. One of the kids,

maybe sixteen, I catch a block  
later he's cursing at me, calling  
me a Paki bastard. So I whacked him,  
right in the head.

DEVI (O.S.)

Farrouhk!

The pain seems to disappear. Max looks at his hand that was  
rubbing his head.

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

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

FARROUHK's words begin to overpower Max.

FARROUHK (O.S.)

I'm kicking the bastard in the  
ribs banging his ass, knocking his  
head against the curb, harder  
and harder, I fucking lost  
it. A hot dog guy starts  
screaming "You're cracking his  
skull, you're cracking his  
skull." So they pulled me off  
of him and calmed me down.  
Cops said he had it coming to  
him.

Then something starts pounding the door. The doorknob quivers,  
the locks unbolt. The chains are the only thing keeping out  
the intruder. The door shakes and the chains are strained.

MAX is paralyzed with terror.

MAX

No! No!

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

BLINDING WHITE VOID

A moment of silence, then we  
CUT TO

INT. BATHROOM - DAWN

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  
MAIN ROOM

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

back.

MARCY DAWSON

Mr. Cohen. Marcy  
Dawson here again I was just  
looking over my schedule and  
I realized I'll be in your  
neighborhood tomorrow around  
three.

Max heads to the  
FRONT DOOR

and checks the locks. He is barely listening to Marcy

MAX

(Groggy)

Who is...

The locks seem secure.

MARCY DAWSON

Marcy Dawson from  
Lancet-Percy I'm so anxious  
to meet you. It will be worth  
it—for both of us I promise.  
See you at your house at  
three, okay?

MAX

My house...how do...

MARCY DAWSON

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

Damn.

Max checks the peephole - all clear.

Then, he opens his -

CLOSET

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.

EXT. SOL'S HALLWAY - DAY 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 70's. 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! How are you?

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

MAX Okay.

EXT. SOL'S STUDY - MOMENTS LATER

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

Stop thinking, Max, just feel. Use your intuition. It's the only way to get into the flow.

(Beat)

What did you think of Hamlet?

MAX

I didn't get to it.

SOL

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

MAX

I'm so close, Sol. I'm so close but I just can't grab it.

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

The more I see you, the  
more I see myself thirty  
years ago. My greatest pupil.  
Published at 16, Ph.D. at 20.

MAX

We'll see.

SOL

But life isn't just  
mathematics. I spent forty  
years looking for patterns in  
Pi, I found nothing.

MAX

You found things...

SOL

I found things, but not a  
pattern.

INT. MOVING TRAIL - DAY

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.)

Tuesday, September  
second, eighteen twelve. If  
Sol hadn't gotten sick who  
knows where math would be. He  
spent years in the numbers of  
Pi. Searching for meaning, for  
order.

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.

He looks down at his Wall Street journal and draws a circle  
with its diameter then he writes "A=pir<sup>2</sup>" and "C=2pir." Next  
he writes "pi=3.14159..."

MAX (V.O.)

Three point one  
four...off into infinity  
and maybe insanity. Somewhere  
in there he wanted sanity.  
Sanity like he found in the

circles Pi represented.  
 Simple, sane circles. If only  
 the stock market had circles.  
 Some type of sanity. Some  
 type of form, of shape.

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.

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

INT. APARTMENT STAIRCASE - DAY

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.

INT. COFFEE SHOP-DAY

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

He draws circles and other shapes across the page.

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

LENNY MEYER

Hey, Max, how you doing?

MAX

Oh, okay.

LENNY MEYER

Lenny Meyer.

(Motioning to the cigarette)

I'll put it out.

(Which he does)

So, what do you do?

MAX

Um, I work with computers  
 ...math.

LENNY MEYER

Really? What type of math?

MAX

Number theory. Mostly

research.

LENNY MEYER

Number theory? No  
 way, I work in theory, too.  
 Not traditional, though...  
 (Points to his yarmulke)  
 I work with the Torah.  
 (Awed by the coincidence)  
 Amazing.

MAX

(Passing it of as a coincidence)  
 Yeah...

LENNY MEYER

Yeah. You know Hebrew is  
 all numbers. It's all math.

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.

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

You see...The Hebrew "A," the  
 number 1. The Hebrew "B,"  
 Bet, is two. You can take any  
 Hebrew text and turn them into  
 a long string of numbers.

The waitress refills Max's coffee.

