

HULK

screenplay by John Turman

based on the Marvel comics character
created by Stan Lee and Jack Kirby

//first draft
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FADE IN:

A MAN RUNNING

In ragged, torn, oversized clothes. Running for all he's worth while struggling to hold onto his pants --

Early morning. Empty streets.

He stumbles, finally gives up on the pants and lets them drop --

The man is naked now, still making a mad dash for safety --

DOWN AN ALLEY --

He tries the doors on a tenement slum building. Finds one open --

INSIDE

A long-abandoned building. Down halls. Up stairs. Up.

A ROOM

A torn-up mattress, some junk food wrappers, empty bottles, broken furniture, old soiled clothing --

The man huddles in the corner against the wall. Weak. Feverish. Tormented. All the symptoms of addiction. He runs a hand through his hair and it comes out in clumps.

Silence. A boarded-up window lets in daggers of dawn's light. Now only the man's labored breathing. A good look at him now, huddled against the wall --

DR. BRUCE BANNER might be handsome in other circumstances. Now he's just desperate.

WHMP. WHMP. WHMP. Chopper blades beat the air outside. SIRENS closing.

SOUNDS. Cars, trucks. Running feet. Guns loading, cocking. More equipment.

AMPLIFIED VOICE (O.S.)

This is the United States Army.
The area has been cordoned off.
You are surrounded.

Banner looks around helplessly. What does the human mind think of at a time like this?

He finds some oil-stained pants, two sizes too big. Pimp pants, purple. He pulls them on to cover his nakedness. A length of dirty rope cinches them around his waist.

VOICE (O.S.)
I'm going to count down from
ten. If you don't come out,
we're coming in.

Banner holds the filthy clothing tightly to his body, a
last link to a vanishing humanity --

VOICE (O.S.)
Whoever you are, you can't
escape. Ten...

A HEARTBEAT is faintly audible and we wonder when it began.

VOICE (O.S.)
Nine... eight...seven...

BEAT. Banner covers his ears. A tear runs down his face -

VOICE (O.S.)
six... five...four...

BEAT. BEAT. The heartbeat drowns out all other sounds.
HIS HANDS seem momentarily distorted: Oversized cables
knot and ripple, bunching beneath the skin --

VOICE (O.S.)
...three...

BEAT.

VOICE (O.S.)
two...

BANNER
(a whisper)
...please no... don't make me...

AMPLIFIED VOICE (O.S. / CONT'D)
One.

BANNER
(cracking with emotion)
I'll hurt you...

BEATING TOO FAST NOW. THE MAN'S EYES SHUT TIGHT --

CUT.

A TICKING SOUND replaces his heartbeat, steady and
mechanical --

ON A GREEN LIGHT - SUPER: TWO MONTHS AGO

Flickering, flaring, glowing like a small sun, dark
filaments arcing --

Brilliant and beautiful, but as the CAMERA PULLS BACK, it's only a reflection we're seeing. The ticking comes faster.

An image in the eyes of a monster. A bug-eyed, heavy-skinned monster.

SUPER: LOS OSOS TEST SITE, NEVADA DESERT

The ticking is the urgent staccato of a geiger counter.

THE MONSTER IS A MAN --

Under layers of technology, a radiation suit, helmet and protective goggles, at a lead-glassed work station. He's operating an insulated radiation sleeve.

INSIDE THE RADIATION CHAMBER --

Two tiny pieces of exotic liquid metal on a calibrated ratchet. Gadolinium-282. The greenish light flares as they are brought closer together. In the air between them, a plasma shape ebbs and flows like a living thing --

The ticking races faster and faster, running together into almost a constant drone now --

The light brightens, filling the chamber, washing out detail in the man's face except for the barest hint of a smile. His lips move and an electronically-transmitted play-by-play echoes --

VOICE (V.O.)

...material required for critical mass almost negligible. Purity seems to be the sole determinant of stability and fusionability...

Underneath the gear, the man's attention is unwavering, emotionless. Satisfied, he moves the calibration units apart and the colors fade from the air as the clicks drop down to a steady, safe, rhythmic beat.

The man slips out of the sleeve, flips the protective goggles up and removes his helmet. It's our man --

DR. BRUCE BANNER, 30's, is a man of singular intensity, part Oppenheimer, part Einstein. He runs his fingers through a thick mop of hair clearly unused to a comb --

BANNER (CONT'D)

The gadget is feasible, gentlemen...

A muffled smattering of APPLAUSE shakes him from his obsession. Behind a thick pane of glass above him --

OBSERVATION ROOM

SCIENTISTS and TECHNICIANS watch monitoring equipment printing out a steady flow of graphs and charts. While Banner replaces the gadadium-282 into tiny lead-glassed canisters and sets them in padded containment cases.

BANNER (CONT'D)

Edward, the delivery system needs recalibration as I suspected.

EDWARD LEDER, unremarkable-looking, looks up --

BANNER (CONT'D)

Leder, are you...?

Leder fumbles for a mike and responds --

LEDER

Right here, Dr. Banner.

BANNER

This time, my specifications, alright?

LEDER'S NOTEBOOK is a mass of inky frustration. Variations on a formula are crossed out and attempted again. Confused question marks underlined.

Leder looks around self-consciously at the reproach and nods. No one likes being publicly corrected but this looks like a guy who's used to it by now.

The room thins out, printouts go to analysis, overdue coffee breaks are taken. A technician removes the containment cases to storage.

IN THE LAB - Banner cleans up, drops his insulated inner gloves in a radiation disposal.

GEN. "THUNDERBOLT" ROSS enters, an imposing presence. He's earned those three stars and dammit, a long overdue fourth too. He looks unhappy. The General motions SENATOR STANLEY in behind him. Stanley is a conservative, 'aw shucks politician', uncomfortable in this hi-tech setting.

GEN. ROSS

You've met Senator Stanley.

Sen. Stanley looks around nervously --

SEN. STANLEY

It's safe in here, Dr. Banner?
The radiation, I mean..?

Banner points to his radiation shield on his I.D. badge --

BANNER

You're perfectly safe, Senator.
This would turn green if there
were the slightest radiation leak.

Stanley examines the radiation shield. It's quite pink.

GEN. ROSS

The Senator has some news.

SEN. STANLEY

I wanted to tell you in person, if
it's any consolation. I couldn't
get the support we needed. The
Senate appropriations committee
killed us. I'm sorry.

Banner looks to the General --

GEN. ROSS

The Gamma project is dead...

Banner is a man tight under control, you'd never know how
he feels about this. The General is another story. He
smacks a table, Banner winces --

GEN. ROSS (CONT'D)

Those bean-counting, pencil
pushing idiots! What do they
think keeps this nation safe
and secure? In their dreams,
what do they imagine preserves
the American Way of life?

SEN. STANLEY

You're preaching to the already
converted, General.

GEN. ROSS

It's our technological edge,
damnit! And they're pissing it
away.

SEN. STANLEY

It's their argument that we're
dismantling more bombs now than
we know what to do with.

BANNER

This is different. We're
harnessing an entirely new energy
source. Gamma technology will make
nuclear power look like a candle in
a cave. The potential...

A glimmer of Banner's passion for the project. The Senator puts a hand on his shoulder, then looks at the radiation precautions and withdraws it, wiping it on his suit.

SEN. STANLEY

It's too late. The cold war's over, son. The Gamma Project has been re-classified and slated for dismantling.

BANNER

But the prototypes...? I can show them something, in maybe... six months, if we push it.

SEN. STANLEY

No tests. Scrap 'em. Banner, you'll supervise. Then... well good luck, son. You'll do fine.

Sen. Stanley exits. Gen. Ross turns angrily to Banner --

GEN. ROSS

Your delays cost us, Banner. Your "precautions."

BANNER

But you know we're working with gamadium-282 -- it's an untested, unstable, transuranium nuclei, a superheavy element that has the misfortune to tend toward spontaneous fission presenting us a sweet little problem. In order to control the highly penetrative gamma-rays we've had to...

Pure passion without a trace of sarcasm. Of course, it's techno-babble to us, and Gen. Ross --

GEN. ROSS

Blah, blah, blah. Expensive words. It doesn't matter now, does it? A half a billion dollars, Banner. You went way over budget and have got nothing to show for it. You're a weak sister. You let your country down. The good news is that next week you're unemployed and I don't have to look at you any more... you milksop!

The General gives Banner a disgusted look and heads for the exit. At the last moment Banner stops him with --

BANNER

But sir, I...

GEN. ROSS

What?

We're ready to hit Gen. Ross but not Banner. If he's angry, it's bottled up in self-blame --

BANNER

...nothing. I should've...

GEN. ROSS

You should've.

The General slams the door behind him. Banner is alone. Expressionless: He starts stacking papers and notebooks.

THE OBSERVATION ROOM is empty now except for LEDER, who watches Banner start to clean out the lab --

LEDER

(to himself)

You blew it, genius...

CUT.

EXT. SCENIC OVERLOOK - HOOVER DAM - DAY

A wonder of human engineering. MARY, the woman behind the camera looks, like a typical tourist, but there is a hint of Eastern European hardness to her to go with the vague accent. Beside her is GUS, a crew-cut who looks like he should be in a bowling league somewhere (or training rebels in Central America).

MARY

Incredible. There is nothing like American engineering.

GUS

Ingenuity.

Gus checks his gold Rolex as Leder walks up --

MARY

You're late. We took a risk, coming here...

Leder's nervous, trying to look cool --

LEDER

You took a risk..? I'm only sneaking off a top secret military installation.

GUS

What've you got?

LEDER

The fashion accessory for the terrorist group who needs to put an exclamation point on their political statements. The Gamma bomb.

Mary turns to Gus, impressed --

MARY

We've heard of it. It could be worth a fortune. North Korea, Pakistan; we can take our pick in the middle east.

GUS

You're bowling in the big leagues. Banner's new bomb.

LEDER

Banner's? I put ten years of my life on this. I helped engineer the delivery system.

