

t h e i n v i s i b l e m a n

By Daniel Knauf

The two Bullies grab the Nerds to either side of Griffin, start POUNDING THEM, ignoring Griffin.

SLAM TO:

INT. HIGH SCHOOL GYMNASIUM (FLASHBACK) - NIGHT

LOUD '80s NEW WAVE MUSIC. Trying to look cool in acid-washed jeans and a Members Only jacket, Teen Griffin bobs his head as he stands against a wall, colored lights playing across his pimply face.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

There were, of course, some obvious disadvantages...

REVEAL that GRIFFIN IS THE ONLY KID LEANING AGAINST THE WALL, A SLOW PULL taking us onto the floor, where his classmates are WILDLY SLAM-DANCING.

BACK TO:

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - CONTINUOUS

Still FLOATING down the sidewalk. A tiny, MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN in a pink sweat-suit approaches and passes us, pulled along by a WHITE POODLE...

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

I continued through college and graduate school at Cal Tech, virtually unnoticed by professors and classmates alike, then entered the working world...

The poodle freezes and begins BARKING frantically at us.

CUT TO:

INT. GIANNI GLITZ COSMETICS - MAIN LAB (FLASHBACK) - DAY

TIGHT ON A WHITE RABBIT inside a wire cage. RICHARD GRIFFIN, present day, early-40s, wearing THICK BLACK RUBBER GLOVES, safety-glasses, lab-coat and tie, opens the cage and pulls out the rabbit.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

My degree in optical physics with a minor in bio-chemistry landed me a job in the R-and-D department at Gianni Glitz Beauty Products testing skin products in the animal testing unit...

As Griffin slips a leather collar on the rabbit, clips it to an eyelet bolted to a stainless steel worktop. A SLOW RISE REVEALS a bird's eye view of a VAST LABORATORY, DOZENS OF RESEARCHERS at identical workstations testing substances on HUNDREDS OF CAGED RABBITS.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

Over the years, I survived a number of massive layoffs, due undoubtedly to the fact that no one seemed to know I existed. With one exception...

Griffin turns to his assistant, MAGGIE KEMP, 27, also wearing safety-glasses, industrial gloves and a lab coat, attractive in an unconventional, brainy kind of way. She gives him a polite smile and offers him a safety razor

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

... my assistant, Maggie Kemp.

CLOSE ON Griffin's gloved hand reaching for the razor, accidentally closing on Maggie's glove. Both draw startled breaths. Their eyes lock--at first shyly, then meaningfully.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

There was something between us that transcended professional--or even intellectual--respect...

THE RABBIT - nose twitching, looks at Griffin, then Maggie, then Griffin.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

A base need. A shared loneliness. Perhaps even an animal attraction. It couldn't be denied, but it had to be...

Griffin averts his eyes. He takes the razor and turns to his task. Maggie is briefly hurt, then composes herself and joins him.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

... for there was another in the world who held my heart; another, whose trust I could not betray...

SLAM TO:

EXT. GRIFFIN RESIDENCE (FLASHBACK) - NIGHT

A two-story suburban neo-Mediterranean. The play-by-play of MONDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)
 ... my wife, Vicky.

 VICKY
 Richard...

INT. GRIFFIN RESIDENCE - DEN (FLASHBACK) - CONTINUOUS

POV - ON TELEVISION - a football game. VICKY GRIFFIN steps into frame. Early-30s, attractive, wearing a tennis outfit and carrying a racket-bag, she bends, looks directly at us, snapping her fingers:

 VICKY
 Earth to Richard...

Griffin blinks, looks at his wife, smiles apologetically.

 VICKY
 Garbage still needs to go out and
 there's dishes in the sink.

Richard GRUNTS affirmation, leans to get a view of the game. She notices, gives him a long-suffering look. Sighs:

 VICKY
 I'll be at the club for my lesson.
 Drinks afterwards with the girls.
 Don't wait up.

She exits. A SLOW PUSH on Griffin's expressionless face as he watches the television.

 GRIFFIN (V.O.)
 True, any passion we once shared
 had long given way to a sense of
 numb comfort. But I knew that I
 could always count on Vicky to be
 true to me, to acknowledge my
 presence. No matter how hard I
 tried to fade away...

BACK TO:

EXT. GRIFFIN RESIDENCE - DAY

ANGLE OUT TOWARD THE STREET - THREE GIRLS, about 12, play jump-rope on the sidewalk.

 GRIFFIN (V.O.)
 Most of all, that's what brought me
 home that day...

WOMAN (PRE-LAP)

... this Honey-Bee-Mine sweater is part of our exclusive, limited edition line of CozyWear Fashions, and once we're sold out, they are gone forever...

A TILT DOWN reveals the sad truth: A sandblasted, sunbaked shit-box motel; a bean-shaped pool that hasn't seen water in three decades, bottom littered with trash and tumbleweeds.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Like all my designs, the Honey-Bee-Mine is machine washable, and guaranteed not to shrink....

INT. ROYAL PALMS MOTEL - MANAGER'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

A TELEVISION is tuned to a SHOPPING NETWORK, a plus-sized clown of a WOMAN gushing over sweaters lousy with "whimsical" appliques of bees. Sizes run from XL to XXXL.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

(on television)

And look! Every one of these *darling* appliques is attached with velcro, so you can reposition them *anywhere* on the sweater for a whole new look every time you wear it!

MRS. HALL, mid-50s, flower-girl hippy gone seriously to flab, dozes in a La-Z-Boy recliner, a ROMANCE PAPERBACK in one limp hand, a FLY-SWATTER in the other. A BELL RINGS in the outer office. Snorting, Mrs. Hall is startled awake.

INT. ROYAL PALMS MOTEL - FRONT OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Bleary-eyed, Mrs. Hall trudges through the door behind the front desk that adjoins the office to her apartment.

MRS. HALL

Yeah, what can I...

She looks up, slightly taken aback by her customer.

MRS. HALL

... do for you?

REVERSE - the ruthless desert sun glares in through broken blinds, throwing the stranger into silhouette. He wears a dark, baggy sweatshirt, hood pulled up over his head, hands in his pockets. He gazes down at the floor.

GRIFFIN

You rent rooms by the week?

MRS. HALL

One-hundred and fifty-four a week.
One-forty if you got the Auto Club.

The stranger shakes his head, pulls out a thick, folded wad of TWENTIES with one GLOVED HAND. As he peels off bills:

GRIFFIN

Two weeks.

He pushes the cash across the counter, slowly looks up, revealing his face for the first time: COMPLETELY WRAPPED IN GAUZE BANDAGES, eyes obscured by a pair of bulky, black post-surgical sunglasses.

GRIFFIN

No Auto Club.

EXT. ROYAL PALMS MOTEL - GRIFFIN'S ROOM - DAY

Griffin pulls up to a room in a dusty Land Rover. Carrying a bottled water, he walks up to the door, head down, the HOT WIND TUGGING AT HIS CLOTHES. He keys open the door.

INT. ROYAL PALMS MOTEL - GRIFFIN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Griffin enters, quickly closing the door against the BAKING WIND. He SNAPS the shades shut, throwing the room into shadows.

He pulls back his hood, claws at the smothering bandages covering his mouth, tugging them down under his jaw and taking big breaths. Uncaps the bottle of water and drinks deeply. Looks around for...

THE AIR CONDITIONER - Griffin cranks it to "HI." The unit starts with a WHEEZING CLATTER. Griffin pulls off a glove, holds one hand in front of the vent. The whisper of cool air BARELY STIRS THE TISSUE STREAMERS TIED TO THE GRILL.

GRIFFIN

Great...

He flops on the bed, unzips the front of his hoodie and takes another deep swig from the bottle. He picks up the remote from the bedside table and flips on the TELEVISION (MOS).

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

In 1781, Luigi Galvani accidentally discovered electric current while dissecting a frog with a statically charged scalpel...

A SLOW PUSH toward Griffin, half unmasked, sprawled on the bed, gazing at the television.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

In 1895, bad housekeeping resulted Wilhelm Roentgen's discovery of x-rays when he forgot to sweep up crystals of barium-platinum-cyanide on his workbench. In 1928, an errant drop of Sir Alexander Fleming's snot in a petri-dish culture of staphylococci led to the discovery of penicillin...

VERY TIGHT NOW, REFLECTIONS from the T.V. SCREEN flickering in Griffin's oversized dark glasses.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

My name is Richard Griffin, and my breakthrough, like all great scientific breakthroughs, was the result of an accident...

SLAM TO:

INT. GIANNI GLITZ COSMETICS - MAIN LAB - DAY

LOOKING UP - as Maggie Kemp gazes down at us, eyes astonished behind her clear safety-glasses.

MAGGIE

Doctor Griffin, take a look at this...

Griffin moves into frame, winces.

GRIFFIN

My God. Is it injured?

MAGGIE

No, doctor. It's... it's fine. I don't understand. This wound is obviously fatal--

GRIFFIN

--it's not a wound. Look...

MAGGIE

Oh my god...

Griffin looks at her. This is big. This is *huge*...

GRIFFIN

Maggie, stay here. Don't say a word to *anyone*, understand?

CUT TO:

INT. GIANNI GLITZ COSMETICS - CUSS'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

V.P. of Research & Development, STUART CUSS, 40, slight corporate paunch, sits behind his desk. Griffin stands, nervously kneading his black rubber gloves as he holds them before him in both hands.

CUSS

I really don't have time for this today, Mister...

GRIFFIN

Griffin. *Doctor* Griffin. Richard.

CUSS

Richard Griffin...
(doesn't ring a bell)
Are you new?

GRIFFIN

Oh, no sir. I've been with Glitz for over fourteen years.

CUSS

Really?! I can't imagine. I thought I knew everyone. What department?

GRIFFIN

Skin products. Animal testing unit.

Cuss is confused, slightly put out.

CUSS

Skin products? We're not in the skin products business.

GRIFFIN

I know, but--

CUSS
 We shut that subsidiary down, what?
 Five years ago?

GRIFFIN
 Six.

CUSS
 So what are you doing working on
 skin products?

GRIFFIN
 No one ever told me to stop, sir.

CUSS
 I see...
 (considers)
 We'll have to look into that.

Panicked, Griffin takes a step forward.

GRIFFIN
 Sir, it's vital you come down to
 the lab right away. There's
 something you need to see.

CUSS
 The lab? I'm sorry. I, uhm...
 I'm terribly busy--

GRIFFIN
 (interrupts)
 --*sir*. This is very important.

Cuss locks eyes with Griffin, he heaves a resigned sigh.

INT. GIANNI GLITZ COSMETICS - MAIN LAB - MOVING - DAY

RESEARCHERS pause in their work, rubbernecking as Griffin,
 Cuss and his attractive assistant, MISS DUNHILL move past.
 It's clear that a visit from anyone in the executive ranks is
 rare. Griffin is excited, chattering breathlessly:

GRIFFIN
 I discovered a formula of pigments
 that lowers both, the reflective
 and refractive indices of organic
 material--

CUSS
 The what?

Griffin SIGHS, patiently explains.

GRIFFIN

Visibility.

(off Cuss's confusion)

Okay, bear with me. A sheet of glass is transparent, but you can still see it. Why?

Impatient, bored and a little annoyed that Griffin actually seems to expect an answer:

CUSS

Light reflects off it?

GRIFFIN

Right. *Reflection*. Now if you scratch the glass, it becomes more visible. *Refraction*. Beat it into powder, it becomes even *more* opaque because now you've multiplied the number of surfaces reflecting and refracting light. But what happens if you pour that powder into water?

Cuss trades a glance with Miss Dunhill. Is this guy nuts? Griffin answers his own question, excited.

GRIFFIN

It becomes *invisible*! So I'm thinking, what if you could do the same thing with living tissue? I mean, theoretically, it's possible. So I spent the last six years--

CUSS

(horrified)

Six years?!

GRIFFIN

Yes! And--quite by accident, mind you--I stumbled across a formulation that can render animal tissue *completely transparent*.

CUSS

(slowly)

And all this has exactly what to do with beauty products?

Griffin gives him an incredulous look, as if the answer is self-evident.

GRIFFIN

Fading cream.

CUSS

What?

GRIFFIN

Fading cream. You know... for freckles and age spots.

CUSS

Age spots? You mean like... on *old people*?

GRIFFIN

Yeah.

CUSS

That's not our target demographic, is it, Miss Dunhill? Old people?

She spits out ad-copy with a clipped, British accent:

MISS DUNHILL

No, Mister Cuss. Gianni Glitz products are for the young professional woman on the go--

GRIFFIN

(interrupts, frustrated)

No, *no*. You don't *get* it. This is way bigger than beauty products. This is... *huge*.

He turns into his cubicle, nods to Maggie. She steps aside. Beaming, Griffin gestures down at a rabbit lying on the steel examining table, as proud as a brand new father.

Cuss winces. Miss Dunhill's aloof, cool expression slowly clenches into one of pure revulsion.

THE RABBIT - eagerly nibbles a leaf of lettuce, its hearty appetite at terrible odds with the GAPING HOLE IN ITS SIDE-- raw pink RIBS, LUNGS PUFFING with each panting breath, a SMALL HEART RAPIDLY BEATING.

MISS DUNHILL

Oh god...

Covering her mouth, Miss Dunhill staggers out of the cubicle. Cuss glares at Griffin, disgusted.

CUSS

What've you done?

GRIFFIN
 It's not how it looks. The subject
 is completely unharmed.

 CUSS
 Unharmed?!

Griffin grabs Cuss's hand, pulls it toward the rabbit.

 GRIFFIN
 Here. Touch it.

Cuss snatches his hand away.

 CUSS
 I'm not touching that!

Griffin SIGHS, shakes his head. He runs his palm over the
 hole in the dog's side. As if explaining to a slow child:

 GRIFFIN
 See? It's not a wound. The
 subject's fine, completely intact.
 I've just rendered its flesh--

 CUSS
 --transparent.

 GRIFFIN
 (grins)
 Exactly!

Cuss stares at him a moment, then turns to Maggie.

 CUSS
 Miss...
 (reads her I.D. badge)
 ... Kemp. I want you to destroy
 that animal immediately.
 (to Griffin)
 Doctor Griffin, you're fired.

 GRIFFIN
 (stunned)
 What--

 CUSS
 (cuts him off)
 Collect your personal belongings.
 Security will escort you from the
 building. You have five minutes.

With that, Cuss exits the cubicle. Griffin turns to Maggie, face pale and slack with gut-punched shock. She's devastated for him.

MAGGIE

I'm so sorry...

All Griffin can manage is a nod and a thousand-yard stare.

OUT TO BLACK

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. GRIFFIN RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Establish.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)
That night, I realized that my
entire life had led up to this one
thing. This one, brilliant
discovery...

INT. GRIFFIN RESIDENCE - DEN - CONTINUOUS

Shell-shocked, Griffin stares at the television with dead
eyes as he absently eats a microwave dinner.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)
All those years of working in
obscurity were over. It was time
to step out from the shadows and
show the world who Richard Griffin
really was. No matter what, I
would continue my research--

VICKY
Off to the club.