LENNY MEYER

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

Satisfied, Lenny lights up a cigarette and takes a drag.

MAX

(Mildly impressed)  
Kind of interesting.

LENNY MEYER  
(Proud of himself)  
Yeah, like take the  
Hebrew word for, say, the  
Garden of Eden, Kadem. Kuf,  
Dalei Mem...Kuf is a  
hundred. Daled, four Mem,  
forty. They equal one hundred  
and forty-four. Then take the  
tree of knowledge...in  
the garden, Aat Ha Haim, it  
equals two hundred and  
thirty-three. Now you can take  
that number and...

MAX  
They're Fibonacci numbers.

LENNY MEYER  
Huh?

MAX  
The Fibonacci sequence.  
Italian mathematician, thirteenth  
century. If you divide  
a hundred and forty-four into  
two hundred and thirty-three,  
it approaches theta.

LENNY MEYER  
Theta?

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

Lenny exhales the smoke. Max quickly graphs the number on his  
Wall Street Journal.

LENNY MEYER  
You're right, I never saw  
that before. That's the series  
you find in nature. Like the  
face of a sunflower.

MAX  
Wherever there's spirals.

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.

MAX

Math everywhere...

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.

MAX

(Serious)

Everywhere...

SLOW MOTION: Max looks at the spiral he just drew on the Wall Street Journal.

NORMAL SPEED Suddenly, Max stands up.

MAX

Oh my God...

INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - DAY

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.

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.)

Simple shapes!  
Tuesday, September second.  
Twenty-twenty-two. Sol! Sol!  
Sol! Shapes in the market.  
Why not? And they're spirals!  
Spirals!

Max traces a big circle on the journal. Then, he cuts it out with an X-acto blade. He cuts out the middle of the circle so that he has a thin loop like one of those futuristic frisbees. He tears part of the loop and stretches the circle out in front of him into a spiral.

MAX (V.O.)

A circle spread out overtime.  
It's open-ended. It has a  
beginning and it grows and  
changes through time. If I  
can find where it fits, if I  
can spin it and lock it into  
a group of numbers, then I  
can calculate the future.  
Lead into gold. Chaos into  
order Madness into sanity. Pain  
into bliss. Perfection.

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.

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 near (minus streetlights) darkness:

MAX

Shit!

TIGHT ON A FUSE BOX

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

MAX'S ROOM

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

Devi and Farrouhk are still at it.

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.

Then he gets it off he's stunned. Not only have the chips melted down, but a strange flaky substance covers the board.

MAX

What the...

Max grabs his face, frustrated.

Devi and Farroakk are giggling, having a great time. Max stares at the wall.

Then he angrily throws Euclid's mainframe onto the ground. It lands with a SMASH!

Under the mainframe is a small city of ANTS. They scramble for cover. Max furiously attacks them, stomping them out with his bands.

Then he jumps on the smashed mainframe. He slides to the ground and covers his face.

DISSOLVE TO

EXT. PLAYGROUND - DAY

TIGHT ON a tree branch shaking manically in the wind.

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

He pulls out the printout of his picks and examines them.

MAX (V.O.)  
 Wednesday, September third,  
 seven-fifteen. Results: AAR  
 at fourteen and a half-low,  
 very low. ABR at six and a  
 half-jeez. Six and a half, ABR  
 hasn't been beneath twenty in  
 ten years. Conclusion:  
 Simple. There is no pattern.  
 No pattern. Chaos, chaos, all  
 chaos.

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

INT. SOL'S STUDY - DAY

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  
 I don't know, first I got  
 these horrible picks. Then  
 Euclid spits out some  
 numbers. Never saw anything  
 like it and then it fries.  
 The whole machine just  
 crashed.

SOL  
 You have a printout?

MAX  
 Of?

SOL  
The picks, the number?

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 was it, a  
hundred and fifty, a  
thousand, two hundred  
sixteen!? How many?

MAX  
I don't know. 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  
Yeah.

SOL  
Remember Archimedes of  
Syracuse? The King asks  
Archimedes to determine if a  
present he's received was  
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, to relax. While stepping into the tub he observes the bathwater rise as he enters. 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!"—Greek for "I found it!"—and is so overwhelmed he runs dripping naked through the streets to the King's castle 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. Listen to your wife, she will give you perspective. Meaning, you need a break, Max, you have to take a bath, otherwise you'll get nowhere. There will be no order, only chaos. Go home and take a bath.