GUS

Of course. But intelligence reports say only Banner knows the big picture.

LEDER

I can get his notebooks. And I can get my hands on a cannister of pure gamadium-282, U.S. weapons grade. A golf-ball will be able to level a city and no other country will be in a position to manufacture it for at least another twenty years.

MARY

How do we know it works?

LEDER

Because Banner's a goddamn genius.

MARY

What warranties does a buyer have?

LEDER

Aw hell, this isn't Radio Shack, guys!

Leder self-consciously looks around and lowers his voice.

GUS
We're talking about a lot of
money. You want to make this
happen? We need documentation.

Leder's being squeezed uncomfortably and he's a little man.

LEDER
Like test data?

GUS
That'll do it. Government
letterhead, of course.

MARY
But how are you going to get
test data without a boom?

In her greed, the accent comes out. On Leder: Little men
are dangerous. He resigns himself to a risky idea --

LEDER
There'll be a boom.

CUT.

INT. GAMMA LAB - NIGHT

Banner's stack of notebooks on a desk. His lab coat on the
chair, ID badge pinned to it.

A HAND opens the top notebook. Every page is scribbled and
ink-stained with what looks like an alien language:
science. CLICK. The pages flip. Symbols and
calculations. Dense with brilliance. CLICK. Fast-food
wrappers with notations scribbled on them, stapled and
glued in place. Arrows direct work from one thought to
another. Exclamation points and question marks.
Passionate work. CLICK. CLICK.

A TINY SPY CAMERA CLICKS AND WINDS. A flashlight clenched
between teeth: A pic of Banner's ID badge on the lab coat.

The notebooks: Notes surround a sketch of a unique bomb
casing labelled "the Gadget". The G-Bomb. Written on the
casing in script, "Bad Betty".

THE MAN writes the name on his hand with a pen. Suddenly
lab lights come up. A DOCTOR is at the door to the lab --

VOICE
Who's there? The lab's closed...
(recognition)
Oh, it's you...

LEDER pockets the camera, tries to hide what he's doing --

LEDER

I was just cleaning up...

The doctor notices and approaches the desk --

DOCTOR

What are you doing?

As the doctor crosses to him, clutched behind Leder's back is a metal Enola Gay paperweight --

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

These are Banner's...

Leder brings the paperweight down on the man's head. Instead of dropping like dead weight, the Doctor pitches forward, grabbing at the back of his head and screaming in pain --

Not like the movies. Leder panics, curses under his breath and chases the thrashing man through the lab, swinging wildly, missing as often as he connects --

LEDER

(hissing whisper)

Shut up... Dammit, shut up!

The Doctor yells. Things break loudly. Furniture overturned. Noise. Mess. Leder is a bumbler.

The Doctor finally trips and falls, hitting his head hard on a desk corner as he goes down. This quiets him. Leder freezes, breathing hard. Outside, voices and lights draw closer --

Leder bends over the fallen doctor and smashes his shin into a chair. He yipes in pain, then grits through it and checks the Doctor's pulse. Leder looks around frantically as footsteps get closer --

Leder grabs a metal chair, raises it and swings down hard, out of frame. There's a nasty sound and Leder is frozen for a moment as he nearly retches at his own handiwork. He's in over his head and not cut out for this. He smashes a window with the chair, setting off alarms. He climbs through into the night just before the MP's burst in --

TIME CUT.

INT. LAB - LATER - MORNING

A mess. The body covered by a sheet. MPs investigate the scene led by MAJ. TALBOT, mustachioed and slick. Gen. Ross chews on a cigar as Talbot confers with him --

She's all business.

ROSS

Ross, Betty Ross... There should be an I.D. for me.

HAYSEED GUARD

Any relation to old Iron Butt Thunderbolt?

ROSS

(sarcasm)

His little princess.

Hayseed straightens as if she had 2 stars on her sleeve. He finds the I.D. pass. The gates open. He waves her in. Back inside the guard shack he pulls out the monster comic again.

HAYSEED GUARD

Sweet cheeses, that's Old Iron Butt's daughter.

THE CAR crests a rise and descends down the other side revealing --

EXT. LOS OSOS (ESTABLISHING) - DAY

Only our government would build an entire town in the middle of nowhere. Military and support personnel for --

EXT. LOS OSOS TEST BASE - SAME

The centerpiece of the town. A playground for men and their adult toys: Weapons of war. Into this ritual men's refuge, Betty Ross drives. She slows alongside a couple of soldiers --

ROSS

Excuse me, soldier. I'm looking for Old Iron Butt?

SOLDIER

The General's at the test range.

The soldier points down a dirt road angling out of the town. As she drives off, he does a double-take because Betty is too young and too beautiful to be this confident.

SOLDIER 2

Maybe she's redecoratin' his office.

A DIRT ROAD

The sedan wishes it were a jeep as it bumps along toward --

MAJ. TALBOT

Well, whoever it was got a good look at Banner's notebooks.

GEN. ROSS

The whole Gamma project is in there. Aborted or not, it's still classified. We've got a spy...

MAJ. TALBOT

Someone with security clearance. The alarms went off when he left not when he entered.

GEN. ROSS

We also have a dead civilian. Washington will want to send someone. Just what I need: to toilet-train some kid from Langley while we're trying to run a spy hunt. Major, you can babysit.

CUT.

EXT. THE NEVADA DESERT - DAY

Vast, unending. Mountains rise up from the high desert floor. One road cuts across the bleak landscape. A cloud of dust off in the distance.

A CAR - A late model sedan approaching --

A CYCLONE FENCE FROSTED WITH RAZOR WIRE extends to the horizon. There's nothing to differentiate the empty land inside the fence from the land outside except a sign:

MILITARY INSTALLATION. NO TRESPASSING.

THE GUARD HOUSE beside it. In the middle of nowhere. A HAYSEED GUARD stops reading and hides a worn copy of Strange Tales #89 into his pocket. He approaches the car.

HAYSEED GUARD

This is a restricted government installation...

He does a jaw-drop when the driver lowers her sunglasses --

BETTY ROSS would get that reaction a lot of places but out here where they don't get many pretty women --

HAYSEED GUARD

(gives a weekend leave smile)
How can I help you, miss?

EXT. TEST SITE - DAY

Desolation. More Nevada desert. Heat shimmers off of dry nothingness. Nature is broken by --

THE GAMMA BOMB

Moving into frame, offloading from a truck. A hot potato about the size of vacuum cleaner.

ENGINEER

Be careful with that.

BANNER (V.O.)

Relax, it's not live.

A VIDEO GAME. A cutting edge version of Tetris. BANNER plays it with one hand while he eats a sandwich with another. Sitting in the hot desert sun until a shadow passes. He squints up at BETTY ROSS, sunglasses on.

ROSS

Hello, stranger.

Banner could be the nerd you never talked to in high school. He doesn't know what to say to women. The men around him have noticed Ross and watch as they slack off. Banner reacts to the men; he knows what to say to them --

BANNER

Watch the jacket shielding. If it's breached there's the chance... It's not armed but it could be...

(finally, to Betty)

...do I know you?

She smiles suggestively and nods. There's a sexual tension that he has no idea what to do with.

ROSS

The last time you saw me, we were both naked.

A guffaw from a burly, ranking army engineer. Banner couldn't be more uncomfortable --

BANNER

Is this a put on?

Betty sees this and softens, feeling suddenly cruel.

ROSS

How could you forget the hula hoop champion of Los Alamos?

Realization dawns on Banner and he relaxes. It's not just a pretty girl it's --

BANNER

Betty? Betty Ross? What are you doing here?

At the sound of "Ross", the men go back to work. On cue, Gen. Ross interrupts, trailed by a mini-entourage of army remora, including Maj. Talbot.

GEN. ROSS

Betty?

The General and Ross, his daughter, share an awkward greeting.

ROSS

They still call you Iron Butt.

GEN. ROSS

Not to my face they don't. What brings you here?

ROSS

I'm what you probably referred to as the diaper from Langley.

Maj. Talbot smiles. She's tough and she knows the score. The General frowns --

GEN. ROSS

Why would they send you, Honey?

ROSS

I'm qualified and I requested it, General.

GEN. ROSS

Of course, I just expected... Dammit, it's good to see you, girl...

Maj. Talbot extends a hand. He's a comer, sees the politics of an attractive woman with a three star father. This "baby-sitting" job isn't going to be half-bad. He greets Betty like a lady --

MAJ. TALBOT

Maj. Glen Talbot, head of base security. I'll take you around, Miss Ross...

ROSS

Special Agent Ross, Major. I work for a living, just like you.

Talbot smiles --

ROSS (CONT'D)
I'm going to need personnel files for all workers with security clearance and a schedule of base operations.

MAJ. TALBOT
Yes, sir... ma'am.

CUT.

INT. OFFICER'S CLUB - NIGHT

Military officers, off-duty scientists, anybody really. Some enlisted men have put together a decent rhythm and blues band and they play in a corner.

Betty Ross sits with Talbot, files in front of them but Talbot's getting personal. He tends to do pretty well with the ladies and he's in mid-pitch.

MAJ. TALBOT
...with a career army officer for a father, nothing you ever did quite measured up because you weren't a boy. It was tough but I bet you can probably hit a curve ball...

Talbot's good. We're not sure how Ross feels about the capsule review --

ROSS
Throw one. I played pitcher.

ROSS' P.O.V. - As BANNER enters and sits alone at the end of the bar.

Ross notices, gathers her files and exits on a deadpan --

ROSS (CONT'D)
You're incredibly perceptive, Major. Excuse me, please.

THE BAR. She sits down beside Banner as the bartender slides him a glass mug of warmed milk.

ROSS (CONT'D)
Well, Banner, it's nice to know some things haven't changed.

Banner, turns, pleasantly surprised --

BANNER

What do you mean? I grew up.
No Bosco.

Over in the corner, Talbot watches --

BANNER (CONT'D)

I see you made a new friend.