Griffin blinks as if awaking from catatonia, looks at Vicki,
confused. She's dressed for tennis, carrying her racket-bag.

VICKY
I have a lesson.
(off his expression)
What's the matter? Something
happen at work?

GRIFFIN
No. No, just... typical. You
know...

He shrugs. Vicky flashes a perfunctory smile, leans in and
gives him a kiss on the cheek.

VICKY
I'm gonna have drinks with the
girls after. Don't wait up.

She turns to go.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL PARK - DAY

Griffin parks in a seedy industrial area beside the freeway. He takes a sip of Starbucks and chews on a pastry as he picks a folded classified section up from the passenger seat.

 GRIFFIN (V.O.)

 But instead of going to work for someone else, I was working for myself. I had to set up bank accounts, order supplies and equipment, and find a place to conduct my research...

He looks across the street through the passenger window.

POV - A brick industrial court divided into multiple units for storage and light manufacturing. A SIGN reads "FOR LEASE - INDUSTRIAL SUITES - 2,000 TO 4,500 SQ. FT."

INT. INDUSTRIAL SPACE - DAY

MOS - Concrete walls; concrete floors; roll-up door; skylights. Griffin, wearing a lab coat and tie, works feverishly on his LAPTOP as MOVERS deliver shelving units and boxes of chemicals and equipment.

 GRIFFIN (V.O.)

 By the time I'd equipped my lab, I'd spent almost three-quarters of the money I'd raised. But I wasn't worried. Most of the heavy lifting was done...

INT. GRIFFIN'S INDUSTRIAL SPACE - DAY

The LAB FULLY SET UP, gleaming high tech equipment-- microscopes, centrifuge, a mass-spectrometer. Shelves laden with chemicals and beakers, stainless steel worktables, appliances, tanks of liquid nitrogen.

Griffin hunches over the laptop, presses enter. ON SCREEN, DOZENS OF LINES OF CODE BATCH PROCESS, scrolling down then executing a DIGITAL 3D MODEL of a VERY COMPLEX MOLECULAR STRUCTURE.

 GRIFFIN

 I'd downloaded all my research from Glitz onto my laptop. If I hadn't, it would've taken years of trial and error to just to reconstruct my formulas...

A white GUINEA PIG from a bank of CAGES. Griffin opens the door of the cage, pulls it out and moves out of frame. As his V.O. CONTINUES, we SLOWLY PAN ACROSS THE CAGES, revealing a gallery of GROTESQUE ODDITIES:

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

I was able to immediately repeat my first success, the drawbacks of a topical application soon became apparent...

CAGE ONE: This little pig looks a lot like the rabbit we saw earlier, drinking from its water-bottle, a GAPING HOLE in its side REVEALING RIBS AND VITAL ORGANS.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

Aggressive reformulation introducing carbon disulfide increased the absorption rates past the skin barrier...

CAGE TWO: This little pig is appears FLESHLESS--RAW PINK MUSCULATURE, WHITE TENDONS, glimpses of BONE. It stands up against the front of the cage, sniffing querulously.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

But the main obstacle was the skeletal system, teeth and eyes. I soon realized that the only way to tackle the problem was to develop a version that could be absorbed from the inside out...

CAGE THREE - This little pig has been rendered down to a COMPLETE AND PERFECT SKELETON except for its cute little pink eyes. As it nibbles on a leaf of lettuce, we see bits of it move down his invisible gullet into his invisible stomach.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

Oral versions were broken down and neutralized by the digestive system. Suppositories were a disaster...

CAGE FOUR - This little pig runs happily on its exercise wheel, but he's only HALF A PIG, perfectly bisected, ITS REAR HALF RENDERED COMPLETELY INVISIBLE.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

My only option was to develop an intravenous serum that could be injected directly into the bloodstream...

ON THE TABLE - Griffin holds down the Guinea pig with one gloved hand as he administers an injection. Starts a STOPWATCH.

 GRIFFIN (V.O.)

 But every attempt I'd made was a failure. After seven months, I was running out of money; beginning to get desperate...

The Guinea pig SPASMS AND GOES STILL, eyes open. Distraught, Griffin clicks the stopwatch. A KNOCK at the door. He reacts, panicked, and throws a towel over the dead rodent.

EXT. GRIFFIN'S INDUSTRIAL SPACE - DAY

CHRISTINE WADGERS, 43, stands outside, fiddling with her Blackberry. Dressed conservatively; lots of makeup; teased, frosted hair. Griffin opens the door.

 GRIFFIN

 Yes...?

 CHRISTINE

 Mister Griffin?

 GRIFFIN

Doctor Griffin.

 CHRISTINE

 (a sour smile)

Doctor Griffin. I'm Christine Wadgers with Knowles and Kinde. We manage this property. Could I come in for a moment?

Griffin glances nervously behind him.

 GRIFFIN

 This isn't a good time.

 CHRISTINE

 Very well...

She withdraws an envelope, hands it to him.

 GRIFFIN

 What's this.

 CHRISTINE

 It's a notice of eviction.

GRIFFIN

What for?

CHRISTINE

Doctor Griffin, I'm sure you're aware that it's been over a month since--

GRIFFIN

The rent. Oh, my gosh. I sent that. It's--

CHRISTINE

--in the mail. I understand. My problem is that it's not in my hand. And at this point, we're almost two months in arrears--

She SNIFFS, makes a face.

CHRISTINE

Do you have animals in there?

GRIFFIN

Animals?

CHRISTINE

Yes, Doctor Griffin. Animals.

GRIFFIN

I, uhm... I wrote in my application that I'd be, you know... conducting research--

CHRISTINE

Animal research?

GRIFFIN

(lies, faltering)

I'm sure I must've...

As he TRAILS OFF, Christine's features sharpen. She cranes her neck to see past him. He fills the space with his body to block her view. She meets his eyes.

CHRISTINE

Doctor Griffin, if I don't have the entire balance of rent-due wired to my company's account by nine o'clock tomorrow morning, I will be placing two calls: One, to the Sheriff's Department; the second, to Animal Control.

CHRISTINE(cont'd)

I suggest you have your permits in order. Am I understood?

Griffin nods, face ashen. She sneers.

CHRISTINE

Good day. "Doctor."

She turns and marches back to her parked BMW. Griffin watches her, features etched with desperation.

CUT TO:

EXT. CONDO COMPLEX - NIGHT

Griffin stands at the security gate of a large suburban condominium complex. He keys a number into the box. SPEED-DIALED TONES come over the speaker, followed by RINGING.

GRIFFIN

C'mon...

Someone picks up with a CLATTER, followed by a GRUFF VOICE:

GEORGE

(over speaker)
Yeah, who's there?

GRIFFIN

It's me. Richard.

GEORGE

(over speaker)
Richard who?

GRIFFIN

Your son.

A WOMAN'S VOICE can be heard in the background. A short exchange:

BETTY

(over speaker)
Who is it...?

GEORGE

(over speaker)
For chrissake...
(to Richard)
Hold on.

His father HANGS UP. Griffin waits for a LONG BEAT, then a BUZZER SOUNDS. He pushes open the gate and enters.

EXT. TOWNHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

TIGHT ON GEORGE GRIFFIN - face framed in his partially open door. Late-60s, retired insurance adjuster, golf-tan, lots of frown-lines. This is a man who spent his career saying "no" far more often than "yes."

GEORGE
Your mother and I were just sitting
down to dinner.

GRIFFIN
Can I come in?

George eyes him, heaves a RESENTFUL SIGH and opens the door, giving Griffin an obnoxious, sweeping "after-you" gesture.

INT. TOWNHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Griffin enters. Betty, 60s, slim, stands unsteadily at the entrance to the dining room, an insincere smile pasted on her face, nervously wiping her hands with her apron.

BETTY
Hello, Richard. I wish you'd
called.

GRIFFIN
I'm sorry, Mom. I would've, but--

GEORGE
He wants something.

BETTY
(scolding)
George.

GEORGE
It's true.
(to Griffin)
It's true, right? You want
something.

Griffin stares at his father, pinned like a bug.

INT. TOWNHOUSE - DINING ROOM - LATER

George saws into his pot roast, chowing down as Griffin CONTINUES HIS PITCH. Betty's on her third glass of merlot, and that doesn't include the bottle of chardonnay she polished off earlier that afternoon.

GRIFFIN

It's more of an investment opportunity than a loan, really. I could give you an equity position--

GEORGE

(chewing)

--what's the product?

GRIFFIN

Well, it's not a product as much as a process...

(leans forward)

I've discovered a way to make animals--living creatures, even human beings--invisible.

Betty barks an ABRUPT, HIGH PITCHED GIGGLE. George throws her a sharp look. Turns to Griffin.

GEORGE

Invisible.

GRIFFIN

Completely transparent.

George thinks about it for a moment, shaking his head. Finally:

GEORGE

I don't get it.

BETTY

He can make people disappear, George.

GEORGE

(impatient)

Yeah, I heard that. It's just not... practical, that's all. There's no commercial applications.

GRIFFIN

Are you crazy? There's *tons*.

GEORGE

Name one.

Griffin thinks about it. It's clear that he's given little consideration to the practical purpose of his research. An idea occurs to him.

GRIFFIN

Okay, military, for one. You could create whole battalions of invisible soldiers--

GEORGE

Does it work on uniforms? Helmets? Guns...?

GRIFFIN

(hesitates, then)

No.

GEORGE

And you think the Army's gonna deploy a buncha naked, unarmed guys into battle?

(scoffs)

Jesus...

GRIFFIN

Okay, how about pest control? You got roaches? Ants? You spray them with my product, they disappear.

GEORGE

(snorts)

Yeah, but they're still there. And the only thing worse than bugs is *invisible* bugs.

Betty, who has more than a passing acquaintance with invisible bugs, shudders and brushes her arms with her fingertips. George digs into his roast.

GEORGE

The way I see it...
(takes a big bite)
... it's totally useless.

BETTY

I dunno. I can think of one person I'd like to have disappear.

George points his fork at her, gives her hard eyes.

GEORGE

Don't.

Betty smirks, lowers her gaze to her plate. Subject closed, George continues to eat. Suddenly, Griffin POUNDS BOTH HANDS on the table, RATTLING DISHES. His parents look at him, shocked by his display.

GRIFFIN
 Goddamnit!

 GEORGE
Jesus--

 GRIFFIN
 I've mortgaged my house, okay?
 I've borrowed against my 401K and
 both our cars. I'm up to my
 eyeballs in credit card debt. My
 landlord just served me with an
 eviction notice--

 GEORGE
 Landlord! What're you talking
 about?

 GRIFFIN
 I leased a space down on San
 Fernando to conduct my research.

George looks at him, puts it together.

 GEORGE
 You quit your *job*?

 GRIFFIN
 I was fired.

 GEORGE
 Fired?! When?

 BETTY
 Vicky never said a word about--

 GRIFFIN
 --seven months ago.
 (to Betty)
 She doesn't know.

 GEORGE
 You telling me you been getting up
 every morning and *pretending* to go
 to work for the past seven months?

 GRIFFIN
 (ashamed)
 Yeah...

George leans back in his chair, begins rocking with BUBBLING
 LAUGHTER, shaking his head.

GEORGE
I knew you were whipped, but I had
no *idea*...

GRIFFIN
You think this is funny?

GEORGE
No. It's awful. Terrible.

GRIFFIN
So...?

GEORGE
So I guess you made your bed, kid.

Griffin looks at his father, stricken.

GRIFFIN
You're not gonna help me?
(to Betty)
Mom...?

She averts her eyes, shrugs.

BETTY
Your father and I are on a fixed
income.

GRIFFIN
Fixed income! You got stocks...
bonds.... You cleared over a
million dollars *at least* when you
sold the old house--

GEORGE
Our personal finances are none of
your concern.

GRIFFIN
I can't believe this...

BETTY
You're a grown man, Richard. We
can't keep bailing you out every
time you get in a little trouble.

GEORGE
She's right, son.

Griffin looks at them, bewildered.

GRIFFIN

You... you've never bailed me out
of *anything*. Not *once*...

George and Betty trade furtive looks. George returns his attention to his meal. Richard sits, stricken, at his end of the table. The silence is leaden, broken only by the SCRAPE OF HIS FATHER'S CUTLERY ON CHINA...

INT. GRIFFIN'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Griffin gets in, SLAMS the door. Tries to control himself, taking even steady breaths. Suddenly explodes, wildly POUNDING his steering wheel, his dashboard as he ROARS.

After a moment, spent, he settles down. Comes to a dark realization of what he must do.

EXT. GRIFFIN'S INDUSTRIAL SPACE - NIGHT

Light blazes in the skylights. The sound of a PHONE RINGING. It's picked up by a MACHINE:

VICKY

(recording)

Hello, you've reached the Griffins.
We're not available right now.
Please leave a message after the
tone...

INT. GRIFFIN'S INDUSTRIAL SPACE - NIGHT

A single lamp illuminates the workbench. The CENTRIFUGE spins as Griffin, seated on a stool, dejected, his head propped up by one hand as he presses his phone to his ear, waiting for the BEEP.

GRIFFIN

Hi honey. It's Richard. I'm gonna
be working real late again...

SERIES OF SHOTS:

A LAB REFRIGERATOR is opened. Griffin looks through various VIALS containing CLEAR SERUMS, plucks one out and reads the label. Griffin CONTINUES in VOICE OVER:

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

I'll try to get home as soon as I
can, but it looks like we might
have to pull another all-nighter...

A SYRINGE - drawing an injection from the VIAL. Griffin peers through it, his eye distorted in the tube of glass. Taps out the bubbles.

 GRIFFIN (V.O.)
... I just want you to know, that
project? The one I can't talk
about? It's just about done...

RUBBER TUBING - wrapped around Griffin's arm, cinched tight. He rubs a cotton swab over the crook of his elbow.

 GRIFFIN (V.O.)
... and if things work out the way
I think they will, you and I'll be
set for life. Just know this...

GRIFFIN - arm outstretched, picks up the syringe, pauses as he looks over and we RACK FOCUS TO IMMEDIATE FOREGROUND, HALF A GUINEA PIG running on its exercise wheel.

 GRIFFIN (V.O.)
... no matter what happens, I love
you.

THE NEEDLE - plunges into Griffin's flesh, the SOLUTION JACKED INTO HIS BLOODSTREAM.

END SERIES

Griffin leans back in his office chair, releases the rubber tie on his arm. Waits for an effect, frightened, sweating...

Nothing.

HIGH ANGLE - looking directly down as Griffin gazes at the ceiling. Suddenly, his entire body is seized by an AGONIZING RICTUS that throws him to the floor. His twitching lips peel back from his teeth and he SCREAMS, LONG AND LOUD, as his body violently spasms. A SLOW PULL UP takes us

OUT TO BLACK

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. GRIFFIN'S INDUSTRIAL SPACE - DAY

SUNLIGHT pours through the skylights. Griffin lies on the floor, pale, grizzled. He GROANS, screws his eyes shut, opens them. What the hell...?