PUBLIC BENCH - MOMENTS LATER

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 standing at him.

Blood drips from the Man's hand. Max doesn't know what to make of it

A TRAIN SWISHES BY -

INT. MOVING TRAIN - LATER

Max reads an ad that says In big block letters 'MOSHIAC IS COMING!' He checks out a few of the other passengers. Then he notices a man reading a newspaper across from him.

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

MAX

Hey, excuse me, can I see that?

The man hands Max the paper. Max scans the article. Then He quickly turns to the listings. His finger barrels down a column. It stops at ABR.

MAX

Six and a half.

Max looks up the column for AAR.

MAX

Fourteen and a half. Oh, my...

Max stumbles toward the doors. He looks out the window: into the darkness of the tunnel.

MAX

(Out of breath)

My God. My God.

(Gets pumped to himself)

Yes! Yes!

SKINNY MAN (V.O.)

Hey, 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.

AT GRAND STREET

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

He hustles toward 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.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

He seems to have lost him, when he notices a business-woman with a pretty face heading right toward him. It 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.  
I thought you stood me up,  
so I was going to head home.

MAX

Who are you?

MARCY DAWSON

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

MAX

I'm sorry, I don't...

Marcy hasn't let go of Max's hand.  
She guides him toward a large black street 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.

MARCY DAWSON

I have something  
you won't be able to say no  
to. Why don't we take a spin  
in the limo?

MAX

No, no, no, really, I  
can't.

MARCY DAWSON

We're excited by your work.  
We can't wait to discuss...

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

The CHAUFFEUR reaches out to him. Max yanks his arm free and  
runs away. He whips around a corner.

INT. BODEGA - DAY

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. He checks the listing.

MAX

On the nose. On the damn nose.

Max turns the page on the Journal and sees the Lancet-Percy ad. Then he notices one of the bodega owners staring at him.

EXT. MAX'S APARTMENT - DAY

Max scouts his front door. The coast is clear.

INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - DAY

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 windowsill. He grabs an old glass slide and puts some of the flaky 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  
HALLWAY

where he looks at Devi's door, nervously. He gathers his courage and knocks on her door. Through the door 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.)  
Here we are. What are you  
examining—  
(At the door)  
a potato!?

She hands Max a bottle of iodine.

MAX  
Just something with my  
computer.

MAX'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Max uses his pinky to drip a drop of iodine on the slide.

Through the wall he hears Farrouhk arriving home.

DEVI (O.S.)  
The neighbor's up  
to his old science...

FARROUHK (O.S.)  
What neighbor?

DEVI (O.S.)  
Next door.

Max listens to the conversation for a few moments.

FARROUHK (O.S.)  
Why are you talking to that dork!

DEVI (O.S.)  
Shh! I just helped ...

FARROUHK (O.S.)  
Pounds on wall. Hey, dork, leave  
my girlfriend alone!

DEVI (O.S.)  
Farrouhk!

Max shakes his head. Then he finishes preparing the slide and 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.

FARROUHK (O.S.)

I don't give a shit.

DEVI (O.S.)

(Laughing)

Shh! C'mon, Farrouhk.

FARROUHK (O.S.)

I'll kill the dork.

(Exploding again)

You hear me! I'll kill you.

I'll fucking kill you!

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.

DEVI (O.S.)

Shh! Baby! Come here, baby!

Max rushes out.

EXT. PLAYGROUND - LATE AFTERNOON

Max sifts through the trash can where he threw his picks from yesterday. Frustrated, he dumps the trash onto 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 printout. I, uh,  
lost my data...

Max looks back at the trash And forgets about Mrs. Ovadia. Soon, Max gets up and kicks the trashcan. He heads home.

IN FRONT OF MAX'S APARTMENT BUILDING

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

Max backs away when he smacks into someone.

It's Lenny Meyer - the young Jewish man.

Max jumps back in fear.

LENNY MEYER

Max! How you doing? Lenny Meyer.

MAX

Oh, hey...

Max tries to quickly pass him.

LENNY MEYER

Hey, where you going? You got a few moments to do Tefillin?

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

LENNY MEYER

I gotta car, we can cruise over to my...

MAX

You gotta car?

LENNY MEYER

Yeah, right there. That's Ephraim, my friend.

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 tight, lets go.

LENNY MEYER

Great...

They head for the station wagon.