Ross looks, surprised that Banner noticed --

ROSS

Talbot? He's just a sheep in
wolf's clothing.

Banner likes that --

BANNER

If we asked your father, he'd
say the Major's just your type.

ROSS

That's why we don't ask my
father. But I'm flattered.
After all this time, you're
jealous.

Banner really doesn't know how to flirt --

BANNER

No, I was just...

ROSS

It's okay. I mean, you're not
married, are you?

BANNER

Actually, you arrived just in time
for the divorce. We're scrapping
the gamma project. Tomorrow, I'm
officially unemployed. So I'm
sitting here drinking milk...

(to the bartender)

Hey, what does a guy who's just
lost his job drink?

BARTENDER

Bourbon?

BANNER

Right here.

Bartender serves it up. Banner raises his glass and takes
a slug. Suddenly, he grimaces and doubles over. Ross
grabs him in concern --

ROSS
What's wrong?

BANNER
Ulcer...

She helps him to his feet --

ROSS
Let me take you to the hospital.

BANNER
No. I don't like hospitals.
I'll be fine. I've got some
medicine at my place.

Ross helps Banner out --

EXT. BASE - NIGHT

Banner walks more easily. Stars out all over around them.
A desert wind.

ROSS
What will you do now that
they're shutting down the lab?

BANNER
This is my lab. Here.

He points to his head --

BANNER (CONT'D)
And they can't close this down.

Ross smiles admiringly, then --

ROSS
You always had a brilliant
mind, Bruce. Why use it to
build bombs?

BANNER
The army builds bombs. I ask
fundamental questions about the
universe...

ROSS
And the bombs finance the answers.

BANNER
They used to.

ROSS
Does it ever bother you?

BANNER

But no one intends to use them.
They're just experiments, tactical
deterrents... Political tools.

ROSS

There's always someone around
willing to use them.

BANNER

Nutcases, madmen.

ROSS

The world's full of them.
That's my job now. FBI
counter-intelligence.

BANNER

So you grew up too. Well, here
we are...

He stops. She anticipates a moment --

BANNER (CONT'D)

This is where I live.

He unlocks the door.

INT. BANNER'S HOUSE - SAME

A spare war-era clapboard. No personal touches.

BANNER (CONT'D)

This is where they store me
when I'm not at the lab.

Banner laughs at his joke and crosses to the bathroom.
Ross looks at a painting of an ocean scene - right out of a
Howard Johnson's. Banner returns swigging a bottle of
ulcer medicine.

ROSS

Nice painting. Holiday Inn?

Banner misses her sarcasm and answers straight --

BANNER

Howard Johnson's. From
Chicago. That's a Motel 6.

A desert scene in pastels. Ross jokes --

ROSS

You're a thief...

Banner is genuinely offended --

BANNER
 No, I bought them. Most of the
 hotels will sell them to you,
 if you ask.

Banner sips more ulcer medicine --

ROSS
 How're you feeling?

BANNER
 Fine, really. Just sick of the
 taste of this stuff. Since high
 school. Bourbon on an ulcer, that
 was really stupid...

She touches his arm --

ROSS
 It's really good to see you
 again, Banner.

BANNER
 Yeah, it's really good to see
 you too, Ross...

Pais. He wants to say more but, child-like, he can't be
 intimate with anything other than his work --

BANNER (CONT'D)
 And thanks. I guess I'll see
 you tomorrow, 0700. Bombs
 away. Good night...

He extends his hand in a formal shake and she takes it --

OUTSIDE - SAME

Ross steps off the porch alone and shakes her head.

ROSS
 Betty Ross, you do go for the
 odd ones.

CUT.

BANNER'S ID (or a good copy). Slides through an I.D. gate.
 Locks open.

EXT. TEST SITE - SECURITY GATE - NIGHT

A MAN carrying what looks like a briefcase walks toward the
 test site.

ANGLE - THE G-BOMB

Gloved hands slide a small cannister of pure gamadium-282 out of the padded container and into the bomb housing. Gently, it's lowered into place but not entirely, leaving a small gap.

CUT.

A DESERT SUNRISE - SERIES OF SHOTS

Long light crawls over rock formations. Dramatic. Wind-whipped sand. All nature's work. Until --

THE STEEL TOWER of the test site slashes the landscape with the hand of man.

EXT. TEST SITE - DAWN

Robot arms swing the Gamma bomb onto the test pad, now a disarmament area. Radiation warnings caution like Burma-shave signs.

INT. SITE MONITORING ROOM - DAY

GIANT TELEVISION SCREENS, watching the test site twenty miles away. Like an IMAX movie, the desert stretches out for miles.

Suddenly, like a Hockney photo, the grotesque head of a lizard fills one screen after another. Tongue flicking at the camera lens. Technician's electronic crackle --

TECHNICIAN

We've got a visual on Godzilla,
call Johnny Sako and giant robot...

A few laughs from the technicians and scientists at monitoring bays. The lizard takes a nap --

TECHNICIAN

And a nice round of applause
for the audio-visual department
for such forethought in camera
placement. Switch to overhead
cameras, please...

The screens switch to an elevated view of the test site.

ENGINEER

Gadget prototype dissemble
sequence, loaded, ready to engage.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SAME

A smaller and more technical space. Banner enters and flicks switches. He watches the same scene on small black and white TV monitors.

BANNER

Ready abort sequence...

LEDER sits at a vacant computer console displaying the same disarming sequence as the master screens. With no one looking, he re-programs his console --

ON SCREEN - he exits to a prompt symbol. Then slides a CD-ROM from his pocket. He pops it into the drive and the display greets him with:

COUNTDOWN INITIALIZATION PROCEDURE

In response to USER_____; He types: B. BANNER

To B. BANNER PASSWORD? Leder types: BAD BETTY

Computer returns: NOT A VALID FILE NAME

Leder looks nervous. Deletes the space and "T": BADBETY

Computer grants access:

DETONATION SEQUENCING

Three button icons appear beneath this. Leder clicks the mouse on each in order: Red:

DEVICE ARMED

Yellow:

DELIVERY ENGAGED

Green.

DETONATION SEQUENCE COMMENCED

The screen is filled by a clock ticking down, beginning at:

10:00.00

Leder switches his screen back to the disarming procedure which matches the other monitors. He couldn't be happier if he were a pig and this was a world of shit. He crosses to the banks of testing and monitoring equipment and begins turning them on.

EXT. TEST SITE - SAME

TIGHT ON THE GAMMA BOMB. The cannister of gamadium-282 drops and locks into place, removing the gap for a tight fit. The red warning light turns to green and an ELECTRONIC PULSE sounds as it arms.

TEST SITE - WIDER

Another electronic pulse, quieter. But there's no human around to hear it.

SAME - WIDER - DESERT PANORAMA

Barely audible. The steel tower now just a tiny pin-prick in the landscape.

THE SOUND OF A MOTORCYCLE

Loud and jarring after the quiet. The kid on it imagines he's a rebel. RICK JONES, 16. Doing donuts in the desert sand. Riding a wheelie up the crest of a butte. Whooping it up until --

The bike dies. He tries to restart it with no luck --

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SAME

Banner plays Tetris. Nothing for him to do but wait for his life's work to be dismantled. Then he notices, out of the corner of his eye, the black and white monitor --

He swings to the computer and punches in some commands. The black and white image zooms in on the sand. He stares hard.

BANNER

Hey, Edward, take a look at this.

Leder is rightfully paranoid --

LEDER

What?

Leder sees nothing.

BANNER (CONT'D)

There. Does that look like a tire tread? We had a hell of a desert wind last night. There shouldn't be a tire tread out there unless...

LEDER

It's probably a snake, or nothing.

Banner works the computer, switching cameras in the field until, on a distant ridge: An ant. Banner magnifies: Not an ant, someone on a motorcycle.

BANNER

There's someone out there.

LEDER

(nervous and quick)

He's in H-7, that's a mile away from GZ. Besides, this isn't a test. There's no danger.

BANNER

It's a secured area. There's always the possibility of radiation exposure.

(more clearly now)

I don't believe it, it's just a kid.

Banner is up, putting on a coat --

BANNER (CONT'D)

I can get to that sector faster from here than security can. Monitor the console. I'll be right back.

LEDER

Sure.

Leder turns to the console just until Banner exits.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - SAME

Banner kicks up a cloud of dust in a government jeep. He talks on the radio --

BANNER

Edward, do you read me? He's heading in the direction of the site. I'm not going to be able to get out there in time. Halt the dismantling sequence so there's no outer jacket exposure.

(beat)

Edward...

A pause, then the radio crackles with Leder's voice --

LEDER (O.S./ RADIO)

Roger on that Dr. Banner. I'll alert control.

BANNER

Thanks.

BANNER
(not listening)
It's armed..!

Banner scrambles to his feet, races to the tower. Rick Jones follows --

THE GAMMA BOMB, resting in the cradle of the test tower. The electronic arm pivots around it with a quiet whirr. The pulse tone is clearly audible and at ever shorter intervals.

Banner throws open a call box and picks up the receiver --

BANNER
This is Dr. Banner to control,
come in...

INTERCUT - CONTROL ROOM

Leder picks up a field phone.

LEDER
Banner.

BANNER
(desperate)
Edward, listen to me. Somehow,
the gadget's armed. The delivery
mechanism is in and the count-down
running. Get into the program and
abort, repeat, abort now.

Leder speaks quietly and calmly --

LEDER
Absolutely. Hold tight, Dr. Banner.

EXT. THE TEST SITE - SAME

Rick Jones approaches. Banner motions frantically --

BANNER
Stay back! This is an extremely
dangerous bomb. There's been a
mistake and it's live.

RICK JONES
Like it's gonna blow?

CUT.

LEDER'S MONITOR

00:00 54.22

That's seconds. And counting.