GRIFFIN (V.O.)
The first thing you notice when
you're invisible is that you can't
close your eyes. Your eyelids are
transparent...

He holds his hand up to shield his eyes from the sun.

GRIFFIN'S POV - No hand. Just an EMPTY SHIRTSLEEVE.

GRIFFIN - Making INARTICULATE SOUNDS of surprise, it takes him a few attempts to successfully stand up.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)
The second thing is how hard it is
to walk without a visual frame of
reference...

He lurches toward the bathroom, shoves open the door and paws the light switch. The FLUORESCENTS FLICKER ON, and he gazes at himself in the mirror, stunned.

GRIFFIN'S POV - an empty shirt floats in the mirror, sleeves moving as Griffin rubs his cheeks.

GRIFFIN - begins LAUGHING, groping at the buttons of his shirt.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)
Same with fine motor skills...

Frustrated, he tears open his shirt, POPPING BUTTONS.

GRIFFIN'S POV - in MIRROR, an open shirt, filled with nothing. He props himself against the sink with both hands. Breathes like a sprinter, heart racing.

GRIFFIN
Wow.

He startled by a RAPPING at the front door.

DEPUTY (O.S.)
County sheriff, Mister Griffin!
Open up...!

Griffin's mouth opens and closes a few times before he can find his voice. SHOUTS:

GRIFFIN
 Hold on! I'll be right there!

EXT. GRIFFIN'S INDUSTRIAL SPACE - CONTINUOUS

A husky SHERIFF'S DEPUTY stands at the door next to Christine Wadgers. Two ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICERS wait near their truck. Again, The Deputy pounds on the door with his baton.

DEPUTY
 Mister Griffin...?!

INT. GRIFFIN'S INDUSTRIAL SPACE - CONTINUOUS

Shirt off, Griffin kicks off his shoes, yanks down his pants and SHOUTS:

GRIFFIN
 Yeah! Hold on! I'm in the
 bathroom!

DEPUTY
 Griffin!

ON LAPTOP MONITOR - displaying the slowly revolving 3-D MODEL of the INVISIBILITY MOLECULE. Griffin folds the laptop shut, slips it in a nylon case.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)
 My first instinct was to protect my work. My only set of notes were in my laptop. I also knew I'd need samples of the finished serum if I was going to develop an antidote...

He opens the refrigerator, scoops vials of serum into the bag. MORE KNOCKING. Griffin looks around, panicked.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)
 There was only one way to make sure nobody would reverse-engineer my discovery and claim it as his own...

Griffin sweeps a row of bottles off one of the shelves, sending them CRASHING TO THE FLOOR.

EXT. GRIFFIN'S INDUSTRIAL SPACE - CONTINUOUS

The FAINT SOUND OF GLASS SHATTERING. The Deputy glances at Christine, POUNDS on the door. SHOUTS:

DEPUTY
Open up! Now!

INT. GRIFFIN'S INDUSTRIAL SPACE - CONTINUOUS

As Griffin LIGHTS A MATCH, SHOUTS:

GRIFFIN
Yeah, I'll be right there!

He tosses the match into the swamp of spilled chemicals pooled on the floor. It BURST INTO FLAMES.

EXT. GRIFFIN'S INDUSTRIAL SPACE - CONTINUOUS

The Deputy SNIFFS, looks down at his feet. SMOKE CURLS UP from under the door.

DEPUTY
Griffin!

He beats on the door with his baton, turns to Christine, who frantically searches her ring of keys, then unlocks the dead-bolt. The Deputy pushes open the door. SMOKE POURS OUT from the RAGING FIRE within. The Deputy thumbs his mic:

DEPUTY
Dispatch, call in a fire! 23225 San
Fernando Road!
(to others)
Stay back!

As the others EDGE BACK, the Deputy ducks his head and runs inside. As he does, Griffin, naked, slips out, carrying his laptop bag. He darts around to the side of the building.

Christine sees movement from the corner of her eye, turns just in time to see...

CHRISTINE'S POV - the LAPTOP BAG BOBS AWAY through the smoke, disappears around the corner.

CHRISTINE
What the--

COUGHING, eyes watering, the Deputy staggers out the door, grabs her, pushing her away from the building.

DEPUTY

Can't find him... too much smoke.
Everybody move... *chemicals--*

He's interrupted by AN EXPLOSION inside, a FIREBALL rolling out the door and rising into the sky. Everyone runs for cover. APPROACHING SIRENS.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - CONTINUOUS

A narrow walkway between buildings. COUGHING, Griffin opens a dumpster, ditches his laptop-bag. With one final glance behind him, he walks quickly down the alley and is swallowed by the ROLLING SMOKE.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

It didn't take me long to realize
being invisible is extraordinarily
dangerous...

EXT. REAR ACCESS ROAD - CONTINUOUS

COUGHING, Griffin staggers out of the SMOKE-FILLED ALLEYWAY only to find himself in the direct path of an oncoming HOOK AND LADDER, SIRENS HOWLING. He dodges at the last minute, spinning and falling to the ground as it speeds by.

Dazed, he picks himself up, watches as FIREFIGHTERS pour out, begin unraveling hoses and hooking up to a nearby hydrant.

Several GAWKERS run up to see what's going on, one of them BUMPING Griffin hard, knocking him, again, to the concrete sidewalk. He covers his head, rolling off the curb into the gutter to avoid being trampled.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

I had to get home--someplace safe
where I could think, figure things
out. But driving was out of the
question--how long would it take
before someone noticed a moving car
with nobody behind the wheel...?

Griffin picks himself up, wiping BLOOD FROM HIS NOSE, looks up to see...

GRIFFIN'S POV - across the street, a RAPID TRANSIT BUS pulls up to a stop with a HISS OF AIR-BRAKES.

INT. RAPID TRANSIT BUS - CONTINUOUS

A FEW COMMUTERS trudge up the steps. As the last boards, Griffin runs up, is CAUGHT IN THE CLOSING DOOR.

Thinking the lever's stuck, the DRIVER jerks it open and shut again, allowing Griffin to slip inside.

Crouching down in the cove, Griffin hangs on as the bus swings into traffic.

 GRIFFIN (V.O.)
 South wasn't a problem. But West
 to Simi Valley would be tricky.

EXT. SAN FERNANDO ROAD/PAXTON STREET - DAY

Commuters wait at a BUS STOP near the intersection,

 GRIFFIN (V.O.)
 Even if I stuck to the roads, there
 was no way I could walk barefoot
 eleven miles over the Susana Pass...

The bus rolls to a stop past the intersection, the doors opening. TWO OR THREE COMMUTERS step down, followed by Griffin. He has to move fast to avoid being caught in the closing door, almost falling headlong as he stumbles out.

 GRIFFIN (V.O.)
 Worse, I was dehydrated and hungry.

INT. MINI-MART - MOMENTS LATER

BEHIND THE COUNTER, a CLERK reads a magazine. In the B.G., Griffin closely follows a young LATINA CUSTOMER inside. A SECURITY MONITOR above the Clerk displays a view of the door: THERE'S NO SIGN OF GRIFFIN ON SCREEN.

Griffin quietly pads down the aisle to a display of ENERGY BARS. Glancing around, he quickly unwraps one and wolfs it down, chasing it with a big slug of bottled water.

 LATINA CUSTOMER (O.S.)
 Madre de Dios...

He looks up, sees the Latina staring down at his belly in cringing disgust. He follows her gaze.

GRIFFIN'S POV - A CHEWED MASS of chocolate, granola and nougat HOVERS IN MIDAIR, disintegrating as it's ATTACKED BY INVISIBLE DIGESTIVE FLUIDS.

 GRIFFIN
 (mutters)
 Ah jeez...

He bolts for the exit.

EXT. MINI-MART - CONTINUOUS

A couple of HARD-HATS are entering as Griffin BURSTS out, nailing one of them with the door. The Latina runs out, SHOUTING IN SPANISH and pointing after him.

HARD-HATS' POV - chunks of PARTIALLY DIGESTED ENERGY BAR slosh around in the water contained within the contours of Griffin's stomach, suspended about three-and-a-half feet above the ground.

GRIFFIN - rounds the corner at the end of the block. By now, he's attracted considerable attention from OTHERS, who join in the chase, pointing and SHOUTING. Panicked, he darts into a dress-shop.

INT. BOUTIQUE - CONTINUOUS

A BELL JANGLES. The OWNER, a petite Chinese woman, steps out from a back room, looks around, confused. Suddenly, HALF-A-DOZEN of Griffin's wild-eyed PURSUERS burst in, led by the Latina. They begin searching.

OWNER

What you want?

LATINA CUSTOMER

You see something come in here.

OWNER

"Something!" What "something?"
What you talk about?

LATINA CUSTOMER

Shh...

The Latina and the others cautiously fan out through the store, walking past...

GRIFFIN - who stands very still in the center of a circular rack of blouses. His pursuers look everywhere but directly at him, A FEW PASSING WITHIN FEET OF HIM.

Confused, nervous, the Owner watches the intruders. She picks up the phone.

OWNER

I call police.

LATINA CUSTOMER

You sure you didn't see anything?
Like... like a little ball of crud
floating around?

OWNER

You crazy. You go now. Everybody go.

Dejected, a little embarrassed, the intruders abandon their search, the Owner shooing them out the door. Griffin closes his eyes, heaves a quiet sigh of relief.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

It was over forty-five minutes before I could go out again, but in the meantime, I figured out a way to get home...

EXT. SAN FERNANDO ROAD - 118 FREEWAY ONRAMP - DAY

In the left turn lane, A BATTERED PICKUP idles in line for westbound freeway access, the bed loaded with GARDENING TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT, A LAWNMOWER...

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

It was just a matter of waiting for the right vehicle headed in the right direction...

IN THE CAB - A GARDENER drums his fingers to the beat of RANCHERA MUSIC blaring over his radio. Suddenly, the REAR OF HIS TRUCK BOUNCES ON ITS SPRINGS. Baffled, he checks his mirrors, sees nothing.

He steps out of the cab, carefully inspects the back, his eyes moving past...

GRIFFIN - buck-naked, seated atop bags of manure stacked near the tailgate.

The LEFT TURN ARROW turns green. Cars behind them start BEEPING. The Gardener hurries back to the cab, throws it into gear and swings onto the freeway onramp, passing a SIGN that reads: WEST - SIMI VALLEY.

EXT. 118 FREEWAY - LATER

IN THE TRUCK BED - Cruising in the fast lane, hair blown back by the wind, Griffin smiles slightly, as if pleased by his own ingenuity.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

Hitching a ride was easy. The real problem was getting it to stop when I arrived at my destination...

GRIFFIN'S POV - an approaching OFFRAMP SIGN reads: SIMI VALLEY - NEXT 5 EXITS

GRIFFIN (V.O.)
But I had that figured out.

Griffin reaches over, jerks up the TAILGATE LATCH. As it falls open with a LOUD METALLIC THUMP, he grabs the lawnmower and hauls it back, dumping it from the open rear of the cargo-bed. It CRASHES to the roadway, triggering a cacophony of SQUEALING TIRES and HONKING HORNS.

TIGHT ON REARVIEW MIRROR - The Gardener's eyes go wide in horror.

EXT. 118 FREEWAY - INSIDE SHOULDER - MOMENTS LATER

Angry, The Gardener throws the WRECKAGE OF HIS LAWNMOWER into the truck-bed, SLAMS the tailgate shut. He gets in the cab and FLOORS IT back onto the freeway. A SLOW PULL REVEALS Griffin, watching.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)
Of course, it would've helped if he'd pulled over on the *outside* shoulder.

He slowly turns, gazing despondently at TRAFFIC, BARRELLING PAST HIM AT 70 MPH in multiple lanes.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)
There are certain tasks in life that defy preparation, experience and practice. Near the top of that list-- somewhere above stealing your first kiss and below drawing your last breath--is crossing five lanes of freeway traffic when you're naked and invisible.

Griffin runs across the fast lane, STOPS, letting a CAR BLAST BY...

Darts across the number-two and three lanes, STOPS, hauling himself back, nearly pasted by a SEMI...

Waits, TRAFFIC BLURRING BY in front of and behind him...

Finally, he sees an opening and sprints across the FINAL TWO LANES, diving for the shoulder just in time to avoid being nailed by an SUV.

On his hands and knees, road-rashed and bleeding, Griffin catches his breath. He stands, unsteady, and begins limping down the emergency lane toward the next offramp.

LITTLE GIRLS (PRE-LAP)
Cinderella,
dressed in yella,
went upstairs to kiss a fella.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GRIFFIN RESIDENCE - DAY

TWO SMALL FEET - in sneakers, hopping up and down, skipping rope as the SING-SONG COUNT CONTINUES.

LITTLE GIRLS
Made a mistake and kissed a snake.
How many doctors did it take?
One...
Two...

A SLOW PULL reveals the THREE GIRLS we saw at the top of the show, jumping rope on the sidewalk, then GRIFFIN, standing in front of them, staring up at his house, weary and battered.

LITTLE GIRLS (CONT'D)
Three...
Four...
Five...

REVERSE - The Girls jumping rope in the FOREGROUND, the COUNT CONTINUES as he walks toward his front door.

INT. GRIFFIN RESIDENCE - CONTINUOUS

We can still hear the GIRLS' VOICES as Griffin quietly opens the front door. He's about to call Vicki's name when the COUNT STOPS:

LITTLE GIRLS (O.S.)
Six...
Seven...
Eight...
Nine--

In the SUDDEN SILENCE, he can discern the MUFFLED MOANS of a MAN AND A WOMAN MAKING LOVE UPSTAIRS. Griffin begins quietly making his way up the steps.

INT. GRIFFIN RESIDENCE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

As Griffin reaches the landing, the FURTIVE SOUNDS GROW LOUDER, more intense, approaching orgasm, BEDSPRINGS CREAKING. OUTSIDE, the FAINT VOICES of the Little Girls as they RESUME THEIR GAME:

LITTLE GIRLS (O.S.)
Cinderella,
dressed in yella,
went upstairs to kiss a fella...

Moving down the hallway, the bedroom door ajar...

LITTLE GIRLS (O.S.; CONT'D)
Made a mistake and kissed a snake.
How many doctors did it take?
One...
Two...

Griffin tips open the door.

LITTLE GIRLS (O.S.; CONT'D)
Three...
Four...
Five...

GRIFFIN'S POV - TENNIS OUTFITS are crumpled on the floor. In the bed, TODD BUCKNER, 27, tanned, blond--a hard-bodied tennis instructor--makes love to Vicky Griffin.

INT. GRIFFIN RESIDENCE - MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Griffin stares at them from the threshold, shock slowly giving way to rage as the GIRL'S SING-SONG CHANTING FADES.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)
If I hadn't been invisible, I
would've turned around and walked
away...