INT. BASEMENT SHUL - NIGHT

The synagogue is a claustrophobic, fluorescent-lit room in general disarray. Two rows 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.

MAX

Lenny, I don't really want to do...

LENNY MEYER

Do it for me? It means a lot, having someone

of your stature performing a mitzvah in my presence.

(Beat)

When you told me your name was Max Cohen, I didn't realize you were the Max Cohen. Maximilian Cohen.

MAX

You know me?

LENNY MEYER

Of course, I've followed your research since your Columbia days. It's revolutionary. You've inspired the work we do.

MAX

I have?

LENNY MEYER

Yes, very much so. The only difference is, we're not looking at stocks. We're searching for a pattern in Torah.

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

MAX

What kind of pattern?

LENNY MEYER

We're not really sure. Our calculations have shown us that there is a number encoded in the text.

MAX

What sort of number?

LENNY MEYER

We don't know. All we know is that it's two hundred and sixteen digits long.

Max, stunned looks at Lenny.

LENNY MEYER

Don't worry. This one just goes over your head.

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

MAX

(Coolly)  
Two sixteen?

LENNY MEYER  
Yes. Now we have to say a  
small prayer, repeat  
after me.

Bewildered, Max does. After the prayer...

LENNY MEYER  
That's it. Wasn't  
so bad, was it? You feel  
anything?

Lenny starts removing the Teffillin from Max.

MAX  
What is it?

LENNY MEYER  
It's a prayer about our  
dedication to our one and  
only God.

MAX  
(Attempting calmness)  
No, I mean the number, the  
two sixteen number? What is  
it?

LENNY MEYER  
Oh. We don't know. We just  
know that it's the most  
common number encoded in  
the text. It might be some  
type of linguistic pattern.  
If we could figure out what  
the number is we could maybe  
answer that.

MAX  
Tell me more.

EXT. SOL'S APARTMENT - DAWN

Max firmly rings SOL's bell.

In a few moments, Sol answers the door in his pajamas.

SOL  
Max?

MAX  
What's going on, Sol!?

SOL

Relax, it's early.

INT. SOL'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

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

SOL

Now, what's up?

MAX

What's the 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, you mean the bug. I  
found it working on Pi.

MAX

What do you mean by "found it"?

SOL

What's this all about,  
Max?

MAX

Well, there's these  
religious Jews who have...

SOL

Religious Jews?

MAX

Well, you know,  
Hassidim. I met one in the  
coffee shop. The guy's a  
number theorist. The Torah is  
their data set. The thing is,  
they're searching for a two  
hundred and sixteen digit  
number in the Torah.

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

It's just a coincidence.

MAX

But hold on, there's something else. You remember those strange 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

(Surprised)

Hmmm.

MAX

Something's going on, and it has to do with that number. The answer is there.

SOL

Max, it's a bug.

MAX

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

SOL

Come with me.

INT. SOL'S STUDY - MOMENTS LATER

Sol and Max sit on either side of a half-played Go board.

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, in fact, the possibilities of game play 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

That 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, 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 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-three. Whatever! You've chosen two 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, okay. No math.

Max looks at his bands.

SOL

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

Max gives a half nod.

EXT. SOL'S APARTMENT - MORNING

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 not interested in your money. I'm searching for a way to understand our world. I'm searching for perfection. I don't deal with mediocre materialistic people 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 acts like an alarm. The  
ants charge out and secrete an  
acid onto 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 dose.

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.

MAX

(Stuttering)  
What do...do...

But then, Max notices that his thumb is twitching.

MARCY DAWSON

Beautiful, isn't it? You know how rare...are you okay?

MAX

Yeah, I got to go.

MARCY DAWSON

But what about...

MAX

Let me think about it...

Max trots off.

MARCY DAWSON

What? Mr. Cohen!?

INT. SUBWAY STATION - PUBLIC BENCH - NIGHT

The station is strangely silent. It is also extremely rundown. 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 nubs 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 dropping from the Man's right hand.

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 a 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 carefully touch it.

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

BLINDING WHITE VOID

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

INT. SUBWAY TRAIN - DAY

Max's eyes pop open. A TRANSIT COP is sticking him with a nightstick.

TRANSIT COP

Up, buddy Coney Island, last stop.

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

TRANSIT COP

Your nose.

Max wipes his nose and looks around nervously.

He sees the rides of Coney Island in the distance.