RICK JONES runs, weaving, across the wasteland --

BANNER takes a more efficient line. Watching Rick Jones head for the concealment of an arroyo. Banner does the physics and takes the angle --

Heading Rick off and taking him down with a shoestring tackle --

IN THE ARROYO, Banner and Rick Jones tumble over and down in the sand. Banner sits up, spitting dirt, out of breath. Rick comes up smiling --

RICK JONES
Nice tackle, Deon.

Beat. They breathe hard. In the distance, an ELECTRONIC PULSE sounds faintly --

RICK JONES
You wanna get that?

BANNER
What?

RICK JONES
Isn't that your phone?

Banner shakes his head.

RICK JONES (CONT'D)
Beeper?

There it is again. Banner looks around in alarm. Behind a butte, previously hidden by the terrain is --

THE TEST TOWER AND DISARMING EQUIPMENT

RICK JONES
That noise?

Banner listens intensely --

BANNER
Shut up.

The pulse tones again.

BANNER (CONT'D)
Oh, my god!

Rick looks at the tower --

RICK JONES
Weather tower predicting rain?
You a meteorologist or something?

Banner hangs up and guns the jeep.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SAME

Leder hangs up the radio mike. Then he switches his computer monitor to his private screen and the countdown sequence:

4:54.99

And counting --

LEDER
Alright, golden boy. Showtime.

THE DESERT

Rick Jones walks across the hot sand. Banner's jeep bears down on him. Closer.

Rick hears the rev of the jeep and turns around, holding out a thumb for a ride. Banner slows --

BANNER
What the hell's wrong with you?

RICK JONES
Chill, man. My bike died.

BANNER
This is restricted government land.

RICK JONES
I pay taxes. Or I will, when I make some money...

BANNER
Get in.

RICK JONES
What about the bike, dude?

BANNER
Get in.

RICK JONES
You're not going to arrest me, are you? ...no way...

Rick Jones starts running away across the scrub --

BANNER
Come back here!

Banner gets out and takes out at a dead run across the desert after him.

THE CONTROL PANEL. Leder pulls the connection from the phone block.

BANNER HOLDING THE PHONE. A click and it's dead. He disconnects and tries to dial again.

BANNER
Leder..? Hello. Somebody...

Nothing. Leder is gone.

INT. HALLWAY - SAME

Leder makes his way past oblivious technicians and scientists. He comes to a security door plastered with warnings: RADIATION DANGER. SECURED AREA.

He slides an I.D. card in: Banner's. He slips through.

INT. STORAGE AREA - CONTINUOUS

Leder moves past hanging radiation suits. He unlocks another safety door and enters the --

RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS STORAGE

Lined up in radiation-safe storage racks: Containment cases of gamadium-282. Hollow shell Gamma Bomb prototypes and parts on another rack.

Leder uses Banner's keys to unlock the rack. He lifts a small cannister of gamadium-282 and slips it into his coat pocket. He's about to lock the case when he gets greedy.

He unlocks the next case and slips another cannister out. Then he hears voices approaching. Technicians. He slips behind a door as they pass, dropping the second cannister into his pocket --

INSERT - LEDER'S POCKET

The two cannisters roll together with a quiet CLINK. Immediately there is a flare of green light. The leaded glass cannisters CRACK as they begin to spontaneously fission --

ON LEDER. Hiding. His radiation shield darkens to GREEN. Leder is sweating. Too much.

The coast is clear, Leder returns to the case and locks it. He turns to the door and stumbles. He stops, breathing hard. He can't get his balance: Strange.

Leder happens to glance at his radiation shield. Green. He looks around the room for the radiation exposure then remembers and checks his jacket pocket. Fishes inside.

Leder's hand comes up with a film of liquid metal and cannister shards.

LEDER's in shock. His eyes go wide. He leans heavily against the wall.

LEDER

Shit...

Without thinking, he rubs his forehead, trying to think, to figure out what to do. Smearing the deadly radioactive material all over. Like B'rer Rabbit with the tar baby.

LEDER

...got to get out of here...

LEDER'S POV. He takes a step toward the door and the room dips like a Tilt-A-Whirl. The distance to the doors stretches through a numbing fog.

LEDER

...get help...

He stumbles dizzily and reaches for the table top for support, only he's not near the tabletop and he falls down hard. His fingernails are a faint green now, contaminated.

He laughs to himself and tries to get up. His balance is shot. Disoriented, he tries to move but can't.

He tries to pull the remains of the cannisters and gamadium out of his jacket lining. It tumbles to the floor. he tries to wipe the residue off on his pants --

LEDER

(barely)

Well, Eddie, looks like you screwed up again...

His eyes roll back, his mouth goes slack, and he collapses.

CUT.

INT. SITE MONITORING ROOM - SAME

Maj. Talbot looks at the screens. As CAMERA switches among remotes, Banner is suddenly visible at the test sight.

MAJ. TALBOT

What the hell is Banner doing out there?

A communications officer tries dialing to the remote phone.

COMM OFFICER

The line to the site is dead.

A technician monitoring the procedure --

TECHNICIAN
I've got a sharing violation on
the launch site computer.
Banner's access code.

The realization dawns and the tech turns TO CAMERA --

TECHNICIAN (CONT'D)
Someone's initiated the
detonation sequence.

Gen. Ross suddenly sits up and pays attention as the room
reacts. Things happen fast, overlapping --

SCIENTIST
But the delivery mechanism
isn't installed...

TECHNICIAN
Detonation sequence can't
engage without it...

Another technician runs a diagnostic --

TECHNICIAN
Diagnostics show delivery
mechanism is on-line and
functional.

GEN. ROSS
In english!

TECHNICIAN
The prototype is live,
gentlemen. And counting down.

GEN. ROSS
I didn't authorize that!

TECHNICIAN
There's no time to abort...

Someone slams the ALARM bells.

ROSS
Bruce...

EXT. TEST SITE - SAME

BANNER runs. The pitch and frequency of the detonation
tones increase: The G-Bomb races to fulfill its destiny.

BANNER
We've got to get out of here,
now!

RICK JONES

Where..?

Banner looks at the jeep, far in the distance. They'll never make it. He heads the other way.

BANNER

There's an underground bunker tunnel left over from the 50's. It's shielded with lead-reinforced concrete... should be enough. Move it, kid...

Rick breaks into a run, following --

LONG LENS - BANNER AND RICK

Running but not seeming to get anywhere --

RICK JONES

Shit, doc, are we gonna die...?

BANNER

Run!

RICK JONES trips and falls, turns his ankle. He looks up, Banner receding in the distance. He looks back - the tower.

BANNER looks back, realizes the kid isn't with him. He stops, sees him.

RICK JONES stumbles as he gets up --

But a hand is there to help him. Banner. They make as much speed as they can toward --

THE TUNNEL ENTRANCE. An ancient, rusted crank door set into a concrete block covered by years of shifting sands --

Banner tries it and it won't budge --

BANNER

Rusted. Help me!

Together, they try to turn it --

Banner kicks at it and some rusted metal flakes away and they get an inch of turn --

Then more and more --

MEANWHILE - THE COUNTDOWN:

00:00.07

Seven seconds. And now we have a pretty good idea that they can't possibly make it in time --

THE TEST SITE TOWER, visible over their shoulder as they pull the bunker door --

With a stroke of luck, the bunker door gives, creaks and opens, throwing Banner to the ground with the momentum of his pull --

BANNER
Get in! Down!

Rick climbs down. Banner gets up and takes one tiny glance back at the test tower. Like Lot's wife, it's enough --

THE COUNTER HITS ALL ZEROS --

THE TOWER VANISHES IN A FLASH OF LIGHT --

BOOM BABY!

THE BUNKER DOOR IS THROWN SHUT BY THE FORCE - WITH BANNER OUTSIDE!

WHITE SCREEN:

DISSOLVES INTO:

THE EXPLOSION

Brighter than a thousand suns. We've never seen one like this. Technicolor, digital effects, state of the art, THX version of those 50's atomic test films. Multiplied by ten thousand.

It's a three-stage bomb. An A-bomb trigger compresses the gamadium core to critical mass, conversion to high-energy neutrons is 100% efficient in Banner's unique design and these impact on an outer shell of gamadium, causing fusion of the gamadium nuclei and maximizing the explosive yield and the radioactivity --

BOOM-BOOM-BOOM. All in an eye-blink. The sound builds until it's too much to take, then sudden SILENCE -

IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS - BANNER (MOS)

Frozen against the brilliant tableau. His radiation shield turns a dark green before it fries.

This is the kind of blast you expect to see him instantly vaporized by, his shadow burned into the ground beneath him but instead, by some miracle -- the light blasts right through him.

A pale green light washes through Banner's body, illuminating every cell and every organ as if he were suddenly transparent. Invisible yet we are able to see him if only for the light. Like a liquid poured into the shape of a man --

His face is stretched frozen in a scream. Pure agony. But no sound comes out. Not a cell in his body can hide from the radiation pouring through him. Unendurable hell just to watch him twist in slow motion --

DOWN IN THE BUNKER, the whole place shakes like a 9.0 earthquake. Rick collapses to the concrete floor and holds his ears.

GROUND ZERO, the mushroom leaps toward the heavens --

The wind hits next, picking up dust like a blizzard, driving across the desert and past Banner like a sandblasting machine.

Behind him, the fireball, green and yellow as it expands from the blast area and then collapsing back in on itself, deepening in color.

Around him wind drives the sands over the now polished green-glass ground zero impact point. The glass is spider-cracked, looking like veins in a living thing, the surface of the earth.

CONTROL ROOM - SAME

Measuring devices and monitors rock wildly as they record the cataclysmic event.

IN THE STORAGE AREA

Leder lies unconscious. ALARMS SOUND in the corridor, MEN race past. One stops as he catches sight of the slack body in the restricted area --

IN THE SITE-MONITORING ROOM

Scientists are slack-jawed. Ross is awed.

GEN. ROSS

Did you see that? That was spectacular.

TECHNICIAN

Get a radiation team out there. Now.