SNARLING, Griffin throws himself at Buckner, hurls him off the bed. Buckner's head SLAMS against a mirrored closet door, stunning him.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)
But unencumbered by the physical
reality of flesh and bone, I'd been
reduced to something akin to pure
thought; pure consciousness; pure,
white-hot rage...

Griffin straddles Vicky, begins throttling her. Though we can plainly see him, THERE IS NO REFLECTION of him in the large, CRACKED MIRROR behind them.

 GRIFFIN (V.O.)

 It was like a dream; an out of body
 experience...

BUCKNER, stunned, looks up at the bed, confused.

BUCKNER'S POV - Vicky GURGLES, bucks violently up and down as if trying to throw off her unseen intruder, claws at her own throat.

 GRIFFIN (V.O.)

 I was there, but I wasn't there...

GRIFFIN - face quivering with rage, gazing down at Vicky as he squeezes the life out of her

 GRIFFIN (V.O.)

 I was strangling my wife, but I
 couldn't see my hands...

VICKY - as she finally goes still, her eyes glassy and wide, tongue swollen as we slowly become aware of the GIRLS CHANTING...

 LITTLE GIRLS (O.S.; CONT'D)

 Thirty-seven...
 Thirty-eight...
 Thirty-nine...

Overcome with revulsion at what he's done, Griffin shoves himself off the bed. He sees Buckner on the floor, dazed, dumb-animal eyes staring, bewildered, at the dead woman in the bed, completely unaware of her killer's presence.

 LITTLE GIRLS (O.S.; CONT'D)

 Forty...
 Forty-one...
 Forty-two...
 Forty-three...

INT. GRIFFIN RESIDENCE - GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Griffin throws a bundle of clothes into his wife's Land Rover, gets in and SLAMS the door; STARTS THE ENGINE as he thumbs the remote clipped to the visor, the garage door rolling open.

EXT. GRIFFIN RESIDENCE - CONTINUOUS

The ROAR of the ROVER'S ENGINE startles the Little Girls. They watch as the apparently DRIVERLESS Rover speeds down the driveway, FISHTAILS out onto the street and ROARS away.

OUT TO BLACK

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. GRIFFIN'S INDUSTRIAL SPACE - DUSK

Establish. The place has been reduced to a shell, SCORCH-MARKS staining the bricks above the boarded up doorway, CHARRED DEBRIS littering the parking lot.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

My mind was racing. I only knew one thing for sure: As long as I was invisible, I was sick. Very sick. I had to formulate an antidote...

EXT. ALLEYWAY - CONTINUOUS

Griffin, now wearing jeans and a DARK HOODED SWEATSHIRT, opens the dumpster, fishes out his laptop bag.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

I recovered my notes and the serum. But I'd need to replace all my equipment, my chemicals--everything I'd lost in the fire...

He pads down the alleyway toward the parked Rover.

INT. LAND ROVER - CONTINUOUS

Griffin tosses his bag across to the passenger seat as he slides behind the wheel, shuts the door. Adjusts the rear-view mirror, sees something in it that strikes him.

REAR-VIEW MIRROR - There is NO FACE reflected under the hood of Griffin's sweatshirt, only a SHADOWED, EMPTY SHELL.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

And I knew just where to go...

EXT. GIANNI GLITZ COSMETICS - NIGHT

A low-slung industrial building. A stylized sign on the building identifies it as GIANNI GLITZ BEAUTY PRODUCTS, INC. The parking lot is almost empty. An unmarked Crown Vic is parked in the handicapped space near the entrance.

RAMOS (PRE-LAP)

You fired him seven months ago?

INT. GIANNI GLITZ COSMETICS - CUSS'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

RAMOS, early-30s, a sharp-looking Latina homicide detective, sits in front of Cuss at his desk. Cuss has Griffin's open file on his blotter.

CUSS
Terminated, yes. What can I say?
(shrugs, closes the file)
So is Griffin a, uhm...

RAMOS
Suspect? Nah.

Ramos' partner, HARDESTY, mid-40s, high-school linebacker gone to seed, examines product samples on a shelf.

HARDESTY
We just need to find him before he,
you know... sees it on the news or
something.

RAMOS
Notification. Next of kin and all
that. So why'd you fire him?

CUSS
(off balance)
Who?

The two cops just stare at him, nonplussed. Who the fuck does he think? Cuss slowly shakes his head.

CUSS
I'm sorry. I just... I really
can't discuss personnel issues.

RAMOS
Uh-huh. And you people do what
here? I mean, exactly.

Cuss gives her the practiced drivel from his corporate handbook:

CUSS
We test the quality, safety and
efficacy of our beauty products,
cosmetics, etcetera.

HARDESTY
(smirks)
Etcetera.

RAMOS

So what was Griffin working on?
Anything, you know... unusual?

Cuss looks at them. It's clear they know more than they're saying. Gives them a sheepish "I'd-like-to-help-but" shrug.

CUSS

Sorry. That's proprietary information. Trade secrets, you know...

HARDESTY

Proprietary.

The word hangs in the air like a bad smell. Cuss shifts in his chair. Reaches deep and finds some bluster.

CUSS

Can I ask what all this has to do with your investigation?

Ramos doesn't answer, just gazes at him, a completely indecipherable Mona Lisa smile on her lips.

RAMOS

You've been very helpful, Mister Cuss. We'll call if we have any more questions.

She slips her notebook in her bag, stands and takes one of his cards without asking. As soon as she and Hardesty exit, Cuss picks up his phone, dials.

CUSS

Miss Dunhill, get me Pierce over at Chemical Logistics...

(waits)

Jason. Stu here. We might have a problem. Richard Griffin's wife was murdered.

(annoyed)

You did? I mean, it would've been nice if you gave me a heads up. I just had two homicide detectives in here asking all kinds of questions-- projects he was working on, the whole ball of wax--

(defensive)

Of course I didn't.

Cuss slowly leans back in his chair, listening with growing relief.

CUSS

You sure?
 (beat)
 You bet. Thanks, Jace.

He disconnects, picks Griffin's file off his desk and begins feeding the contents into a SHREDDER.

GRIFFIN (O.S.)

Chemical Logistics.

Cuss sits bolt upright. GRIFFIN STANDS DIRECTLY BEHIND HIM.

GRIFFIN

That's one of our sister companies,
 isn't it, Stu?

Frantic, Cuss looks around.

CUSS

Who's there?

GRIFFIN

Oh, yeah. I remember. That's the
 one with all those government
 contracts...

Cuss lunges for his phone. Griffin grabs a letter opener, drives it down and IMPALES CUSS'S HAND to his desk. Cuss's STARTLED SCREAM IS CUT SHORT as Griffin grabs him in a headlock, clamps one hand over his mouth.

Someone RATTLES the door knob, KNOCKS.

MISS DUNHILL (O.S.)

Mister Cuss? Are you all right?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. GIANNI GLITZ COSMETICS - OUTER OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Miss Dunhill stands at the inner office door, mildly concerned. Again, she tries the door. IT'S LOCKED.

MISS DUNHILL

Mister Cuss...?

Griffin WHISPERS in Cuss's ear.

GRIFFIN

Tell her everything's fine.

CUSS
 (shaken)
 Everything's fine, Miss Dunhill.

GRIFFIN
 (whispers)
 Send her home.

Cuss hesitates. Griffin jerks the letter opener from Cuss's hand, presses it to the flesh just below his right eye.

GRIFFIN
 (clenched teeth)
 Do it.

CUSS
 (calls out)
 You can go ahead and take off now.
 I'll lock up.

MISS DUNHILL
 Yessir.

Griffin and Cuss listen for a moment, hear the OUTER OFFICE DOOR SNICK SHUT.

GRIFFIN
 You son of a bitch. You stole it
 from me, didn't you? You stole my
 research.

CUSS
 No.

Griffin gives Cuss's head a violent jerk, presses the letter opener into the flesh under his jaw.

GRIFFIN
The truth!

CUSS
 I didn't--I had no idea when I
 fired you that--

GRIFFIN
 But later...

Cuss nods, a tear escaping one eye, terrified.

CUSS
 You were right. Your discovery
 was...

Cuss trails off.

GRIFFIN

Huge.

CUSS

That's right! *Huge*. I wanted to call you. Bring you back--

GRIFFIN

Sure you did.

CUSS

I did, I swear! But corporate wanted to keep everything in-house. Turned the project over to Chemical Logistics.

GRIFFIN

What project? I took everything-- my notes, my compounds. You don't have *anything*--

Stops and reconsiders a moment, then realizes...

GRIFFIN

Maggie.

CUSS

She didn't want to do it. Not at first. But they offered her a team, her own lab, stock options--

Furious, Griffin THROWS Cuss to the floor. Cuss crab-crawls back, presses himself against his credenza, frantically looking around.

CUSS

What do you want?

Eyes burning with hatred, Griffin stares at Cuss for a long moment before we

CUT TO:

EXT. GIANNI GLITZ COSMETICS - LOADING DOCK - NIGHT

A STEEL DOOR is ROLLED UP, Griffin's Land Rover parked, its rear facing the dock. Cuss pushes a cart loaded with boxes of chemicals and lab equipment in aluminum cases up as Griffin opens the rear doors, looks around.

GRIFFIN
Everything in the back. Go.

 CUSS
This is crazy. You're just making
things worse--

Griffin SMACKS him in the back of the head.

 GRIFFIN
Shut up.

Cuss, rattled, speaks rapidly as he begins off-loading the
cart into Griffin's SUV.

 CUSS
That guy I was talking to at
Chemical Logistics. Pierce. He's
our marketing liaison with the
government people. Ex-spook.
C.I.A. The real deal. He knew all
about your wife's murder. Said you
wouldn't be a problem. Said they
were already on it...

He loads the last box into the back of the Rover.

 GRIFFIN
"On it..."

Griffin SLAMS the rear doors shut.

 GRIFFIN
... what the hell's that supposed
to mean?

 CUSS
It means this whole deal, this
technology, it's black as hell.
It's a Homeland security issue.
Pierce has contacts with all kinds
of fringe players, private
contractors--

Griffin suddenly him by the back of the neck, gives him an
impatient shake.

 GRIFFIN
What're you *saying*?

 SECURITY GUARD
Hey!

Startled, both men turn. A SECURITY GUARD approaches, his hand covering the butt of his pistol. Cuss grabs Griffin's arm, throws a wild gut-punch that connects solidly. Griffin drops to his knees, Cuss holding on for dear life, SHOUTS:

CUSS

Help me!

The Guard looks at him, confused.

SECURITY GUARD

Mister Cuss? What the hell's--

GUARD'S POV - Cuss is holding on to air, struggling with his INVISIBLE OPPONENT.

CUSS

Hurry, you idiot! He's gonna get away! Shoot! *Shoot him!*

Suddenly, something sweeps Cuss's legs out from under him. He falls back, his HEAD STRIKING THE CONCRETE FLOOR.

THE GUARD - slowly approaches, confused, gun drawn.

SECURITY GUARD

Sir...

GUARD'S POV - As we slowly move up on Cuss's prone form, HIS HEAD LIFTED BY UNSEEN HANDS and repeatedly, violently SLAMMED against the concrete as invisible GRIFFIN SNARLS:

GRIFFIN (O.S.)

You sonofabitch--

(CRACK)

--think you can *threaten* me--

(CRACK)

--stupid *bastards!*

WORM'S-EYE VIEW - Griffin straddles Cuss's chest, lifting the unconscious man's head by the ears and POUNDING it against the concrete with a final wet, sickening CRACK. Breathing heavily, he looks down at his victim as the Guard slowly STEPS INTO FRAME BEHIND HIM.

SECURITY GUARD

Mister Cuss...?

Griffin turns, the Guard gazing through him at the dead man on the floor in numb shock. He BATS the pistol from the Guard's hand.

THE GUARD - stunned, looks around, then at his empty hand. What the hell just happened? Suddenly, he hears a CAR DOOR SHUT. Turns just as the Land Rover's engine ROARS TO LIFE.

SECURITY GUARD

Hey!

He takes a couple steps forward, watches helplessly as the SUV ROARS AWAY into the darkness. Hold a beat, then

SLAM TO:

EXT. ROYAL PALMS MOTEL - DAY

The familiar SIGN: THE ROYAL PALMS MOTEL & SPA. TILT DOWN to reveal MR. HALL, late-50s, a skinny, faded ex-biker-type, long, lank graying hair pulled back in a ponytail, unloading the boxes and equipment from the back of dusty Land Rover as his wife looks on.

MR. HALL

Why in hell can't he tote his own stuff. This ain't The Ritz.

MRS. HALL

I told you, he's recovering from surgery.

MR. HALL

What kinda surgery?

MRS. HALL

You think I'm gonna ask him that?

Mr. Hall GRUNTS as he sets a box down on top of the others stacked on a dolly. There's the CLINKING OF BOTTLES inside the box.

MR. HALL

Sounds like booze.
(a sour glance toward
Griffin's motel room)
You don't think he's gonna trash
the place?

MRS. HALL

(snorts)
Ain't nothing worth trashing.

Hall glares at his wife.

REPORTER (PRE-LAP)
 ... police discovered the body of a
 woman identified as Victoria
 Griffin inside her Simi Valley
 home...

INT. ROYAL PALMS MOTEL - GRIFFIN'S ROOM - DAY

ON TELEVISION - A REPORTER stands in front of Griffin's
 house, the yard festooned with yellow crime-scene tape,
 POLICE CARS in the driveway.

REPORTER (CONT'D)
 A suspect was arrested at the
 scene. Authorities have identified
 him as Todd Buckner, 26, an
 instructor at a local tennis
 club...

GRIFFIN - Asleep, still sprawled on the bed, the bandages on
 the lower half of his face tugged down. A KNOCK at the door.

MR. HALL (O.S.)
 Got your bags, mister...

A key scrapes the lock and the door opens a crack, glaring
 sunlight streaming past him into the room.

GRIFFIN
No, don't!

Griffin springs from the bed, staggers up to the door, one
 hand covering the lower half of his face. Mr. Hall reacts,
 horrified, before Griffin SHOVES the door closed.

EXT. ROYAL PALMS MOTEL - GRIFFIN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Shaken, Mr. Hall stands on the landing for a moment,
 confused, not sure what to do. We can still hear the
 TELEVISION INSIDE:

REPORTER
 ... still missing, the victim's
 husband, Richard Griffin, 33--

It's ABRUPTLY SWITCHED OFF. After a moment, Griffin CALLS
 FROM WITHIN:

GRIFFIN (O.S.)
 Okay... you can come in, now.

INT. ROYAL PALMS MOTEL - GRIFFIN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mr. Hall eases the door open, peers into the room. The bedspread is ruffled, the laptop open on a bedside table, but no sign of Griffin.

MR. HALL
Mister...?

Mr. Hall's eyes are drawn to the hypnotizing, now-familiar DISPLAY OF THE COMPLEX MOLECULE on Griffin's laptop.