EXT. CONEY ISLAND BEACH - DAY

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 exam

INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

MAX'S POV through the microscope. Max sees the brain structures.

Just then, there's a KNOCK on the door. The knock startles him and his hand bumps the turret of the microscope. The lens moves and he realizes that the magnification can be changed.

A KNOCK again.

Max looks out the peephole and sees nothing. Confused,

Looks down at his thumb. It's not shaking. He heads back to his microscope.

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

IN THE HALLWAY is Jenna with her calculator.

JENNA

Max, Max, can we do one.

MAX

Jenna. I can't now, Jenna.

JENNA

Please, Max.

MAX

I'm working now, later okay?

Max shuts the door and returns to the microscope. 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

Hello, this is Lenny?

MAX

Lenny, it's Max Cohen.

LENNY MEYER

Max! How are you?  
You want to come down?

MAX

I've been thinking about  
our conversation earlier.

Max looks into the microscope. He stares at the spirals.

LENNY MEYER

That's good...

MAX

I want to help.

LENNY MEYER

Excellent.

MAX

Do you have the Torah in  
digital form?

DISSOLVE FROM TURRET TO:

## SATELLITE IMAGE OF SPINNING TORNADO

Start in tight on the epicenter and pull out to reveal the entire storm.

MAX (V.O.)

Thursday, September  
fourth, sixteen forty-five.  
The alchemist awakes. All of  
my ideas, work and dreams are  
spinning together It all has  
to do with spirals. It began  
with spirals and the answers  
are thee.

INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - DAY

EUCLID'S INNARDS

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

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

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.)

The most I can  
remember about their  
significance is from  
Schneider's class. That  
bullshit core for majors.  
Schneider's fascination with  
mystical geometry made him a  
bit of a quack...but...then again,  
look at Kepler. He was really into  
Pythagoras. The leader of an  
ancient sect which believed  
the entire universe could be  
represented by numbers.  
Pythagoras' greatest contribution  
was the golden ratio, which ended up  
influencing art and science  
for thousands of years,  
arguably all the way up to  
today.

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

He draws it over a copy of Leonardo Da Vinci's famous drawing of man's anatomy.

MAX (V.O.)

The golden ratio,

if I recall, is this unique relationship between the length and width of a special rectangle called the golden rectangle.

TIGHT ON MAX carefully measuring out a golden rectangle.

The rectangle fits perfectly over Leonardo Da Vinci's Man.

MAX (V.O.)

If you take the width of this rectangle and use it to form a square within the rectangle, the part left over is a rectangle that has the same ratio as the original rectangle. You can continue squaring the rectangle, over and over again, making the rectangles smaller and smaller to infinity.

TIGHT ON MAX squaring rectangle after rectangle. Then he draws the golden spiral through the rectangles.

MAX (V.O.)

Then, if you connect a curve through these rectangles you get the golden spiral. The Pythagoreans loved this shape because they found it everywhere in nature.

MONTAGE OF IMAGES

The images mirror what Max talks about. We see NAUTILUS SHELLS, SUNFLOWERS, PLANTS, RAM HORNS, HUMAN FINGERPRINTS, THE MILKY WAY, and DNA STRANDS.

MAX (V.O.)

It really is amazing. In the sea, on land, in air, our basic building block DNA and even our home.

EXT. CHINATOWN - DAY

Max wanders through the crowded streets of Chinatown.

MAX (V.O.)

If we're built from spirals, while living within a giant spiral, is it possible that all of human behavior, if it could be

quantified, is in the form of  
 a spiral. Then, maybe,  
 extensions of our behavior  
 like the stock market. maybe  
 even the writing of The  
 Torah, is infused with the  
 spiral pattern.

DISSOLVE 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.)  
 Friday, September  
 fifth. Seven twelve. It's  
 fair to say, I'm stepping out onto a  
 limb. But I'm on the edge and  
 that's where it happens.

He holds two wires apart from each other as he contemplates  
 what will connect them.

EXT. ELECTRONIC MEGADUMP - DAY

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

EXT. PUBLIC PAY PHONE - DAY

Max eyes Marcy Dawson's business card, suspiciously He dials  
 the number. A man answers on the other line.

MAN'S VOICE (OS.)  
 Three, eight, two.

MAX  
 Marcy Dawson.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)  
 Who's calling?

MAX  
 Max Cohen.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)  
 Hold on.