Men race out, passing a scientist entering --

SCIENTIST

We've got a man unconscious in the RL-4 lab, and a radiation breach, possible high-level Gamma exposure.

ALARMS WHOOP. More men race from the room to follow the scientist --

RADIATION SUITS ARE PULLED OFF RACKS --

ROSS watches the screens, the mushroom drifting lazily into the sky --

BETTY

Bruce...

CUT.

GROUND ZERO AND BANNER STILL SCREAMING. IN SLOW-MOTION --

VOICE (V.O.)

Bruce!

CUT.

INT. RADIATION CHAMBER - LATER - NIGHT

Banner is sweat-slick and screaming, trying to catch his breath --

Leaning over him in full radiation suits are a team of DOCTORS and TECHNICIANS headed up by DOC SAMSON, a military doctor and base psychiatrist, his voice muffled by the protective gear --

DOC SAMSON

Can you hear me? Do you know where you are?

(turns to the team)

He's coming out of it.

ANOTHER DOCTOR

He should be dead.

TECHNICIAN

Dead, he should be dust.

The Tech turns from his equipment with an astonished look --

TECHNICIAN

Radiation readings are down within normal range.

DOC SAMSON

That doesn't make any sense.

TECHNICIAN

Maybe we should ask the
resident expert, about the
effects of gamma radiation...

Samson removes his radiation helmet and a glove, takes
Banner's pulse --

BANNER

Samson.

DOC SAMSON

Yeah, it's me. How do you feel?

Banner takes stock and it surprises him --

BANNER

I... fine... how?

DOC SAMSON

We were kinda hoping you could
tell us. What were you doing
out there?

BANNER

The kid... It was armed.
There was light everywhere...
inside me...

BANNER looks up at the doctors, remembering everything,
realizing --

BANNER (CONT'D)

I was... ground zero.

CUT.

INT. ROSS' OFFICE - DAY

A strategy session. Ross, Gen. Ross, Doc Samson, Maj.
Talbot.

MAJ. TALBOT

No radiation sickness, no sign
of burns?

DOC SAMSON

It's impossible. His body
must've absorbed the radiation
somehow.

GEN. ROSS

Maybe I misjudged him. Maybe that
wimp's tougher than I gave him
credit for. How's the engineer?

DOC SAMSON
 Leder was exposed to unfissioned gamadium over a longer period. It's a more classic case of radiation poisoning. He wants to talk.

INT. LEDER'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Samson bends over a pale-looking Leder with a pen light, raises an eyelid --

DOC SAMSON
 Leder, can you hear us?

Leder's eyes snap open. And did we see a tiny flash of green light in his contracting pupils? Leder sits up.

LEDER
 General.

GEN. ROSS
 Do you remember what happened?

DOC SAMSON
 We found you unconscious in radiation storage...

Leder's groggy but his mind is still working as he sizes up the situation --

LEDER
 I remember. Something was wrong. One of the delivery systems was missing. I followed him... he was stealing gamadium. He hit me. I must have passed out...

GEN. ROSS
 Who?

Leder draws this out for maximum effect --

LEDER
 Banner. He was acting crazy, said he had to prove his theories. I tried to stop him. He was going to kill me.

Leder watches their reactions --

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

They walk from Leder's room. Ross turns to Doc Samson --

ROSS
We don't know Banner's
responsible.

GEN. ROSS
Who else? He had something to
prove?

ROSS
I know him. He wouldn't.

MAJ. TALBOT
Banner's access codes were logged
into the launch computer.

Talbot hands Ross a computer printout. She reads.

GEN. ROSS
Banner's funding is pulled
before he's able to test his
baby and it just happens to go
off anyway. His own country
wasn't going to pursue it, so
he decided to find someone who
would.

DOC SAMSON
All the monitoring equipment was
on-line.

Ross puts the inevitable together and wishes she hadn't --

ROSS
And now that he's proven his
theories, the technology is
marketable.

Gen. Ross has genuine admiration for Banner's efforts --

GEN. ROSS
I've got to give him credit,
that was some blast. And he
said it wasn't ready. This'll
show those clowns in
Washington. But it doesn't
change the facts. Banner broke
the law. I never trusted him.

MAJ. TALBOT
Who's the kid?

CUT.

RICK JONES (V.O.)
What am I doing here?

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

Rick Jones faces Maj. Talbot and Ross. The General paces in the background. Rick folds his arms defiantly.

RICK JONES

What are you doing here?
Building secret weapons. I bet
60 minutes would love to find
out about you guys.

GEN. ROSS

Don't get smart with me.

MAJ. TALBOT

You were trespassing in a
restricted area.

RICK JONES

Restricted? How can you own the
desert, the mountains, the air?

Ross smiles at this logic and reads a computer printout --

ROSS

Richard Jones. Auto theft.
Burglary. Receiving stolen
merchandise. Eighteen months
Colorado State Reformatory.
Where you should still be, if
this is right. Quite a career
you're building for yourself.

Rick gets nervous --

RICK JONES

Don't bother calling my
parents, they won't care.

MAJ. TALBOT

We have no intention of calling
your parents.

ROSS

Rick, we can't help you if you
don't help us.

RICK JONES

I told you. I don't know a
thing. I was just driving
through. I saw a shortcut on
the map and figured I'd do a
Jim Morrison, you know, camp
under the stars.

GEN. ROSS

Do you respect your country, son?

RICK JONES
Not really: Vietnam,
Watergate, Attica...Attica...

The General grabs the kid by the collar --

GEN. ROSS
You snot-sleeve, you weren't
even born then! What's your
arrangement with Banner? Who
are you working for?

RICK JONES
Uh, I think I want a lawyer.

INT. ISOLATION CELL - DAY

Talbot tosses Rick back by the scruff of the neck.

RICK JONES
Hey, ouch...

Gen. Ross turns his interest to Banner. Ross watches from
the sideline.

GEN. ROSS
How are you feeling, Doctor?

BANNER
Alright.

Rick watches, looks to Banner for a clue how to act, gets
none.

RICK JONES
We're both fine. I'd like to
check out...

The General ignores Rick --

GEN. ROSS
Little accident out there
today.

BANNER
What happened? Why was the
bomb armed?

GEN. ROSS
Something must've gone wrong,
huh? You were probably
supposed to be long gone,
weren't you?

Banner is clueless. The General is through playing chess.

GEN. ROSS (CONT'D)
 Don't play dumb, doctor. We
 all know how smart you are.
 Hell, you're the smartest
 person on the base, aren't you?

Banner says nothing. Rick Jones listens intently. The
 General gets in Banner's face.

GEN. ROSS (CONT'D)
 But you outsmarted yourself
 this time. Had to prove you
 knew it all. That's all
 history is going to remember
 you for. You'll just be the
 guy that tried to sell a bomb
 to the bad guys. You're a spy.
 That's treason, Doctor. You're
 a traitor.

Rick Jones' eyes go wide. Banner is just as surprised --

BANNER
 No... I didn't...

RICK JONES
 Don't they execute people for
 that?

MAJ. TALBOT
 Who are you working for? Tell
 us now and we can try to
 control the damage.

Banner can't believe this. He locks eyes with Ross.

RICK JONES
 At least tell them I'm not
 involved.

BANNER
 Why didn't Leder stop the
 countdown?

GEN. ROSS
 We found Leder unconscious in
 radiation storage... where you
 left him.

BANNER
 Where I..?

GEN. ROSS
 When you want to stop playing
 games, doctor.

Banner turns to Ross --

BANNER

Ross, you know me. I would never...

ROSS

You used my name for your access code.

Ross holds the computer printout Maj. Talbot gave her.

ROSS (CONT'D)

Bad Betty. You named a bomb after me? I don't know whether to be flattered or insulted.

Banner is ashamed and embarrassed --

BANNER

Be flattered.
(then)
I didn't initiate the detonation sequence.

ROSS

I want to believe you. But what I know and what I can prove are two different things. Help me.

BANNER

I don't know how.

Banner is confused and helpless. The General, Talbot and Ross exit.

RICK JONES

Why didn't you tell them you never saw me before in your life? I didn't tell them anything about you, Doc, nothing.

BANNER

That's because you don't know anything.

TIME CUT.

INT. LEDER'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Leder writes in a notebook: His unsolveable equation from earlier. He writes more, extending the solution, unhesitatingly. His handwriting is different, sure and graceful, not like his previous unsure chicken-scratchings. Confidently and simply, the formula is solved.

Leder underlines the answer and lets out a curious laugh --

LEDER

Of course! It's right there.
What was wrong with me that I
couldn't figure it out before?
Was I a moron? An insect? It's
child's play...

A NURSE carries a pile of medical and scientific texts to Leder's bedside to join a stack of others. Doc Samson follows her in. Leder closes his notebook.

NURSE

The books you requested.

Samson examines the textbooks with curiosity.

DOC SAMSON

Radiation Effects and Cellular
Development. Sub-Atomic
Structural Mutation. Odd
choices for an electrical
engineer.

LEDER

I almost died. I'm curious
about what happened.

Samson nods, turns away to inspect Leder's chart and Leder pages through a good part of a dense text at an impossible rate of speed. Samson turns back and Leder pretends to be reading at a normal pace. He smiles.

LEDER (CONT'D)

Though, I'm feeling much better
now.

INT. ISOLATION CELL - DAY

Banner sits on a bunk, keeping to himself, jotting calculations on a corner of his shirt - trying to make sense of what's happened. Rick paces, pissed off.

BANNER

What's your name, kid?

RICK JONES

Rick, Rick Jones. Look, Doc,
I'm sorry. I didn't even thank
you. You saved my life. You
didn't even know me. Nobody's
ever done anything like that
for me before...

Banner manages a smile, sees something familiar in the kid.

BANNER
Sorry about all this, Rick.

RICK JONES
How long do you figure they're
going to keep us here?

BANNER
You have an appointment?

RICK JONES
I was on my way to Vegas to see
a girl. How about you, you got
any girlfriends?

Banner shakes his head.

BANNER
How old are you?