GRIFFIN
Just put everything down on the floor by the dresser.

Hall starts, sees Griffin, sunglasses on, gauze-wrapped face peering at him through the cracked bathroom door. He covers the lower half of his face with a hand-towel.

GRIFFIN
I'm sorry, it's just... I'm very sensitive to light.

Mr. Hall slowly nods, hesitates.

GRIFFIN
There's a twenty on the table. You can take it when you're done.

Mr. Hall sees the bill lying on the table, enters and hastily deposits the stack of boxes and cases inside the door.

GRIFFIN
Is that everything?

MR. HALL
Yeah. Everything.

Palpably relieved, Mr. Hall picks up the twenty, tucks it in his jeans pocket as he moves toward the door.

GRIFFIN
Wait.

Mr. Hall freezes. God, he just wants to get out of there.

GRIFFIN
The air-conditioner. It's making a noise...

MR. HALL
(hesitates)
If you want, we could move you to
another room--

GRIFFIN
No, that's okay. I'm fine, here.
(Mr. Hall doesn't move)
Thank you.

After a beat, Mr. Hall gives Griffin a guarded nod.

SLAM TO:

INT. ROYAL PALMS MOTEL - MANAGER'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Mrs. Hall is back in her recliner, munching cheese-puffs as she watches an INANE GAME SHOW on the television. The SCREEN-DOOR SLAMS in the adjoining office.

Her husband enters, crosses to the kitchenette, opens a cabinet and pulls out a bottle of Wild Turkey. Mrs. Hall hits "MUTE," turns in her chair.

MRS. HALL
What?

He slowly looks up, eyes haunted.

MR. HALL
(without turning)
It ain't Brad Pitt...

OUT TO BLACK

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

INT. ROYAL PALMS MOTEL - MANAGER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

As Mrs. Hall watches curiously from her recliner, Mr. Hall pours himself a generous shot of whiskey and knocks it back.

MRS. HALL
What happened?

Mr. Hall leans against the counter, collecting his composure.

MR. HALL
I knocked but he didn't answer, so
I used my key. He was on the bed.
It was dark.

MRS. HALL
So?

MR. HALL
So I guess... some of his bandages
musta come loose.
(shudders)
It was bad.

MRS. HALL
You saw his face?

Mr. Hall nods, pours another shot, hands shaking.

MR. HALL
Man musta had a accident. A real
bad one. His jaw was just... tore
off.

MRS. HALL
His whole jaw?

MR. HALL
Nothing there but a big black hole
from here to here...

He places the edges of his hands against his upper lip and the top of his shirt-collar.

MRS. HALL
That's ridiculous.

MR. HALL
I know what I saw.

MRS. HALL
So how come he can talk?

Mr. Hall averts his eyes, suddenly unsure. He hadn't thought about that. Mrs. Hall gives him a dismissive look, turns and thumbs off the "MUTE" on the television. After a beat:

MR. HALL
He says his air-conditioner's
making a noise.

MRS. HALL
He said so? That must be some
trick, what, with no jaw and all...

EXT. CONDO COMPLEX - DAY

Detectives Ramos and Hardesty stand outside the gate. OVER THE SPEAKER, a RING TONE purrs, George Griffin picks up.

GEORGE
(over speaker)
Yeah, who's there?

RAMOS
Detective Ramos, Simi Valley
Police. We need to ask you a few
questions about Richard.

GEORGE
(over speaker)
Richard who?

Ramos and Hardesty trade a glance.

INT. TOWNHOUSE - DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Dressed for a round of golf, George Griffin sits at the table with the two detectives. Ramos takes notes.

RAMOS
And this was the night before last?

GEORGE
(hollers)
Betty? Night before last?

BETTY (O.S.)
Yes, dear!

George GRUNTS. Ramos jots a note.

RAMOS
Did he seem normal?

GEORGE
Hell no. Practically went on a
rampage.

Betty enters with a tray of iced tea.

BETTY
He wanted to borrow some money.

HARDESTY
A loan?

GEORGE
Called it an *investment*. That's a
laugh...

RAMOS
What'd he need the money for?

George and Betty trade a glance, hesitate. Ramos looks at one, then the other, patiently waiting. Finally...

GEORGE
It's kinda embarrassing...

RAMOS
Embarrassing.

GEORGE
Sad, even...

BETTY
Richard said he'd invented a way to
make people...

She trails off, hesitant to make what she's convinced would be an admission that madness runs in the family.

RAMOS
Make people what?

Again, George and Betty glance nervously at one another. Finally, George turns to them, resigned.

INT. UNMARKED CROWN VIC - MOMENTS LATER

Behind the wheel, Ramos slips on her seat-belt. Hardesty SLAMS his door.

HARDESTY
Invisible.

RAMOS
That's what the man said.

HARDESTY
That's nuts.

RAMOS
Ya think?

HARDESTY
Yeah. I think.

Ramos draws a deep breath. She doesn't like it, but...

RAMOS
We got tennis-boy, says there was nobody else in the room. Swears the vic had some kind of seizure.

HARDESTY
Coroner says she was strangled.

RAMOS
No question. She absolutely was strangled. Then we got the girls--

HARDESTY
--saw the vic's car drive off with nobody behind the wheel. You believe that?

RAMOS
The husband worked in a lab--

HARDESTY
--a *cosmetics* lab.

RAMOS
Your point?

HARDESTY
It's barely a lab. I mean... cosmetics, right?

RAMOS
Still, his ex-boss gets all hinky when we ask what Griffin was working on.

HARDESTY
It was proprietary.

She gives him a look.

RAMOS
Don't gimme that. You had your suspicions. You gonna tell me you didn't suspect?

HARDESTY
Okay, fine. Sure, I thought something was off, but... come on!

Ramos shrugs. It is what it is.

HARDESTY
Okay. So what's our game plan?

RAMOS
We cut tennis-boy loose, get an arrest warrant for Griffin. Murder one. Issue an A.P.B. Caution the law-enforcement community that the suspect is--

HARDESTY
(interrupts)
--invisible.

RAMOS
Yeah. Invisible.

HARDESTY
Be on the look-out for some guy you can't see.

RAMOS
That sounds about right.

They lock eyes. Hold a beat. Ramos SNICKERS. Hardesty BUSTS UP.

RAMOS
How about we just BOLO the wife's car, throw it on the sheet, see what turns up.

HARDESTY
That might work. Say we're looking for a possible accessory.

RAMOS
If anyone asks.

HARDESTY
Yeah. Naturally.

Ramos STARTS the car. Hesitates before putting it in gear, gazing out the windshield, disheartened.

HARDESTY
What?

RAMOS
It's not entirely crazy. You do know that.

She meets his eyes. After a long moment, he looks away.

HARDESTY
You gonna drive or what?

INT. ROYAL PALMS MOTEL - GRIFFIN'S ROOM - DUSK

ORANGE SUNLIGHT struggles through the closed blinds. Open cases litter the bed. The table is crowded with SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENTS, BEAKERS, MICROSCOPE AND CENTRIFUGE. Displayed on a LAPTOP MONITOR, the 3D DIGITAL MODEL of the invisibility serum's MOLECULAR STRUCTURE.

GRIFFIN
Opacity compound C-19. Cellular integrity intact, computer models look promising...

Sweating profusely, stripped down to jeans and a t-shirt, wearing a small HEADSET jacked into his laptop, Griffin adjusts a Bunsen-burner under a beaker of bubbling liquid the color and consistency of tallow and records his findings into his computer audio-log, his VOICE TREMBLING with desperation:

GRIFFIN
This is my last shot. I've distilled the last of my serum to develop the base, increased the amino-acid components in order to speed absorption--

With fevered eyes, he watches a single drop of CLOUDY LIQUID build at the end of a glass condenser, drop into a small test-tube. INPATIENT:

GRIFFIN
C'mon....

INT. ROYAL PALMS MOTEL - GRIFFIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

The air conditioner has been dismantled, parts spread out on a small tarp as Teddy works on the fan. The bedside lamp has been placed on the floor, shade removed to give her more light. She glances over her shoulder.

Griffin stands uncomfortably close, arms crossed, radiating impatience. Creeped out, Teddy returns to her task.

GRIFFIN
Hypomelanosis.

TEDDY
Yessir. That's what the doctors
call it.

GRIFFIN
Do you have red eyes? I can't tell
in this light.

TEDDY
No. They're blue. You a doctor?

He SNIFFS, wipes his nose with the back of his glove.

GRIFFIN
Not a medical doctor.

TEDDY
Cuz most people just ask if I'm an
albino.
(adds, pointedly)
That's if they stop *staring* long
enough to ask.

Griffin just nods. Doesn't move. Doesn't look away.

TEDDY
You get in some kinda accident?

GRIFFIN
Yes.
(hesitates)
More of a condition, really.

TEDDY
What kinda condition?

GRIFFIN
Similar to yours but... more
extreme.

Something in Griffin's voice indicates bitter amusement in this description.

 TEDDY
You trying to be funny?

 GRIFFIN
No. When will you be done?

 TEDDY
Soon.

A silent, uncomfortable beat.

 TEDDY
What kinda doctor?

 GRIFFIN
I'm sorry?

 TEDDY
You say you're not a medical
doctor. What kind, then?

Griffin follows Teddy's gaze toward the scientific paraphernalia cluttering the table.

 GRIFFIN
I'm a physicist. I'm doing some
research. I needed some peace and
quiet. That's why I'm here. You
can tell that to Mrs. Hall.

 TEDDY
Why would I do that?

 GRIFFIN
Because it's obvious you're not
here to fix the air conditioner.
If it was, you'd have been done
thirty minutes ago.

 TEDDY
Is that a fact?

 GRIFFIN
Yes. That is a fact. Now
please...
 (heart attack serious)
... finish and go.

EXT. ROYAL PALMS MOTEL - MOMENTS LATER

Teddy loads her tools into the back of the van. Mrs. Hall pumps her for information.

MRS. HALL
A physicist?

TEDDY
That's what he told me.

MRS. HALL
You mean like one of them guys,
teaches you how to walk and feed
yourself after a stroke?

Teddy rolls her eyes.

TEDDY
No. That's a physical *therapist*.
A physicist is a guy who, you know,
builds nuclear bombs and stuff.

MRS. HALL
(alarmed)
You think he's building a nuke?

TEDDY
No. *Hell* no. You need way more
stuff than he's got in there to
build a nuke.

EXT. GLEESON'S CORNER - NIGHT

A clapboard roadhouse at the intersection of two dusty blacktops, JOAN JETT growling loud on the juke. Teddy's van is parked out front in the dirt lot among work-trucks, beaters and a line of rat-bike Harley Davidsons.

FEARENSIDE (PRE-LAP)
Still, he could be some kinda
terrorist...

INT. GLEESON'S CORNER - CONTINUOUS

Dimly lit, cigarette smoke glowing with primary colors from dozens of NEON BEER-SIGNS on the walls. Mixed BLUE-COLLAR and OUTLAW CROWD. Teddy Henfrey sits at the bar with FEARENSIDE, a burly biker wearing a greasy denim vest, a huge, bushy moustache, tiny round sunglasses and a bandanna.

TEDDY
No accent.

Fearenside rubs his chin, nodding sagely as if that would settle it in a court of law. Something occurs to Fearenside.

FEARENSIDE
Maybe he's cooking ice.

TEDDY
Meth? Ya think?

FEARENSIDE
What kinda legitimate guy does scientific research in a flea-bag like The Palms? You say he had a lot of chemicals and stuff...?

Teddy nods.

FEARENSIDE
Stay put. I'll be right back.

Fearenside rolls off his stool, swaggers past a gang of bikers playing pool for cash, a COUPLE propped up against the wall, dry-humping near the back door, then out into...

EXT. GLEESON'S CORNER - BACK PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

A ROWDY, SHOUTING CROWD surrounds two tough-looking guys in the middle of a vicious street-fight. Fearenside weaves through the crowd.

He approaches a uniformed County Sheriff's Deputy, JAFFERS, late 40s, hard, sunbaked. He leans on the fender of his cruiser, arms crossed, impassively watching the fight.

FEARENSIDE
Hey, Jaffers.

JAFFERS
'sup, Stinky.

FEARENSIDE
Wish you wouldn't call me that.

JAFFERS
Why not? Everybody else does.

FEARENSIDE
Not to my face.

Jaffers grins, pushing a toothpick from one corner of his mouth to the other.

JAFFERS

So what's up?

FEARENSIDE

Gotta guy cooking meth out at The Palms.

This tidbit gets Jaffer's eyes off the fight. He looks at Fearenside for the first time.

JAFFERS

One of Easy's boys?

FEARENSIDE

(shakes his head)

Freelance.

Jaspers heaves a tired sigh, shakes his head.

INT. ROYAL PALMS MOTEL - GRIFFIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Griffin shuts off a small spigot at the end of the glass condenser tube. Picks up the test tube, which now contains enough of the CLOUDY ANTIDOTE for a single injection. Speaks quietly into his headset:

GRIFFIN

Opacity compound testing protocol...
intramuscular self-injection, 5 ccs.
If results are positive, begin
intravenous series--

He hears the STEALTHY CRUNCH of wheels on gravel OUTSIDE. Turns toward the door, slowly removing his headset

EXT. ROYAL PALMS MOTEL - NIGHT

Jaffers' cruiser noses through the darkened parking lot, headlights off. He rolls to a SLOW STOP BEHIND GRIFFIN'S ROVER, thumbs the button on his radio mic, SPEAKS QUIETLY:

JAFFERS

Dispatch, this is nine-nine-three.
I gotta late-model Range Rover, tag
number Alpha-Romeo-Foxtrot one-one-
nine seven, over.

The response to Jeffers' tag-check comes in over the radio:

DISPATCH

Unit nine-nine-three, vehicle is
subject of a statewide BOLO in
connection with a homicide.

DISPATCH(cont'd)

Registered owner, Griffin, Richard;
male Caucasian, five-ten, one-sixty-
five--

SLAM TO:

INT. ROYAL PALMS MOTEL - GRIFFIN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

AS THE DOOR IS KICKED IN. Jeffers enters, pistol drawn,
ROARS:

JAFFERS
Sheriff! Freeze!

He sweeps the place with his pistol, eyes moving right past Griffin, who stands naked, silent and stock-still in the center of the room.

JAFFERS
Griffin...?!

Quickly ascertaining the room is empty, Jaffers glances into the bathroom, leading with his gun. Griffin silently assumes a position between the bed and the wall.

Jaffers relaxes, holsters his pistol, casually examines the equipment on the table. Griffin watches, nervous.

Jaffers picks up the test-tube of OPACITY COMPOUND, sniffs it. Fear written on his face, Griffin takes an involuntary, protective step forward. Still holding the test-tube, Jaffers thumbs the button on his handset.

JAFFERS
Dispatch, I got a suspected meth-
lab out here at The Royal Palms on
Avenue G. Scene is clear. Send
out a hazardous waste unit--

Jaffers inadvertently drops the test-tube. It SHATTERS
AGAINST A BEAKER.