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

MARCY DAWSON  
 Mr. Cohen? I'm so  
 Happy...

MAX  
 Look what do you want for the chip?

MARCY DAWSON

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

MAX

No, I don't.

MARCY DAWSON

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

We're willing to take the risk.

MAX

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

MARCY DAWSON

(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 Anyone.

MARCY DAWSON

How do I know you're home?

MAX

I'll knock back.

MARCY DAWSON

Fair enough.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Max sits at the counter. The POST headline in front of him reads MARKET DOOMED. PRESIDENT IN PANIC, WORLD LEADERS MEET.

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.

MAX

What is it?

LENNY MEYER

In Hebrew characters and numbers.

MAX

No, what is it? The two  
hundred and sixteen digits.

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.

EXT. MAX'S APARTMENT - DUSK

Max marches into his foyer when he's suddenly ambushed by  
Devi's boyfriend, Farrouhk. Farrouhk is a little guy with a  
big sadistic smile.

He grabs Max by the collar and slams him against the wall. His  
fist butts up against Max's chin.

FARROUHK

There you go, dork.  
Been thinking about my  
girlfriend. Haven't you?

MAX

Wha...

FARROUHK

You want to fuck her, don't you?

MAX

No, no..

FARROUHK

You calling my girlfriend  
ugly!? Why don't you want  
to fuck her? You think she's  
ugly?

MAX

No, no, I just. It's that  
she's your girl...

FARROUHK

So you do want to  
fuck her. You think about

fucking her in the mouth,  
don't you?

MAX

No, no, sir, please. I've  
never touched Devi...I  
never will.

FARROUHK

Give the fucking  
genius a Mars bar. Stay away,  
or I'll slice off your balls.

Farrouhk tosses Max against the wall. Max whimpers off to his apartment. Farrouhk has enjoyed this and to end his game he gives Max a small slap on the butt.

INSIDE HIS APARTMENT Max bolts the front door.

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

Next door, he hears Farrouhk and Devi talking.

FARROUHK (O.S.)

Damn dork.

DEVI (O.S.)

He's just a bit unique.

FARROUHK(O.S.)

Unique?! Unique?! He's a dork!

Then, Max carefully slips the DISK into Euclid's drive. Hebrew characters pop onto 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.

Max nods. Then there's a knock at the door.

MAX

(To himself)

Okay.

Max peeks through the peephole. Two well-dressed large men, BRAD and ABE THE BABE, wait for the signal. MAX knocks and the suits leave.

Then Max shyly 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 black attaché case. Sitting in foam is a tiny but beautiful chip. Max studies it with awe.

MAX (V.O.)

Friday, September  
fifth? Lots of work to be  
done. But I'm close, so  
close. Today is the day Might  
have cost me my soul, but  
down the line I'll work it  
out. Just keep them in the  
dark, let them beg. A damn  
Ming Mecca chip. It's like  
giving a desperate junkie a  
syringe filled with junk.  
Defense uses them to nun  
nuclear sub reactors. Me? I'm  
going to dissect the market.

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

MAX

Happy birthday, Euclid.

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

He gets up and grabs a Ginseng soda from the fridge He drops  
eight pills in the can. He calmly 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 (V.O.)

Eighteen thirty. Press return...  
Max darts over and smacks  
the 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.

He smacks RETURN again Max gets the same empty result.

Euclid's cursor blinks, waiting. Max starts to laugh. He  
laughs and laughs and laughs.

MAX

Oh God. Damn religious  
freaks.

(Sarcastic)

The holy Torah...

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

MAX

Ah God...

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

Max almost throws up.

THE BATHROOM

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

MAX

Too much...too soon.

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—its empty

MAX

Ohh...

He grabs a bottle of medicine but knocks them an 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.

MAX

Stop, please, stop.

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

MAX

What the?

So he takes out a 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 head. He examines it in the mirror.

MAX

What is it!? What is it!?

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.

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.

Then he hears something. It's Euclid, buzzing with life. He gets to his feet and head's 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 onto the screen. Max estimates how many digits are on the screen.

MAX

Two...two hundred. That's it! That's it!

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 a-

MAX

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

BLINDING WHITE VOID where we hear several deep peaceful breaths.

Then, a fuse blows and we cut to:

BLACK

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

MRS. OVADIA (O.S.)

He's alive. His eyes are moving.

DEVI (O.S.)