RICK JONES
Sixteen.

BANNER
When I was your age, I was
working on my master's thesis
in particle physics at MIT.

RICK JONES
That sounds fascinating, doc.
I mean, really. I bet you have
to fight off the girls when you
tell them about that. Hey, I
saw the way you were looking at
that government chick...

The same scene in black and white - video

BANNER (VIDEO) (CONT'D)
She's just an old friend...

INT. SECURITY ROOM

Banner and Rick under surveillance on video. Two OFFICERS
monitor the console as Ross approaches --

OFFICER
Nothing yet.

TIME CUT.

INT. ISOLATION ROOM - LATER

Banner tries to sleep. Rick paces. He kicks a trash can
across the room and the NOISE jars Banner awake --

RICK JONES

This blows! We're being framed, you know? We're history. No one's ever going to hear from us again. "Rick Jones? Oh, he vanished last year in the desert, no one's seen or heard from him since."

Rick makes a twilight zone sound effect --

BANNER

Look, I'm sorry about all this...

RICK JONES

You're sorry? Stop apologizing. You didn't do anything besides save my life, right? You're getting screwed on this deal, too.

BANNER

But it's my fault. I built that bomb. I wish I knew what went wrong.

Rick lets out an angry YELL.

BANNER (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

RICK JONES

Yelling. I'm pissed.

BANNER

That won't help anything.

RICK JONES

It'll help me. Look, I feel better already. Try it. You're pissed off too, you just don't know it...

Banner shakes his head. Controlled.

BANNER

I've got to think this through... The bomb was armed... Leder couldn't stop the countdown because he... But that was after...

A stab of pain lances through Banner's skull. As if thinking just got very painful. He continues, his growing anger has a strange, irrational edge to it that gets Rick's attention --

BANNER (CONT'D)

See, I should have known... If I had, they'd leave me alone... if it wasn't all my fault..

Banner's ranting now. His tone escalating. Like a pressure-cooker about to blow.

RICK JONES

Hey, calm down. I'm just blowing off steam, you know, talking...

BANNER

Everyone's always talking. But no one ever says anything. All the problems in the world today and you know who's responsible? People.

Rick lets out a nervous laugh.

RICK JONES

Hey, that's good...

But Banner is dead serious, growing more irrational. Banner doubles over in pain but it's not the ulcer --

RICK JONES (CONT'D)

You okay? Relax, you're going to have a heart attack...

BANNER

Relax?! It's my fault... I should have known...

Banner stands, hyperventilating --

RICK JONES

No, doc. It's my fault. If I hadn't been there...

Banner is arcing wildly now. He slams his fist into the wall. When he turns away, there's an imprint where the fist hit - in solid metal.

RICK JONES

Holy... you been taking vitamins...

The humour is a weak attempt. Something's very wrong. BANNER is sweating, pale, his eyes hollow and far away. He suddenly looks like a radiation victim. He runs his hand through his hair and a clump comes out in his hand --

BANNER

...what's happening..?

RICK JONES
 Maybe you should lie down...
 I'll call a doctor.

BANNER
 I am a doctor! I'm a doctor!
 I should know what to do!
 Leave me alone...

The last word comes out deeper, like echoing up from a deep cave. Guttural, enraged. THE LIGHTS in the room flicker without warning. As if some electrical interference is shorting them out. An electrical panel shorts --

IN THE SURVEILLANCE ROOM

The monitors glitch with static. Technicians turn --

TECHNICIAN
 What's going on in there?

A momentary normal image: BANNER SCREAMING. Then more violent static mirroring Banner's pain like an EEG --

TECHNICIAN 2
 Some sort of a power surge. Call security.

IN THE ISOLATION CELL

Darkness. The flickering overhead electricity fights the mysterious interference. Radiation-sensing equipment against the wall starts beating out a crazy staccato drum beat --

RICK JONES watches where Banner was standing --

A STROBING, CHANGING SHADOW --

Banner's voice: screaming, then changing, hoarser --

BANNER
 Oh God... help...

Rick watches in terror but it's too dark to see clearly --

Suddenly, a metal frame bed flies across the room like a toy shattering everything in it's path. Rick dodges the destruction.

RICK JONES
 Holy shit...

Now the ROAR of something that sounds more animal than human surrounding us --

The sound of twisting metal, smashing masonry, like a wrecking ball taking a building down --

EXT. ARMY BASE - HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Suddenly the side of a building blows outward with the force of a small bomb --

Cement and steel rupture as something pushes through. It's dark. All we can see is --

AN ARM. Massive. In the darkness, there is no color to it, just grey. It could be a corpse's hand but it's too powerful for that. What's clear is that it doesn't have a normal human pallor. The hand finds purchase on the side of the building and pushes --

Terrifyingly, there must be a body attached to this hand but we can't see it --

The fingers dig into the steel and concrete building as if it's a sand castle, crumbling and deforming. There's nothing co-ordinated or calculated about it, just --

POWER. RAW, INCOMPREHENSIBLE POWER THAT WE USUALLY ASSOCIATE WITH A FORCE OF NATURE. THEN --

A HUGE HULKING SHADOW --

Detaches itself from the side of the building as if deconstructing itself. The shape moves through the darkness, avoiding the light we'd like to see it in.

Like a car accident: you're horrified but you want to slow down to see more --

After it, Rick Jones steps through the gaping hole --

RICK JONES
Solid weird.

He ducks into a shadow as a pair of MP's pass by --

BETWEEN BUILDINGS, the shape seems to be searching for something --

INT. LEDER'S ROOM - SAME

Leder paces. His feet brushing the fallout from his thinning hair. An earthquake-like RUMBLE. Leder turns. The wall shakes, then begins to crumble --

Massive green hands tear through the reinforced concrete. Leder retreats in the face of the unknown --

THROUGH AN OPENING IN THE WALL -- A PAIR OF EYES

Flecked with green. Set back in deep shadow, glowing from some angry place. Concrete continues to crumble. A primal ROAR echoes through the room --

Leder falls back, holding his ears, preparing to meet this... his demon --

OUTSIDE

A group of SECURITY OFFICERS double-time it to the commotion. Ross joins up a step behind --

ROSS
What's going on?

MAJ. TALBOT
A disturbance of some kind...

They round the corner and come upon the building in mid-destruction. There are field lights in the distance making the large shape a featureless silhouette.

REVERSE P.O.V. - ROSS

The lights illuminate her face and the silhouette stops at the sight of her. It's hard to read the blackness but it seems to be staring.

Reinforcements round the corner with flashlights and as the lights hit him, the figure covers his face. Another ROAR that sounds vaguely like "Nooo." Torn clothing covers the huge arms that hide a clear look at this monstrosity --

MAJ. TALBOT
Hold it.

The figure ducks round the corner into shadow. Talbot follows and aims. The earth shakes for an instant and the figure is gone. He lowers the gun.

SOLDIER
Did you see that?

Maj. Talbot turns to Ross --

MAJ. TALBOT
Was that... a man?!

ROSS has no answer. An MP reports to Talbot --

MP
Maj. Talbot, Banner and the boy, they're gone...

Ross, Talbot, and the rest of them are off in that direction. CAMERA MOVES IN ON LEDER staring in wonder at the departing disturbance --

LEDER
...incredible...

EXT. BASE - SAME

The General, in his bathrobe, out on his porch, gun in hand.

GEN. ROSS
What the hell is...?

He stops. Stares at a huge figure approaching in the shadows. Nearly seven feet tall. The General raises his sidearm --

GEN. ROSS
Hold it right there.

The whoop of SIRENS. Field lights flick on across the base. A patch of light hits the giant figure. The skin is a grey-green, battle-fatigue, dinosaur color, not flesh --

GEN. ROSS
Get your hands up. Who are you?

The giant ROARS - it sounds like thunder - and keeps walking. The General fires --

The huge figure keeps coming and The General dives back inside as one swing of a massive arm takes out the porch supports, raining debris down around him --

ANGLE - FROM THE BARRACKS

PAST RUNNING SOLDIERS, IN THE DISTANCE, an electrified security fence appears to tear itself from the ground. A shadow passes over it --

Beyond it, another fence goes down --

A wall explodes behind an irresistible force --

The speed that these barriers come down suggest something moving faster than we can believe. It's heading out into the desert night and nearly gone --

BACK AT THE BUSTED LAB BUILDING

A searchlight from a security tower finally gets a beam trained on the carnage --

RICK JONES shields his eyes. The base is a fury of activity, sirens and lights --

He sees his motorcycle at the motor pool across the street and makes his move: He breaks into a dead run for it --

Behind him, soldiers. In front of him, an unsuspecting guard. Rick leaps into him, element of surprise, takes him down and keeps rolling --

A soldier appears in front of the motor pool. In one swift motion, Rick kicks the soldier square in the chest while at the same time vaulting onto the bike.

RICK JONES

Come on, baby. Don't be fickle
on me now.

It turns over on the first kick and Rick smiles. He guns the bike and roars off like the Lone Ranger, following the trail of destruction out into the endless desert night --

INT. GEN. ROSS' OFFICE - NIGHT

The General storms in to Ross, Talbot and Doc Samson.

GEN. ROSS

What in perdition is going on
around here? I have reports of
green men... not little tiny
ones, for chrissakes, but a big
giant one!

DOC SAMSON

There might be some sort of
mass hysteria among the men.
Perhaps a conversion response,
psychological trauma from the
blast...

GEN. ROSS

Goddamnit, I saw it, Samson.

MAJ. TALBOT

It could have been a diversion,
General. Banner's gone.

GEN. ROSS

Gone?! Escaped? He just
vanished from a high security
military base? Jesus H.
Christmas! Maybe we should
call in the friggin' army!

As an MP knocks, hands a VHS tape to Talbot who pops it in
the VCR --

MAJ. TALBOT

This is the surveillance tape
of Banner's cell just before...

ON THE TV, in black & white, complete with interference and
drop out. There's no way to see a thing.