GRIFFIN
NO!

JAFFERS
Who's the--

Jaffers goes for his gun. Griffin instinctively grabs him from behind, locking him in a tight bear-hug. They struggle, Jaffers twisting, awkwardly pointing his pistol back over one shoulder, FIRING A ROUND INTO THE WALL.

GRIFFIN

Jesus--

JAFFERS

(confused, terrified)

Lemme go, goddamnit--

BLAM BLAM. Two more shots narrowly miss Griffin. He grabs Jaffers' wrist, the two spinning an ungainly waltz across the room until they're in front of...

THE MIRROR - Reflected in its surface, NOT TWO MEN, BUT ONE-- Jaffers, alone, gazing in stunned disbelief, his arms pinned to his chest, his wrist squeezed by an unseen hand.

JAFFERS

Lemme...go!

The muzzle of his pistol moves inexorably under his chin.

EXT. ROYAL PALMS MOTEL - GRIFFIN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A MUZZLE-FLASH rims the blinds as a SHOT IS FIRED. A BODY hits the floor with a sloppy THUD.

INT. ROYAL PALMS MOTEL - GRIFFIN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Griffin gazes down at the floor in horror, HIGH-VELOCITY BLOOD-SPATTER splashed across his bare chest and left shoulder. Dazed, he turns to...

THE MIRROR - the spray of JAFFERS' BLOOD IS SUSPENDED IN MIDAIR, a gaudy red splash modeled by the contours of Griffin's left pectoral muscle, collar bone, trapezoid...

As Griffin wipes it away, he looks up to see THREE DISEMBODED RED FINGERS floating in the mirror, each DRIPPING BLOOD.

Suddenly, LIGHTS BLAZE ON outside, snapping him out of his trance.

EXT. ROYAL PALMS MOTEL - FRONT OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Clad in dirty boxers and a frayed satin kimono, Mr. Hall dashes out the office door, an Army .45 in one hand. Mrs. Hall, in a cotton night gown, waddles to keep up. They move past Jaffers' cruiser, still canted behind Griffin's Rover.

MR. HALL

Stay back.

MRS. HALL

But--

MR. HALL

Stay *back!*

He presses himself against the wall next to the broken-down door, peeks around the threshold. Sees legs--tan cop pants, clunky black cop-shoes.

MRS. HALL

What--

MR. HALL

Shh. Stay here.

INT. ROYAL PALMS MOTEL - GRIFFIN'S ROOM

Mr. Hall moves slowly into the room, gun extended in two shaking hands, eyes darting around. The room is empty.

He looks down at Jaffers' body--dead eyes gazing at the ceiling; a dark, spreading halo of blood soaking the carpet under his head. Mr. Hall's eyes are again drawn to the mesmerizing 3-D DISPLAY OF THE INVISIBILITY MOLECULE on Griffin's laptop.

A POWERFUL ENGINE ROARS to life outside, TIRES SPINNING on gravel followed by a CRASH.

EXT. ROYAL PALMS MOTEL - GRIFFIN'S ROOM

Griffin's Land Rover BOLTS FORWARD from Jafferts' cruiser with a wrenching SCREECH of tortured sheet-metal, again REVERSES HARD the police car, this time ramming it back far enough to provide clearance to turn around.

The Rover shifts into forward gear, SPINS A FISHTAIL, kicking up gravel as Mr. And Mrs. Hall burst out the door.

MR. HALL

Hey!

The Rover POWERS AWAY. Mr. Hall levels his Colt, FIRES EIGHT ROUNDS at the fleeing SUV as it disappears into the night.

OUT TO BLACK

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

FADE IN:

EXT. ROYAL PALMS MOTEL - DAWN

The parking lot is packed with San Bernardino Sheriff's cars, coroner's van; crawling with COPS and CRIME-SCENE TECHS. A couple news vans squat beyond the yellow tape. Ramos and Hardesty play catch-up with a County Sheriff homicide detective, SGT. BRAUTIGAN as they head for the room:

BRAUTIGAN

Single shot to the head. Looks like there was a struggle...

INT. ROYAL PALMS MOTEL - GRIFFIN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Brautigan, Ramos and Hardesty peer inside. Jaffers' body has been removed, leaving a bloodstain and taped outline. TECHS photograph and print the lab equipment on the table.

BRAUTIGAN

Meth lab. Jafferts was checking it out. Your guy musta got the drop on him...

RAMOS

You sure he was cooking speed?

BRAUTIGAN

What else?

RAMOS

Tell ya what, soon as you get those chemicals analyzed and I.D.ed, shoot us an inventory, 'kay?

BRAUTIGAN

Sure. Whatever.

Hardesty calls to a FINGERPRINT TECH.

HARDESTY

Hey. Any luck with prints?

FINGERPRINT TECH

Yeah. We've lifted a buncha good ones.

Hardesty looks at Ramos, eyebrows raised. Ramos shrugs.

RAMOS
So? He's gonna leave prints,
right?

Brautigan gives them a curious look.

RAMOS
Any physical I.D.s? Witnesses?

BRAUTIGAN
That might be a problem.

INT. ROYAL PALMS MOTEL - MANAGER'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Mrs. Hall is thrilled. This is the most action she's had in years. Mr. Hall is surly; hates cops. Hardesty and Ramos do their best to pull information.

MRS. HALL
He was all wrapped up in bandages.

RAMOS
Bandages.

Mrs. Hall nods. Ramos turns to Hardesty, who SIGHS AND MUTTERS to himself:

HARDESTY
Please don't say sunglasses...

MRS. HALL
Yeah. Big sunglasses.
(to Ramos)
Like the old people after they get
their cataracts out.

RAMOS
Hands?

MRS. HALL
Gloves.

RAMOS
So...
(glances at Hardesty)
... neither of you got a look at
his face.

MR. HALL
Well...

He trails off, glances at his wife, who rolls her eyes.

HARDESTY
You saw his face?

Mr. Hall sulks, throws an angry, sidelong glance at his wife, who gloats, SING-SONG:

MRS. HALL
Go ahead, Ray. Tell em...

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY

Ramos and Hardesty's Crown Vic barrels down the black slash of a highway.

INT. UNMARKED CROWN VIC - CONTINUOUS

Ramos drives, Hardesty gazing fixedly out the passenger side window. Finally:

HARDESTY
I'm really hating this case.

Ramos doesn't reply. After a beat:

HARDESTY
You think...?

RAMOS
I dunno.
(then)
Maybe. What do you say we just
keep it real.

HARDESTY
(nods)
Like any other investigation.

RAMOS
Routine. By the book. Who haven't
we talked to?

HARDESTY
Known associates, friends...

RAMOS
Co-workers.

HARDESTY
Yeah, we can do that.

Again, they fall into silence. After a moment, Hardesty slowly shakes his head.

HARDESTY
Bandages.

RAMOS
Bandages and sunglasses.

HARDESTY
Jesus...

She glances at him, then turns away, begins QUIETLY
CHUCKLING.

HARDESTY
What.

RAMOS
I was just thinking...

HARDESTY
Yeah?

RAMOS
Maybe we should talk to Brad Pitt.

Unamused, he just stares at her, then turns and, once again,
watches the scenery pass by.

HARDESTY
I'm really hating this case...

Pre-lap the HUM OF A BLOW-DRIER.

INT. MAGGIE'S CONDO - BATHROOM - DAY

Wrapped in a towel, Maggie BLOW-DRIES her hair front of the
mirror over her sink. A SLOW PULL REVEALS GRIFFIN standing
directly behind her, BLOOD STREAMING FROM A BULLET WOUND
above his shoulder blade (no sign of him reflected in the
mirror). She finishes, switches the BLOW-DRIER OFF.

GRIFFIN
Maggie...

She SCREAMS and turns, clutching the towel against her,
cringing back against the sink, eyes wide.

GRIFFIN
I need help.

Something catches her attention. Her eyes flicker to:

MAGGIE'S POV - a deformed .45 Caliber slug floats in midair,
moving rhythmically with each RAGGED BREATH drawn by Griffin.

GRIFFIN
I've been shot...

She stares at him, paralyzed a moment, then bolts from the bathroom.

INT. MAGGIE'S CONDO - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Maggie runs for the phone. Griffin grabs her, hurls her on the bed. He rips the phone-cord from the wall and pins her to the mattress, covering her mouth with one hand to keep her from crying out. Her panicked eyes dart around, unseeing--similar to a blind person's.

 GRIFFIN
Maggie, listen to me. I am not
going to hurt you. I promise.
It's just me, Richard...

She stops struggling. He slowly moves his hand from her mouth.

 MAGGIE
(astonished)
You did it.

 GRIFFIN
Yeah.

 MAGGIE
We haven't been able to get past
the absorption issue.

 GRIFFIN
I worked it out.

Suddenly, she tenses, remembering the news--Vicky Griffin's murder... asks in a quiet, faltering tone:

 MAGGIE
Are you gonna kill me?

 GRIFFIN
No.

 MAGGIE
Your wife...

Griffin doesn't respond immediately.

 GRIFFIN
I promise I won't hurt you. I just
need your help.

GRIFFIN(cont'd)

I need to get this bullet out, a place to stay. Just for a little while.

Hold, then the DOORBELL RINGS, startling both of them.

EXT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

DISTORTED, FISH-EYE VIEW through a peep-hole. Ramos and Hardesty stand out in the hallway. Again, Ramos RINGS THE DOORBELL.

INT. MAGGIE'S CONDO - ENTRY HALL - CONTINUOUS

Griffin peers out the front door peephole. After a moment, he steps away, looks down to see a business card slip under the door. He picks it up.

INSERT: BUSINESS CARD - SIMI VALLEY POLICE DEPARTMENT - Det. Monica Ramos, telephone numbers, address, email.

He turns, looks up from the card at Maggie, who stares in his general direction, ashen, rigid with fear.

GRIFFIN

Talcum powder...

Huh? Maggie looks confused.

INT. MAGGIE'S CONDO - BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

THE BEDSIDE TABLE - A plastic container of TALCUM POWDER sits next to an open FIRST-AID KIT, a few medical instruments-- TWEEZERS, A DISPOSABLE SCALPEL, A PAIR OF FORCEPS--a bottle of MINERAL ALCOHOL and a SEWING KIT.

Maggie picks up the powder. Griffin lies face-down on the bed. Maggie places her hand on his back, begins feeling for the bullet hole.

GRIFFIN

A little to the right.

MAGGIE'S POV - Her palm moves about three inches above the floating .45 slug, finds something, her index finger dipping into a slight depression. Griffin GRUNTS IN PAIN:

GRIFFIN (O.S.)

That's it...

Maggie begins generously sprinkling the area with talcum powder. As if by magic, the POWDER LANDS AND DISPERSSES ABOUT TEN INCHES ABOVE THE MATTRESS.

MAGGIE - leans in, blows away the excess powder, then pulls back, gazing down in wonder.

MAGGIE'S POV - we can now see the surface of Griffin's shoulder, bone white, semi-transparent, marred by an ugly bullet-wound.

MAGGIE - reaches for the forceps.

MAGGIE

Okay, I'm gonna get the bullet.
Try not to move.

MAGGIE'S POV - She pushes the head of the forceps into the wound. O.S., Griffin moans through grit teeth. INVISIBLE BLOOD begins flowing, CLEARING RIVULETS through the thin sheet of talcum powder.

MAGGIE - leans down for a better point of view as she works.

MAGGIE'S POV - A thin, semi-transparent SHELL OF TALC DELINEATING FLESH AND MUSCLE; below it, THE BULLET, moving slightly with Griffin's every HITCHED BREATH; and, finally, the SURGICAL-STEEL BEAK OF THE FORCEPS, working its way down an invisible wound channel, probing... opening... LOCKING AROUND THE SLUG.

MAGGIE

Got it.

MAGGIE - She slowly draws out the bullet, holds it up to look at it, hands trembling slightly.

INT. POLICE STATION - RAMOS AND HARDESTY'S DESK - DAY

A printer spits out AN INVENTORY of the items confiscated from Griffin's motel room. Ramos is on the phone.

RAMOS

Sergeant Brautigan, please...?

She picks up the inventory, scans it.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. SHERIFF'S SUBSTATION - LANCASTER - CONTINUOUS

A small station. FEDS IN SUITS are working in the background, a few carrying boxes through to the main exit. Harried, Brautigan picks up the phone, exasperated:

BRAUTIGAN

Brautigan.

RAMOS
Hi, this is Detective Ramos. I got
the inventory--

BRAUTIGAN
(defensive)
That's all of it, okay. No
research notes, no laptop
computer... If it isn't on the
list, we didn't take it into
evidence?

RAMOS
Whoa, whoa... who says you did?

Brautigan looks behind him at the SUITS, leans in and lowers
his voice.

BRAUTIGAN
This place is crawling with feds.
Homeland security--

RAMOS
Wait a second, *what*?

BRAUTIGAN
Homeland security. They just
called jurisdiction. They're
taking everything, evidence, my
murder book... everything.

RAMOS
Why?

BRAUTIGAN
Beats the hell outta me. They just
showed up with a bunch of writs.

RAMOS
So what's all this about a laptop?

BRAUTIGAN
Hell, I dunno. They just keep going
on and on. "You find any notes,
disks, computers? You sure?" Like
we're a buncha amateurs...

RAMOS
I didn't see any laptop at the
scene.

BRAUTIGAN

Gee. Thanks for the validation.
Mind if I send someone out for a
deposition?

RAMOS

(stung)

Hey...

BRAUTIGAN

I'm sorry, I just... God I hate
these guys. So what's up? What do
you need...?

RAMOS

I was just calling to thank you.

BRAUTIGAN

Fine. Don't mention it.

Ramos disconnects. Looks a little stunned.

HARDESTY (O.S.)

Barb...?

RAMOS

(as she turns)

You wouldn't believe what's going
on out in Lancaster--

She suddenly stops. REVEAL Hardesty standing at the entrance
to their cubicle flanked by two FEDERAL AGENTS. One of them
holds out his hand.

FED

Homeland Security.
(professional smile)
Mind if we hang onto that?

INT. MAGGIE'S CONDO - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Dimly lit. Under a gooseneck lamp, Maggie sits in a chair,
knees tucked under her chin, reading a book. Griffin sleeps
on the sofa, covered by an afghan. Suddenly he awakes, sits
bolt upright. The movement attracts Maggie's attention. She
looks in his direction.

MAGGIE

Griffin...?

GRIFFIN

How long was I out?

MAGGIE
Not long. A few hours.

Griffin rubs his head, groggy.

MAGGIE
You hungry?

That gets his attention. He's famished.

CUT TO:

INT. MAGGIE'S CONDO - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Scrambled eggs are scraped from a frying pan onto a plate. Maggie sets the meal on a small table in front of Griffin, who is wrapped in the Afghan.

MAGGIE
Sure you don't want some bacon?