Yes, hello?

FADE BACK INTO THE MAIN ROOM Max's eyes slowly open.

DEVI (O.S)

(On the phone)

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 on his chin and  
chest. Devi hangs up the phone.

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

MAX

What happened?

DEVI

You were screaming...

MRS. OVADIA

Who told you you can put extra  
locks on the door.

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.  
I've had enough of you. Look at all  
this junk.

He starts reciting the numbers. Then Max 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.

MAX

But what is it?

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

DEVI

Are you okay?

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!

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! Outt

The three neighbors retreat to the front door.

DEVI

Are you okay?

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 reads each digit.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

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

A phone continues to RING.

In the clouds of the 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.

MAX (V.O.)

Saturday? Dark outside. There  
was a moment there...when, I don't  
know...when I didn't exist. What? What?

We hear a phone being picked up. The ringing stops. Silence,  
then:

MARCY DAWSON (O.S.)

Max, is that you? Max?

(Pleading)

Max, just talk to me. Things  
are a bit out of hand down  
here. People are getting  
desperate.

(Suddenly firm)

We had a deal, Max. A deal.  
Talk to us, Max.

We hear the sound of a phone hanging up.

At the coffee counter, Max pops a handful of pills and  
crumples the paper.

INT. MAX'S BATHROOM - LATER

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.

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.

INT. MAX'S APARTMENT-LATER

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.

MAX

Two and a quarter, twelve  
and an eighth, six and two  
eighths.

Max states the numbers right before they enter onto the screen.

MAX

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.

MAX

My God. It's gonna  
crash, it's gonna fucking  
crash.

INT. SOL'S APARTMENT - DUSK

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...  
(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)

Okay, 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?

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.

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.

SOL  
It's killing you. Leave it  
unknown.

MAX  
(Clarity)  
You were afraid of  
it. That's why you quit.

SOL  
Max, I got burnt.

MAX  
C'mon, Sol.

SOL  
It caused my stroke.

MAX  
That's bullshit. It's  
math, numbers, ideas.  
Mathematicians are suppose to  
be out on 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!

INT. SUBWAY - PORT AUTHORITY - NIGHT

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 jacket 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.

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

The Photographer sees him coming and flees.

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

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

Max chases him down a loooooong 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 TO

EXT. TIMES SQUARE - NEON NIGHT

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's of, he turns around to see the source. The reflection is from a giant, brilliant stock ticker - 50 yards long and luminous.

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

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

EXT. PORN SHOP - 42ND STREET - NIGHT

Max whacks the Photographer against a back-lit 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.

EXT. MAX'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Max heads home in a furious state. Suddenly, he sees two of Marcy's men blocking his path. It's Brad and Jake, yet another tough guy, and they don't look happy. Max spins around and sees Marcy Dawson blocking his exit.

MAX

Marcy? What's up?

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 limo!

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

MAX

Don't ever hit...

He pushes Marcy aside and darts.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

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

He scurries through a construction site and over a footbridge.

Then, he runs into an all-night  
BODEGA

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.

EXT. UNDERNEATH CAR - NIGHT

Max dives under a car and crawls for terror. He sees two sets of feet nun by. Max starts to relax when he notices a pair of heels on the other side of the car. Marcy bends down and looks at him.

MARCY DAWSON

Enough, Max, c'mon out.

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! Hey!

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

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

MARCY DAWSON

You're responsible for this.

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 gave us 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!?

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 gun.

Jake cocks the gun. Max starts to cry.

MAX

You bastards! You stupid  
bastards!

Suddenly, Jake is whacked with a sawed-off baseball bat. He smashes into the sidewalk. It is Farrouhk, Max's neighbor, who's just pulled up in his taxicab.

MAX

(Spotting his savior)  
Farrouhk!

Farroukh threatens Marcy and the other tough guy, who retreat in fear. Farroukh is afraid as well, so he doesn't

quite leap on them. He just keeps swinging the bat.

FARROUHK

He's sick! He's sick!

Max gets to his feet and runs behind Farrouhk.  
Just then a station wagon screeches up to the curb. Lenny Meyer, Ephraim, and a bunch of other his burly Jews jump out.

LENNY MEYER

Max!

Max looks at Farrouhk and then he looks at Lenny. Ephraim grabs Max and pulls him toward the station wagon.

MAX

(To Farrouhk)

C'mon...