GEN. ROSS
What's this garbage?

MP
We can't make it out.

LEDER (O.S.)
It's an electromagnetic disruption
caused by... gamma rays.

LEDER is standing at the door.

LEDER (CONT'D)
Another application of Banner's
research.

GEN. ROSS
Leder?

LEDER
Feeling a thousand percent
better, General, thank you.

And he looks it. His eyes bright, skin clear and clean.
But something is different: it's subtle, the cadence of
his speech, the rhythm - like a much more intelligent man.
But that's impossible, isn't it?

LEDER (CONT'D)
We all thought of the Gamma-bomb
as merely an outdated weapon of
mass destruction. But Banner saw
the seeds of a technology with
applications in everything from
advanced communications to medical
research. The bomb was just the
key to unlock the door. It's so
clear, the possibilities...

Leder is lost in an intellectual fugue. He snaps out of
his reverie with a decision --

LEDER (CONT'D)
His work must be allowed to
continue.

GEN. ROSS
Glad you're well but we have
more pressing problems...

LEDER
I understand. A shame about
Banner.

Awash in sincerity, Leder exits. The General turns angrily
to the remaining brain trust.

GEN. ROSS
Washington doesn't hear on this
until I say so.

Tension between the General and his daughter --

ROSS
That's my call. For the moment
I agree. Until we know what's
going on.

GEN. ROSS
Banner's bought the farm this
time. I don't care who's behind
him or what that infernal thing
was...

CUT.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

A chuckwalla lizard walks across the hot sand, stepping
over a human hand.

BANNER lies on his back, eyes closed, snoring. His army-
issue hospital pyjamas stretched and torn, barely hanging
on thanks to the elastic waistband --

RICK JONES (V.O.)
Hey, Doc. Wake up.

Banner opens his eyes. Rick Jones is leaning over him.

BANNER
What? Where...

Rick stares down at him. A moment, then --

RICK JONES
Come on, get up. They're
probably looking for us.

Banner looks around: They're in the middle of nowhere. A
beautiful desert sunrise.

BANNER
How did I get here..?

RICK JONES
You really got no idea? Get on
the bike.

BANNER
We've got to get back to the
base.

RICK
Uh uh. That's where we came
from. We're going to Vegas.

BANNER
Which way's the base?

Rick Jones jerks a thumb --

RICK JONES
Oh, you can't miss it. About a
hundred miles that way.

Banner is stunned --

BANNER
A hundred miles..?

RICK JONES
Look, I owe you and Rick Jones
always gives proper change.
But I'm not going back there so
they can send me back to reform
school, or worse.

Rick gets on the bike and rummages in the side-bag for a
spare jacket and shirt which he tosses to Banner --

RICK JONES (CONT'D)
Put these on.

Banner catches them and now notices his own torn clothing.
He looks down at his shoes, split along the seams, toes
visible. Something's wrong with this picture --

BANNER
What happened to my clothes?

Rick kick-starts the bike, then pats the seat behind him
encouragingly.

RICK JONES
That, Doc, is the best question
I've heard in a long time.

The bike roars off --

RICK JONES (V.O.)
Bright light city gonna set my
soul on fire...

CUT.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - ESTABLISHING - DAY

Neon in the daytime. Hotel towers. City of sin, sleaze and corruption, where for a price every fantasy can... excuse me -- Las Vegas, family fun vacation mecca.

INT. LAS VEGAS POLICE DEPT. - SQUAD ROOM - DAY

Ross and Talbot are introduced to a room of COPS by CAPT. SIEGEL.

CAPT. SIEGEL

Listen up. This is Maj. Talbot of the United States Army and Agent Ross of the FBI.

ROSS

Thank you, Captain. We're looking for a fugitive, a Dr. Bruce Banner, a nuclear physicist. He was last seen at the Los Osos military base.

Talbot circulates a photo of Banner.

ROSS (CONT'D)

He's wanted in connection with national security violations.

COP

Is he armed?

MAJ. TALBOT

You may assume so. Banner is a desperate, resourceful man. He should be approached with extreme caution.

CUT.

EXT. LAS VEGAS DOWNTOWN - DAY

Where dad doesn't bring the wife and kids. Rick and Banner on the bike.

EXT. VEGAS STREET - DAY

A neon sunset. Banner and Rick walk.

RICK JONES

Doc, I'm not shitting you, I don't even know you. It was like instant steroids, you grew a coupla feet and got real ugly real fast. You were like this big, giant... hulk. You really don't remember?

Banner shakes his head.

RICK JONES (CONT'D)
 Look, if you still don't
 believe me, you can call them
 to come get you after I get set
 up, okay? You owe me that.
 Anyway, Marlo's great, you'll
 like her.

INT. DIAMOND LOUNGE - SAME

A low-rent piano bar. Banner's never been in a place like
 this. Rick goes to the BARTENDER.

RICK JONES
 I'm looking for Marlo Chandler.

BARTENDER
 She's next, kid. And no booze.

RICK JONES
 (to Banner)
 You'll like this. She's great.

Banner and Rick sit at a table as MARLO CHANDLER makes her
 appearance, singing a Nina Simone-type arrangement of
 "Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood." --

RICK JONES (CONT'D)
 Ain't she something?

Yes. If it's possible to do something classy in this
 setting, Marlo does it. Slow and sexy. Hair and clothing
 like a 50's pin-up. Moves are all 90's.

Banner is embarrassed, agitated, stimulated, awkward.

BEHIND THEM, a couple of loud VEGAS COWBOYS wolf-whistle.
 Rick turns around in disgust and eyes them. She's too
 classy for that. But what do you expect from this setting?

COWBOY
 I understand you, baby!

Rick stands up fiercely and turns around --

RICK JONES
 Show some respect. The lady's
 trying to sing.

COWBOY 2
 Hey, down in front.

BANNER
 Forget it, Rick...

But the cowboys continue, answering to the song --

COWBOY
My intentions ain't good!

Rick stands again --

RICK JONES
Hey, shut up, pencil-dick!

The cowboys don't like this --

COWBOY 2
Don't hurt yourself, kid. It's
past your bedtime.

COWBOY
Yeah, she ain't worth it.

A laugh filled with bad teeth.

BANNER watches Marlo weave her spell. She's good, she's
sexy. These cowboy idiots are ruining it for all of us.

RICK JONES
Can't we get these morons to
shut up?

Banner gathers himself and turns around --

BANNER
Why don't you gentlemen keep it
down so the rest of us can
enjoy the show?

The cowboys look at each other.

Without getting up, one of the cowboys raises a leg and
kicks Banner square in the stomach, sending him sprawling
over a chair. Rick races to him --

RICK JONES
Doc, you okay?

Banner's never been hit like that. He struggles to catch
his breath. The BOUNCER comes over and addresses the
cowboys --

BOUNCER
What's the problem here, Dirk?

COWBOY
Guy's drunk. Trying to pick a
fight.

COWBOY 2
He's crazy.

RICK JONES
That's a lie.

COWBOY
Kid don't belong here, neither.

BOUNCER
I'm going to have to ask you to
leave.

RICK JONES
Us?!

The cowboys share a smile.

BANNER
But these two were being rude.

COWBOY
We were?

The bouncer puts Banner in a come-along hold and walks him
toward the door --

BANNER
Ow. You're making a mistake.

EXT. DIAMOND LOUNGE - SAME

The bouncer propels Banner uncomfortably into the street.
Rick Jones follows and helps Banner up --

BANNER
That was wrong...

RICK JONES
Locals only, I guess.

Rick's hand is around Banner's arm which suddenly feels
thicker --

RICK JONES (CONT'D)
Uh oh. Doc?

BANNER
No... that was wrong...

Banner turns angrily back to the door --

BOUNCER
I thought I told you...

The Bouncer spins Banner around, grabs him in a half-nelson
control hold. Banner's arm is pinned behind his back. The
Bouncer takes Banner down to the ground --

BOUNCER (CONT'D)

Now, don't get all excited,
buddy.

BANNER on the ground, in pain. Blood pounding in his ears. His HEARTBEAT begins to quicken. We can hear it. Above their heads, the neon lounge sign flickers -- and explodes. Street lights blink and crackle.

Under Banner's clothes, something begins to change. Like hydraulics bunching and expanding but organic --

All 300 pounds of the Bouncer's weight can't hold the arm-lock in place anymore. Banner's arm tears through his clothing --

BOUNCER

Jeez, what are you..?

Banner's skin isn't pink anymore. It's that sallow greyish-green we saw back at the base. With a GUTTURAL ROAR that doesn't sound much like Banner anymore, he throws the Bouncer off easily, skipping him like a stone across the street --

Even in the darkness, it's obvious that what rolls over isn't Dr. Bruce Banner anymore. The face is coarser, cruder than what we associate with human, a throwback perhaps, a mutation, a monster --

THE HULK --

INT. DIAMOND LOUNGE - SAME

THE DOOR FRAME SPLINTERS as the Hulk comes through. Close to seven feet tall and massive, the overwhelming feeling is of being in the presence of power. This is no pretty-boy body-builder, this is ugly, green and mean.

MARLO gamely tries to continue as PATRONS SCATTER. The Hulk explodes through tables toward the startled cowboys. One hand is enough to jerk the first hapless cowboy out of his chair --

Almost casually, the Hulk shakes the cowboy like a chicken-farmer preparing dinner, then tosses him across the bar, taking out drinks and drinkers like a cannon shot. When he hits, he hits hard.

With a speed that belies his appearance, Hulk treats the tables and patrons like stairs as he pursues the second retreating cowboy across the stage. Glasses shatter and pop like candy. Hulk tears curtains down in pursuit --

THE COWBOY grabs the mike stand away from Marlo and swings for the bleachers. It clangs and bends double against the back of Hulk's massive head. Hulk grabs the cowboy and throws him, helicopter-style across the bar --

THE BARTENDER ducks and comes up with a shotgun --

THE HULK stops in front of Marlo. She backs away and he stops her, grabs her by the shoulders, each huge hand wrapping half-way around her back. The strength held in reserve is terrifying but he's gentle --

He lifts her, pulls her close, his fetid breath pumping into her face, examining her. Marlo is terrified but you wouldn't know it unless I told you. She's a tough girl.