GRIFFIN
Takes too long to digest.

He scoops up a fork full of egg. Feels eyes on him, pausing and looking up. Maggie gazes at him, curious.

GRIFFIN
Look away.

MAGGIE
What.

GRIFFIN
It's not pretty. Please.

Maggie sighs and averts her eyes. Griffin begins devouring the scrambled eggs.

MAGGIE
What're you gonna do?

GRIFFIN
I gotta reverse this. As long as
I'm like this, I can't think
straight...

Maggie glances at him, then stares in fascination.

MAGGIE'S POV - Eggs are shewed in midair, swallowed down an invisible gullet.

GRIFFIN

Look away!

Maggie quickly averts her eyes.

MAGGIE

I'm sorry, I--
(gathers herself)
I don't understand.

GRIFFIN

Understand what?

MAGGIE

What does being invisible have to do with your ability to think.

GRIFFIN

I've been trying to figure that out. It's like, you know how it's slightly harder to hear someone when they're behind you?

MAGGIE

Yeah.

GRIFFIN

You can't see their lips move, their facial expression. You're missing all kinds of visual cues. It's something like that, only it's internal.

MAGGIE

Dissociation.

GRIFFIN

Exactly. You're disconnected. On some level, you don't exist.

MAGGIE

Present, but not accounted for.

GRIFFIN

Yeah. It's like... so much of what you do--and what you *don't* do--is about how it looks. Not just to other people, but to yourself. And when you can't see yourself, you can't...

He holds his hands up in front of his face, gazes through them, then lets them drop.

GRIFFIN
 ... control yourself.

Maggie nods, understanding.

 GRIFFIN
 I worked out an antidote, but I'm
 out of base serum. I need
 chemicals, equipment...
 (pauses)
 I'm gonna need your help.

 MAGGIE
 Then what?

 GRIFFIN
 After?
 (shakes his head)
 I'll probably turn myself in to the
 police. I need to pay for...

He fights it for a moment, then breaks down, SOBBING. Maggie turns.

MAGGIE'S POV - The afghan, wrapped around Griffin's invisible form, jerks and shudders as he WEEPS.

MAGGIE - goes to him. Hesitates a moment, then takes him in her arms. He embraces her around her waist, clinging for life, desperate for warmth, for human contact. After a moment:

 MAGGIE
 There's another way.

 GRIFFIN
 No...

 MAGGIE
 Yes. You can go back to work with
 me at Chemical Logistics.

 GRIFFIN
 That's crazy. They won't--

 MAGGIE
 --No. They will. The guy I work
 for, Jason Pierce, he's--

 GRIFFIN
 --Yeah, right. Ex-C.I.A. I heard
 that--

MAGGIE

Right. And your research, it's so
important--

GRIFFIN

--it's useless--

MAGGIE

No, Griffin. It's vital. You need
to finish it. Show us how you made
it work. You don't have to worry
about the police. It'll be like
witness protection. New name. New
identity. New face, if you want
one. Jason says--

Griffin shoves her away, looks at her, astonished at her
betrayal.

GRIFFIN

You called them.

The guilt on her face says "yes." The condo door SPLINTERING
OPEN out in the living room says "absolutely." Griffin
throws off the afghan as FIVE ARMED MERCS in black tactical
gear swarm through the door. One of them, WEARING INFRARED
GOGGLES, turns toward the kitchen.

MERC'S POV - Both Maggie and Griffin can be clearly seen--
ORANGE-RED HUMAN SHAPED BLOBS.

MERC

Two o'clock!

A Specialist behind him, armed with an odd-looking rifle,
steps forward and FIRES TWO SILENCED ROUNDS. Griffin reacts,
staggering back, two FEATHERED DARTS imbedded in his chest.

ROARING, he charges the Mercs. They easily take him down,
two of them pinning him to the carpet while a third steps
forward, wearing a portable PAINT SPRAYING RIG, and hits him
with an extended blast.

MERC'S POV - Griffin becoming VISIBLE WITH EACH SWEEP OF
WHITE PAINT, coughing and struggling, losing strength as the
tranquilizers take hold.

OUT TO BLACK

END OF ACT SIX

ACT SEVEN

FADE IN:

INT. CELL

A concrete room, walls draped with canvas padding, BRIGHTLY LIT by caged fluorescents, a drain in the floor. Single, steel reinforced door. SECURITY CAMERAS are mounted up in all four corners of the cell.

Griffin sits on a concrete bench dressed in a hospital gown. His body has been sprayed with a FLAKY WHITE TEMPURA PAINT, his hair spiked stiff with it. The effect is Kabuki-like.

(SFX NOTE: Though OBJECTIVE CAMERA can see his eyes, teeth and the inside of his mouth, any time we cut to a POV, his EYES AND MOUTH APPEAR HOLLOW, like an empty, full-face mask.)

He looks down at his arm. After a moment, he licks it, looks at it again.

GRIFFIN'S POV - A BROAD SWATH of the paint on his arm is gone, revealing the HOLLOW SHELL within.

GRIFFIN - begins licking the paint off his hand, rubbing, cleaning himself like a dazed cat.

INT. SECURITY BOOTH

CLOSE ON VIDEO MONITOR - as Griffin frantically licks the paint. His right arm is gone almost up to the elbow.

The TWO FEDS we saw earlier in Ramos' office gaze down at the security monitors.

FED

Looks like he could use another coat.

INT. CELL

A LOUD BUZZ, a RED BULB flashing on over the door, and three men in WHITE BIO-HAZARD SUITS burst in, two of them holding Griffin down while a third SPRAYS HIM with more white paint from a portable compressed air unit.

Griffin ROARS, struggles, GAGGING and SPUTTERING, eyes screwed shut against the stinging paint.

SLAM TO BLACK

Hold a beat, then...

SLAM IN:

INT. CELL - LATER

To a JOHN PHILLIP SOUZA MARCH played at EXPLOSIVELY HIGH VOLUME. Griffin is curled up in a ball in the corner, covering his ears with his arms, SCREAMING.

SLAM TO BLACK

Hold a beat, then...

SLAM IN:

INT. TILED ROOM - LATER

Men in BIOHAZARD SUITS bind Griffin to a stainless-steel table with leather restraints, cinching them painfully tight.

One of his captors stretches PLASTIC WRAP tightly across Griffin's face. A second almost immediately hits the wrap with a steady stream of water from a hose.

Griffin struggles, eyes wide in terror, his SCREAMS MUFFLED.

SLAM TO BLACK

The CALM VOICE of Jason Pierce:

PIERCE (O.S.)
Mister Griffin...? Mister Griffin,
can you hear me?

FADE IN:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - LATER

TIGHT ON GRIFFIN - seated, head bowed, still coated with FLAKING WHITE PAINT, wearing a soiled hospital gown, his left wrist is cuffed to a leg of the table.

The room is lit by a SINGLE BARE OVERHEAD BULB; the only furnishings, a steel table bolted to the floor, two chairs and a wastepaper basket. One wall is dominated by a TWO-WAY MIRROR.

PIERCE (O.S.)
Mister Griffin...?

PIERCE

(taking the cue)

You see, a number of my colleagues believe you are a threat to national security. I think you may be an asset. A very valuable asset.

(leans forward)

You're not a threat, are you, Doctor?

Griffin slowly shakes his head. Pierce smiles, as if he's been telling the other guys all along.

PIERCE

That's what I thought.

(admits)

Well, maybe not at first, but your friend, Maggie Kemp, can be very convincing...

As Pierce CONTINUES, Griffin's head lolls back, his unfocused gaze DIRECTED AT THE CEILING:

GRIFFIN'S POV - Typical of an unfinished industrial ceiling: VENTILATOR DUCTS, PIPES and FIRE SPRINKLERS.

PIERCE (CONT'D)

... she's been advocating for you since we brought you in. She feels you could be a key member of the Chemical Logistics team. What do you think?

PROFILER

(over mic)

You're losing him.

PIERCE

Doctor...?

Griffin looks at him, then begins CHUCKLING.

GRIFFIN

Invisible bugs...

PIERCE

I'm sorry?

GRIFFIN

My research... has absolutely no... practical applications.

PROFILER

(over mic)

Flatter him. Tell him how important he is.

PIERCE

Oh, Doctor. Do not sell yourself short. Your research has already yielded results that have a number of very *important* applications. In surveillance, for instance. There are certain groups--groups that are impossible to infiltrate. An invisible operative at ground zero could be very useful. Or consider covert ops. One invisible saboteur could wreak more havoc than a *battalion* of conventional troops. And their leadership--the real bad guys, the ones at the top... they would be completely vulnerable. Totally exposed--

GRIFFIN

--to assassination.

PROFILER

(over mic)

Don't lie. Be honest.

PIERCE

If such an action was legally authorized, if it would save American lives, yes. Absolutely.

GRIFFIN

It doesn't work on guns, knives...

PIERCE

(a knowing smile)

Trust me, Doctor Griffin, the government has hundreds of operatives on its payroll who are perfectly lethal without benefit of guns or knives.

Griffin thinks about it, then shakes his head.

GRIFFIN

You'd never be able to control them.

PIERCE

Why not?

GRIFFIN

Look at me. I'm nobody. I've never been aggressive. I've never been in a fight. I've never even raised my voice in anger at a stranger. And I've murdered three people. One of them was a *cop*.

PIERCE

The men I'm talking about are highly trained--

Griffin POUNDS both fists down on the table.

GRIFFIN

(shouts)

--*it doesn't matter! Can't you see that?* If they're human...

(anger spent)

... it won't matter.

A beat. Pierce heaves a deep sigh, sizing Griffin up.

PIERCE

Richard--can I call you Richard?

Griffin doesn't say no. It wouldn't matter if he did.

GRIFFIN

Right now, the United States is facing an enemy more dangerous than any we've faced in the past. It's a war--a war we'll probably lose. Do you know why?

(pauses)

Because the enemy is willing to do anything to kill us. The enemy is willing to strap bombs on their children. Extreme measures, Richard. *Extreme* measures. And our countermeasures are going to have to be just as extreme if we are going to survive.

PROFILER

(over mic)

More flattery. Stroke him. Tell him how brilliant he is.

PIERCE

Your research could help save this country from total annihilation. You've succeeded where a team of over two-dozen brilliant, dedicated scientists have failed.

PROFILER

(over mic)

Tell him we need him.

PIERCE

We need you, Doctor Griffin.

PROFILER

(over mic)

Perfect. Don't say another word. Give him time to own it. Let him respond...

Again, Griffin's eyes drift to the ceiling.

PROFILER

(over mic)

Not a word.

Griffin looks meets Pierce's eyes, nods.

GRIFFIN

Okay. I'll help you.

The reaction of the Men in the booth is a hushed, restrained version of mission-controllers after a successful landing.

PIERCE

I knew you would, Richard. Maggie was right. You're a good man.

The Profiler heaves a sigh of relief as others pat his back.

PROFILER

(over mic)

Okay, now you need proof. A show of good faith.

PIERCE

We can get started right away--get all the chemicals you need, your own lab, a hand-picked staff. Where are your notes?

GRIFFIN

Notes?

PIERCE
Research notes, files, records. We understand you kept everything in a laptop computer, but the police didn't find it in Lancaster...

Griffin seems surprised, a little confused. He knows he left it behind when he fled the shooting...

PIERCE
Well...?

After a long moment, Griffin slowly shakes his head.

GRIFFIN
There is no laptop, no notes.
There never were.

Pierce looks at him, confused. Griffin taps the side of his head.

GRIFFIN
It's all right here.

Pierce seems disappointed. He hadn't expected this.

GRIFFIN
Is that a problem?

PIERCE
It could be, yeah. Not with me, but... a lot of people have to pull a lot of strings to make this happen. I mean, you are wanted for three murders.

GRIFFIN
Quid pro quo.

PIERCE
Exactly. We need to deliver a show of good faith if we're going to move forward.

Griffin nods, thinks about it.

GRIFFIN
I could write it all down. The entire process. I could put it down on paper.

PIERCE
You could do that?

GRIFFIN
 It's a little complicated but,
 yeah. All I need is a pad, a few
 pencils, cigarettes...

The Profiler quickly rifles back through his file.

PROFILER
 He doesn't smoke.

PIERCE
 Cigarettes?

GRIFFIN
 I know. I don't smoke, except...
 it's kind of a holdover from grad
 school, pulling all-nighters.
 Whenever I really need to focus,
 you know--dial in and work straight
 through something--I smoke.
 (apologetic)
 It's just... part of my process.

PIERCE
 This is a non-smoking facility.

Griffin gives him a shrug as if to say "no biggie."

GRIFFIN
 We could go outside...

Griffin deadpans him.

SLAM TO:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A YELLOW LEGAL PAD, PENCILS, a PACK OF CIGARETTES, MATCHES
 and AN ASHTRAY are set on the table.

PIERCE
 How long?

GRIFFIN
 A while.
 (off Pierce's reaction)
 It's complicated.

Pierce sighs, takes a seat in the chair opposite him.
 Griffin lights up his first cigarette.

OUT TO BLACK

FADE IN:

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM

The Profiler, tie now loose, shirtsleeves rolled up, sits back in his chair, tapping his pencil on Griffin's file.

THROUGH THE TWO-WAY MIRROR - A blue conversion layer of trapped cigarette smoke. Griffin is hunched over the pad, jotting down formulae and diagrams. Pierce, coat draped over the back of his chair, watches with a bored expression. Griffin takes a drag off a cigarette.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

Griffin grinds out his cigarette, which is now overflowing with butts. He starts a new page.

PIERCE

Need anything? Something to eat?
Drink?

GRIFFIN

No. I'm good.

He stops writing, SWEARS UNDER HIS BREATH and tears the page from the pad. Crumples it up and tosses it into...

THE MESH WASTEBASKET - brimming with dozens of other loosely crumpled pieces of yellow, lined paper.

Griffin lights up another cigarette, resumes his note-taking. Pierce COUGHS.

GRIFFIN

Is this bothering you?

PIERCE

Not much. How we doing?

GRIFFIN

Just about done.

Griffin scribbles a few more notes. Pierce looks at him expectantly.

PIERCE

Is that it?

Griffin nods, flips the other pages of the pad over, then sets it down on the table, sliding it across and turning it around so Pierce can read it.

INSERT: THE FIRST PAGE - Three words in the center, pencilled in neat, blocked printing: "KISS MY ASS"

Pierce reads the message, brow furrowed. Looks up just in time to see Griffin SET THE BOOK OF MATCHES ALIGHT with the coal of his cigarette, drop it into the waste-basket. The crumpled notepaper immediately BURSTS INTO FLAME.

Pierce leaps to his feet, moves for the wastebasket.

PIERCE

What're you--

Griffin stands, blocking him with his free arm while kicking the wastebasket over, flaming paper spilling across the floor, THE ROOM FILLING WITH ACRID SMOKE.

THE FIRE SPRINKLERS - KICK ON along with a SHRILL ALARM, WATER SPRAYING DOWN.