Farrouhk heads for his cab. Ephraim helps Max into the backseat of the wagon and climbs in after him.

Lenny Meyer jumps into the passenger seat and the gray-bearded YISRAEL slams on the gas Pedal.

Farrouhk jumps into his cab.

INT. LENNY MEYER'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

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

MAX

Farrouhk what about Farrouhk!?

LENNY MEYER

Stay down!

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

MAX

Go back!

LENNY MEYER

He's okay, he got  
in his cab. We've been  
looking for you.

MAX

What's going on?

LENNY MEYER

Do you have the number?

MAX

What's going on?

LENNY MEYER

Do you have the number?

MAX

Yeah, I have it!

LENNY MEYER

You have it. Where is it?  
You have it written down?

MAX

What is it?

Lenny nods to Ephraim, who starts scanning 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

(Pushing 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!

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

LENNY MEYER

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.

INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

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

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 it down the drain. Screaming like a madman, he jams it until it is gone.

INT. BASEMENT SHUL - DAY

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.

RAV COHEN

Max, Max. You're  
okay 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 okay?

MAX

Yeah, yeah

RAV 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!

RAV COHEN

Okay, okay! Lenny,  
easy! Max, I'll tell you  
what's going on. Just calm  
down.

(Deep breath, then)

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

MAX

What are you...

RAV COHEN

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

Max takes out his pills and starts feeding himself some.

RAV COHEN

The Romans also

murdered all of our priest-  
 hood—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 reemerge 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?

RAV COHEN

That word was the true name of God.

MAX

Yeah...

RAV 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.

RAV COHEN

(Passion building)

Yes...it's The key into  
the messianic age. As the  
Romans burned 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.

RAV 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

RAV COHEN

You saw nothing.

MAX

I saw everything.

RAV 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.  
I'm the one who has the  
number

RAV COHEN

Who do you think  
you are? You are a vessel  
from our God. You are  
carrying a delivery that  
needs to be made to us.

MAX

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

RAV COHEN

It's killing you.  
Because you are impure.

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!

RAV 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? It's not the  
number! 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!

(Whispers to Rav Cohen)

Rabbi...I was chosen.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

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

MAX (V.O.)  
Suddenly, it's all there.  
It all makes sense. I  
can crack it. I can know it.  
I know what it is. Sol knows,  
too. I need to tell him. I  
need to show him. I need to  
bring him with me.

People fly by. Max in a spiraling whirlwind.

EXT. SOL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

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?

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.

MAX  
No.

Max rushes into Sol's study. The room is covered with Sol's P, 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

INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - DAY

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.

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

MAX

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 BLINDING WHITE VOID where Max looks around starry-eyed. The pain is gone. Everything is new to Max - even his hands. The stress leaves 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. Max! Are you okay!? Oh my God, Max!

Her voice reaches into the void.

DEVI (O.S)

Max! Breathe, Max. Breathe!

Max looks toward her voice.

DEVI (O.S.)

Yes, Max. Listen to me...

We cut back to

...THE MAIN ROOM

where 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

BLINDING WHITE VOID

where Max continues to recite the number.

DEVI (O.S.)

No, Max. No.

Stay with me Max. Stay with  
me.

And then we cut back to

THE MAIN ROOM

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

THE BLINDING WHITE VOID

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

MAX

Where am I? What is  
this? This is wrong, Sol.  
Sol!

Max lets out a 'SOL!', and reaches out into the void. We match

cut back to

THE MAIN ROOM

where 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.

DEVI

That's right Max. That's  
Right. Breathe. Breathe.

MAX

He was right. I want to  
breathe. Breathe.

DEVI

Yes, breathe, Max.  
Breathe...

Max sobs. He holds onto her for dear life

And then he realizes that Devi is not in his arms. He is holding onto himself.

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

INT. MAX'S BATHROOM - DAY

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

Next, he prepares something in the sink.

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

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 as we quickly  
CUT TO

EXT. CITY PLAYGROUND - DAY

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!

Max smiles at Jenna. He's glad to see her.

JENNA

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.

Jenna presses the EQUALS button.

JENNA

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

MAX

(Smiling and then laughing)  
I don't know. I really don't  
know. What is it, Jenna?

JENNA

Forty-six thousand six  
hundred and sixty-five.

MAX

Oh.

The trees blow gently in the wind as we slowly  
FADE TO WHITE which brings us to  
THE END