GRIFFIN

Buh-bye.

Pierce looks up, astonished to see...

PIERCE'S POV - As the WATER STRIKES GRIFFIN, forming holes and rivulets in the shell of white paint, his head and shoulders disappearing. Griffin rips off the already soaked hospital gown. He's almost gone.

WHITE PAINT - swirling into the drain on the floor.

THE DOOR - bursts open, the two Feds barging in, guns drawn, followed by the Profiler. One of the Feds looks around, crosses toward the spot where Griffin was just standing.

FED

Where is he!

PIERCE

No! Don't!

PIERCE'S POV - as an invisible force grabs the Fed and violently drives his head into the corner of the steel table with a sickening CRUNCH.

GRIFFIN - naked, soaking wet, lips peeled back in a savage grimace as he lets the Fed crumple to the floor.

The second Fed FIRES WILDLY. SNARLING, Griffin picks up the steel chair and hurls it with all his strength at the second Fed, NAILING HIM, taking him down.

On one knee, Griffin thrusts his hand into the unconscious Fed's pocket, withdrawing a HANDCUFF KEY and unlocking his shackle. Pierce ROARS at the Profiler:

PIERCE
Close the door!

But he's too late. Griffin springs forward from his crouched position like a football lineman, driving his shoulder into Pierce's gut. He butts the Profiler aside and HURTLES OUT THE OPEN DOOR.

INT. FEDERAL BUILDING - BASEMENT CORRIDOR - DAY

WATER SHOWERS DOWN from the emergency sprinkler system. Griffin sprints down the hallway, shoving confused. SHOUTING AGENTS aside as they run to see what triggered the ALARM. Pierce staggers out the door behind him.

PIERCE
Stop him!

PIERCE'S POV - RUNNING IN PURSUIT, Agents further down the corridor being SHOVED ASIDE BY SOME UNSEEN FORCE. A steel door marked EXIT at the end of the hallway BURSTS OPEN, revealing a stairwell.

INT. FEDERAL BUILDING - STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

HAND-HELD - Pierce and several other ARMED AGENTS, soaking wet, charge up the stairwell. One flight up, a door swings shut. FOLLOW Pierce THROUGH THE DOOR INTO...

INT. FEDERAL BUILDING - PARKING GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

HAND-HELD - ON THE CONCRETE FLOOR, WET, BARE FOOTPRINTS, FADING even as we follow them, as our invisible prey's feet dry out in the running. Soon, there's NO TRACE OF THEM. WHIP around to find Pierce and the rest of the agents, looking around helplessly. Enraged, Pierce ROARS:

PIERCE
GRIFFIN...!

OUT TO BLACK

END OF ACT SEVEN

ACT EIGHT

FADE IN:

INT. SIMI VALLEY POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY

Ramos and Hardesty file paperwork in their cubicle. The PHONE RINGS. Ramos picks up.

RAMOS
Homicide, Ramos.

GRIFFIN
Monica Ramos?

RAMOS
Yeah.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. MAGGIE'S CONDO - LIVING ROOM - DAY

VERY TIGHT ON GRIFFIN - as he speaks into the phone (we don't know where he is).

GRIFFIN
This is Richard Griffin. I want to turn myself in.

Ramos SNAPS HER FINGERS for Hardesty's attention, motions toward his extension. He quietly picks up, listens in.

RAMOS
Mister Griffin, you have no idea how relieved we are to hear from you.

GRIFFIN
The man you charged with my wife's murder is innocent. You need to release him. I did it. I killed my wife...

Ramos and Hardesty look at each other. Whoa!

RAMOS
Mister Griffin, if you wanna make a statement--

GRIFFIN

I'm *making* a statement. I also
killed a cop. A Sheriff's Deputy.
And my boss, Stuart Cuss...

Hardesty is taking notes like mad.

RAMOS

Mister Griffin, listen--

GRIFFIN

No, Detective. You listen to me.
I will come in. I will make a full
statement. No lawyers. But I need
protection. And the press. I want
all the networks there, understand?

RAMOS

Where?

GRIFFIN

Rancho Tapo Park. Four o'clock
this afternoon.

Ramos checks a WALL-CLOCK. It read 10:35.

RAMOS

That's a big place--

GRIFFIN

I'll call you with more details as
soon as I see it's safe. Then I'll
come in.

He hangs up. Ramos looks at Hardesty as he hangs up and
dials.

RAMOS

Homeland Security.

HARDESTY

Screw those guys. I wanna pop this
clown myself.

RAMOS

I thought you hated this case--

Hardesty connects with his party.

HARDESTY

Yeah, hi. Hardesty, homicide. We just had a call come through to extension 2915. I need a caller I.D.

He writes down a name, hangs up.

HARDESTY

Margaret Kemp. Remember?

RAMOS

Panorama City.

EXT. MAGGIE'S CONDO BUILDING - DAY

Hardesty and Ramos pull up in their unmarked, are joined by several uniformed back-up units. They converge out front. Ramos lays it out for the Uniforms.

RAMOS

Cover the exits, front and rear. Stand by. We'll go see what's what.

The two detectives head up to the main entrance.

INT. MAGGIE'S CONDO BUILDING - CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Guns drawn, Ramos and Hardesty move quietly to either side of the door. Hardesty tries the doorknob. It's unlocked. He gives Ramos a look.

INT. MAGGIE'S CONDO - ENTRY HALL - CONTINUOUS

Hardesty opens the door a crack, SHOUTS:

HARDESTY

Is anybody home?

No answer.

HARDESTY

*This is the police. We're armed.
We're coming in.*

They cautiously enter the condo, sweeping it with their weapons.

INT. MAGGIE'S CONDO - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Empty. Hardesty moves past the unmade bed, checks the bathroom. He comes out, holstering his pistol, frustrated.

Ramos looks at an upended bedside table, a broken lamp on the carpet.

RAMOS
He took her.

HARDESTY
What kinda car does she drive?

SLAM TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY

A RED B.M.W. 525i races down the blacktop.

MAGGIE (PRE-LAP)
Where are we going?

INT. MAGGIE KEMP'S B.M.W. - CONTINUOUS

Maggie drives, Griffin, naked, seated in the passenger seat.

GRIFFIN
Shut up.

Maggie swallows, terrified, glances over

MAGGIE'S POV - There's no sign of anyone in the passenger seat.

MAGGIE
Are you gonna kill me?

GRIFFIN
I haven't decided yet. How far did your team get in the project?

MAGGIE
I told you. No farther than you did that first day.

GRIFFIN
When I got fired.

Maggie nods.

MAGGIE
That's why Pierce was so desperate. Everyone decided it was impossible. We were about to lose our funding.

GRIFFIN

Gee. That would've been tragic.
Now I understand why he tortured me
for two days.

MAGGIE

I didn't know, I swear--

GRIFFIN

You knew what he was. You knew
what they were trying to do.

MAGGIE

Invisible soldiers, yeah--

GRIFFIN

Killers. Assassins. Do you have
any idea how stupid that would be?
How would he control them? How
would he stop them? That idiot
can't even stop *me*.

Maggie tries to reason with him.

MAGGIE

Richard, you're sick--

GRIFFIN

--you bet your ass I'm sick--

MAGGIE

--you need help. We can go back
together. There's people who can
help you...

GRIFFIN

No. I gotta end this thing. I'm
not gonna let that psychopath get
his hands on my research.

MAGGIE

What's the point? You've already
given them the formula--

GRIFFIN

No. What I gave them were very
detailed instructions to formulate
eye-liner. Smudge-proof; water-
proof. You know...

(in a loopy voice)

... for the young professional
woman on the go.

(normal voice)

GRIFFIN(cont'd)

Everything's on my laptop. That means it's still at the Royal Palms. Those two bumpkins who own the place probably lifted it before the cops showed.

MAGGIE

Then what?

GRIFFIN

Then I'm gonna wipe the disk, burn the machine; whatever I have to do to destroy it.

MAGGIE

Richard, think. You can't invent something.

GRIFFIN

I can try--

A WOOP-WOOP of a SIREN. Griffin turns, sees A HIGHWAY PATROL CAR following them, RED LIGHTS flashing.

INT. HIGHWAY PATROL CAR - CONTINUOUS

The HIGHWAY PATROLMAN at the wheel radios dispatch.

HIGHWAY PATROLMAN

I've got a red B.M.W., matches vehicle description of all-points-bulletin...

PATROLMAN'S POV - Ahead of us, the B.M.W.; the only occupant visible is Maggie at the wheel.

HIGHWAY PATROLMAN

... northbound on Highway 14, marker one-one. Single occupant, solo driver, please advise...

INT. MAGGIE KEMP'S B.M.W. - CONTINUOUS

Maggie begins slowing down.

GRIFFIN

What're you doing?

MAGGIE

I'm pulling over--

Griffin grabs her by the neck, pushes her back against her seat.

GRIFFIN

No, you're not. Go! Faster! *Step on it!*

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

The Bimmer LEAPS FORWARD with a SURGE OF ACCELERATION, the Highway Patrol car in pursuit.

CUT TO:

EXT. SIMI VALLEY POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY

Ramos and Hardesty have just parked their unmarked. As they get out, Maggie's cell-phone RINGS. She answers, listens, then quickly disconnects.

RAMOS

Highway patrol's spotted Maggie Kemp's car on Highway 14, Northbound. They're in pursuit.

HARDESTY

Griffin?

As they get back in the car.

RAMOS

Single occupant. Female driver. Matches our description of Kemp.

Hardesty FIRES UP the engine, REVVES IT.

HARDESTY

Yeah. I bet.

He throws it into gear and they jet out of frame.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY

SERIES OF SHOTS - High speed chase. The initial Highway Patrol unit has been joined by TWO MORE. They jockey for position behind the Bimmer, which weaves down the highway at a terrifying speed.

INT. MAGGIE KEMP'S B.M.W. - CONTINUOUS

Maggie white-knuckles the wheel. Griffin, one hand on her throat, looks back at the cops on their tail. Maggie's eyes flicker down to...

THE SPEEDOMETER - reads 127 MPH

MAGGIE
We're gonna die--

GRIFFIN
Shut up! Keep going!

MAGGIE
I can't--

GRIFFIN
We're almost there! Go go go!

He lifts a leg over the console, stomps...

THE ACCELERATOR - Griffins bare foot mashing Maggie's down to the floor.

HELICOPTER SHOT - Tracking the pursuit, Maggie's red B.M.W. leading the three black-and-whites down the straight-shot slash of interstate. O.S., RADIO CHATTER:

HELICOPTER PILOT
Subject vehicle still northbound
approximately four miles from your
location, prepare to intercept...

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DOWN THE ROAD - CONTINUOUS

A ROADBLOCK of HIGHWAY PATROL UNITS, LIGHTS FLASHING, crawling with cops, PUMP-SHOTGUNS JACKED and trained down the interstate. As we watch, several more police cars SCREECH UP, move into position.

INT. MAGGIE KEMP'S B.M.W. - CONTINUOUS

Maggie's eyes are locked on the road ahead, face taut with sheer, unadulterated terror. Griffin gazes back at the THREE HIGHWAY PATROL CARS CROWDING THEIR TAIL.

Maggie makes a SHORT, FRANTIC YELP of panic. Griffin turns, sees...

GRIFFIN'S POV - as we CREST A GENTLE RISE in the highway, FLASHING LIGHTS become visible, then the ROADBLOCK. Too close to stop.

Griffin grabs the wheel. The car makes a SICKENING SWERVE. Maggie regains the wheel, OVER-CORRECTS.

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DOWN THE ROAD - CO

The Beemer slides sideways, both tires on the leading side BLOWING OUT, the rims biting into the asphalt and throwing the sedan into a hellacious 125 MPH ROLLOVER.

MULTIPLE ANGLES AND SPEEDS as it tumbles down the highway, side-over-side, end-over-end, pieces of sheetmetal, glass, rubber and chrome flying off with explosive force.

It finally comes to rest off the shoulder, an unrecognizable lump of smoking, twisted steel.

THE ROADBLOCK - the cops gaze at the wreckage in dim shock, slowly lowering their weapons as we...

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DOWN THE ROAD - DUSK

The aftermath. A flatbed tow-truck pulls up the remains of the B.M.W. A BODY BAG strapped down to a gurney is loaded into the back of an AMBULANCE. Firefighters coil hose; investigators measure skid-marks.

RAMOS - stands twenty feet off the highway, looking around for some sign of Griffin, troubled. Hardesty approaches.

HARDESTY

She was the only one in the car.

RAMOS

You think?

Hardesty doesn't answer. After a beat.

HARDESTY

Nobody could've survived that crash.

Ramos nods, sighs. Resumes her gaze out toward the desert. Hardesty starts back toward their car.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

My name is Richard Griffin. Ever since I can remember, I've been invisible...

CRANE UP AND PULL to reveal the emergency workers behind her closing up shop, one by one getting in their vehicles and driving away.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)
 I've found that being invisible
 offers a number of distinct social
 benefits...

CRANE DOWN, GROUND LEVEL to find Griffin, about ten feet from
 Ramos, BROKEN AND BLEEDING, too damaged to speak or call out.
 HIS BREATHING IS LABORED, SHALLOW...

 GRIFFIN (V.O.)
 There are, of course, some obvious
 disadvantages...

Ramos turns, starts back toward her car. Griffin MOANS,
 shudders and STOPS BREATHING, dead eyes gazing up at the
 empty sky. Hold a beat, then...

 FADE TO BLACK:

SLAM IN:

EXT. ROYAL PALMS MOTEL - FRONT OFFICE - DAY

MRS. HALL'S POV - Another scorcher. About two miles down the
 highway, BUZZARDS CIRCLE high in the air with DISTANT,
 ECHOING CAWS.

Shading her eyes with one hand, leaning on a broom, Mrs. Hall
 squints at the horizon.

INT. ROYAL PALMS MOTEL - MANAGER'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Smoking a cigarette, Mr. Hall hunches over Griffin's open
 laptop. The screen-door CREAKS open and SLAMS. Mrs. Hall
 enters.

 MRS. HALL
 Something dead out there, bout a
 mile'r'two down the road.

Mr. Hall GRUNTS, focused on the computer, muttering to
 himself:

 MR. HALL
 Useless...

Mrs. Hall walks around behind him, looks over his shoulder

 MRS. HALL
 What is that? One of them video-
 games?

MR. HALL
(shakes his head)
If it is, ain't much to it.

MRS. HALL
Kinda pretty, though...

She hands him a mop and a bucket. He sighs, follows her out of the office. A SLOW HOOK around the coffee-table REVEALS...

THE LAPTOP MONITOR - The hypnotizing 3-D IMAGE OF THE COMPLEX MOLECULE BEHIND GRIFFIN'S INVISIBILITY SERUM floating in black space like a lethal, digital land-mine. Hold a beat, then, as we hear the SCREEN-DOOR CLOSE...

SLAM TO BLACK