THE BARTENDER advances with the shotgun levelled at Hulk but there's no clear shot past Marlo. The Hulk looks at her, searching some dim human memory for recognition --

A frozen moment. The whole tableau. Then Hulk seems to vaguely shake his thick head and release her. A toy he's no longer interested in. One hint: She's not Betty. Marlo slumps into Rick Jones' waiting arms --

BARTENDER

Alright, freak --

Hulk turns toward him almost casually. And the Bartender lets go with both barrels --

What's left of Rick's old shirt perforates as the Hulk's chest darkens with the powder and shot. The Hulk takes a half-step backward with the force but that's about it. He ROARS with disapproval.

Everyone covers their ears from the force of the sound as they scramble to escape --

The Hulk grabs the piano and lazily tosses it across the lounge. It splinters against the wall and the Bartender collapses in terror --

The Hulk exits through the fire door, his shoulder takes out a chunk of door frame. The FIRE ALARM whoops loudly. RICK JONES turns to Marlo --

RICK JONES

Marlo...

MARLO

Rick Jones? What are you doing here? Did you see that?

RICK JONES

I came to see you, baby. You were great.

Marlo smiles. She's a couple of years older than Rick but what he lacks in age he makes up for in attitude. O.S., the SCREECH of brakes followed by the unmistakable CRASH of cars.

RICK JONES

Come on, I've got to help a friend.

SIRENS in the distance. Rick grabs Marlo's hand and heads out the back in the same direction as the Hulk --

EXT. LAS VEGAS - CITY STREET - NIGHT

A multiple car crash scene and a growing throng of confused onlookers (overlapping):

ONLOOKERS

(overlapping)

...what the hell happened?

...gorilla escape from a circus act... crazy jerk...

Rick follows the noise. No sign of the Hulk. He races down a blind alley. Rick searches behind dumpsters, in shadowed corners. Scary, ominous. (A faint heartbeat THUMPS in the underscore.) We expect something to jump out at any moment. And it does --

BANNER, looking raw, lurches from a darkened doorway, almost collapses on Rick, startles the hell out of Marlo --

RICK JONES

Doc! You okay?

But Banner is so weak, he can barely talk.

RICK JONES

I've got to get him out of here.

MARLO

Where?

RICK JONES

Your place.

Rick leads Banner away from the commotion as POLICE CARS arrive on the scene. Banner catches a glimpse of the Bartender being wheeled off to an ambulance. He passes --

ROSS AND MAJ. TALBOT. CAMERA STAYS WITH THEM, climbing out of an unmarked car. Capt. Siegel collars the Bartender.

CAPT. SIEGEL

He saw your guy.

BARTENDER

He was with a kid in the lounge.
Just before that crazy guy went
nuts and tore up the place.

MAJ. TALBOT

Banner?

BOUNCER

No. This guy was big. Giant.
His skin was... weird.

ROSS

(hates to ask)

Was it green?

BOUNCER

Yeah, pretty much.

CAPT. SIEGEL

We got reports of a circus animal
running loose. A bear, a monkey
or something. Probably painted
green for a show or something...

Ross and Talbot don't think so and share a look --

CUT.

INT. HOTEL SUITE - DAY

Ritzy Vegas. Sun sets over the killer view as Marlo lets
Banner and Rick in.

RICK JONES

Wow. First class.

Rick lowers Banner to the couch.

RICK JONES (CONT'D)

How're you feeling?

BANNER

Hungry. What happened?

RICK JONES

(sotto)

You did the monster mash again,
doc.

BANNER

I hurt people...

RICK JONES

(smiles)

Well, no one who didn't have it
coming.

Marlo comes over --

MARLO
Are you alright?

RICK JONES
Doc, I'd like you to meet a
friend of mine, Marlo Chandler,
this is Doc. He's a sub-atomic
psychic.

BANNER
Physicist.

RICK JONES
Probably the smartest guy
you'll ever meet. Maybe the
smartest in the whole world.
Right, doc?

MARLO
Pleased to meet you.

BANNER
You have a wonderful voice, Ms.
Chandler.

MARLO
Thank you. Though I guess I
wasn't the headliner tonight.

RICK JONES
Look, Marlo, we're in a little
trouble...

MARLO
What's new?

RICK JONES
And I'm a little...

MARLO
...short on cash. Of course.

She's seen it all. But Rick loves every minute of her
toughness. He grins --

MARLO (CONT'D)
Okay, you can sack out here
tonight on one condition. You
don't tell me what kind of
trouble it is this time, Rick.
Because if I don't know, I
can't get dragged into it.

Rick smiles and shakes his head, continually awed by Marlo.

RICK JONES
Is she great or what?

Marlo opens a closet, hands Banner a men's suit.

MARLO
I think this'll fit.

Rick doesn't like the implication --

RICK JONES
Who's is it?

MARLO
A friend's. This is his place.

RICK JONES
"His?"

Rick throws Marlo some jealous tension. But he's just a kid to her.

BANNER
Can I use the phone?

MARLO
Sure.

Banner dials, Rick and Marlo argue in the B.G., overlapping:

MARLO
Rick Jones, you are sixteen years old.

RICK JONES
So? You're only seventeen.

MARLO
But I'm a mature woman with possibilities. I can take care of myself.

RICK JONES
Who's the guy, Marlo? Another loser?

BANNER
Hello, Betty Ross please.

CUT.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

End of a long day. Ross at a temporary desk going over pictures of the damage today.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
Routing a call from Los Osos
for Agent Ross.

Ross picks up the phone. She's tired.

ROSS
Agent Ross.

INTERCUT - BANNER AND BETTY

BANNER
Betty.

ROSS
Bruce, where are you?

BANNER
You've got to trust me...

ROSS
I'd like to. But if you're
innocent, why did you run away?

BANNER
I didn't mean to.

ROSS
What does that mean? Where are
you? I'll come get you.

BANNER
I've got to get to a lab, run
some tests, figure this out...

ROSS
Banner, the army has questions.

Banner picks up a matchbook from the ashtray.

BANNER
Meet me tomorrow morning early
at the Universal Casino, the
D'Angelo room. Alone.

He hangs up. Unsatisfying to both.

ROSS
Be careful...

As Talbot returns with two coffees and Betty takes it
without mention of the phone call.

CUT.

INT. GAMMA LAB - NIGHT

Discarded science texts on every surface. Chalkboards fill the room, covered with figures. Like what we expect from Banner by a factor of ten. Indecipherable. Where there's no more room, the writing continues on the walls.

A hand moves as fast as thought, stringing out alphanumerics, signs, symbols and numbers. The chalk breaks. SCREECH. The fingers take a moment to register and finally stop, still moving, twitching.

CAMERA MOVES IN ON LEDER --

He looks tired, like a speedfreak at the end of a binge. His skin is sallow. Strangely: His clothing seems baggy and his forehead looks imperceptibly... longer.

He turns from the blackboard and grasps his cramping writing hand with the other. He holds it in pain. The fingers are raw and torn. But there's more, so much more. He can't stop the flow, the torrent of ideas pouring from his unharnessed brain... He holds his head, the pressure, another headache... His temples throb.

LEDER

Banner was an idiot. He didn't see the possibilities of his work...

In his moment of revelation, a sudden, piercing headache doubles him over. He stumbles from his chair and crashes to floor, hands clutching his throbbing temples --

When he looks up, his skin seems a shade more translucent, his green-flecked eyes a little more sunken and hollow -- was that green-flecked? His headache jabs a lightning thrust. He SCREAMS and lunges for the bathroom door --

IN THE BATHROOM. Leder grabs a large aspirin bottle and crams a fistful into his mouth like M & M's. It doesn't do much, maybe the razor edge is off the pain.

LEDER

It just requires context and vision...

And he sits down at a computer terminal to work --

CUT.

INT. MARLO'S SUITE - NIGHT

A ROOM SERVICE CART wheels in. Banner moves from a scavenged tray to the new order. THE WAITER lifts the cover to reveal a plate piled high with steaks. Rick signs for it. Banner starts in: No sign of the ulcer. Rick channel-surfs the TV.

RICK JONES

Yeah, right. Do you believe that crap?

Rick sees Marlo --

RICK JONES (CONT'D)

Wow!

MARLO

I'm going out.

Rick's face falls.

MARLO (CONT'D)

You've got to be out of here by tomorrow, Rick. I'm sorry, I mean it.

RICK JONES

But...

She's gone. ON TV: Back to the anchor desk and two shiny-faced NEWSCASTERS.

NEWSMAN (VIDEO)

And, is there a monster on the loose in Las Vegas? Tritia?

NEWSWOMAN (VIDEO)

Well, Kevin, a lot of people seem to think so after someone or something apparently went beserk in a downtown nightclub.

ON VIDEO - A PARADE OF WITNESSES prove the unreliability of eyewitness testimony:

NUTTY MAN

It was a giant green monster. All covered with hair. thirty feet tall...

NEW AGE WOMAN

...and we wouldn't heed it's warning so he went back to Zarnon, in another galaxy...

PAIR OF KIDS

...a dinosaur like in that movie, about twenty feet high.

SPIKE LEE WANNABE

If he were white, they'd paint a big "S" on his chest and call him Superman. But it's a green man so...

Banner takes the remote and turns off the TV.

BANNER

There's a university lab near here that will have the facilities I need. Thank you for your help, Ms. Chandler. We won't endanger you further, will we, Rick?

CUT.

SMASH OF GLASS

INT. UNIVERSITY LAB - NIGHT

Rick climbs in and opens the broken window, talking.

RICK JONES

She didn't mean that. She's just, shy... that's it. Like you. You got the hots for that Agent Ross and you won't admit it.

Banner follows in and looks around. Bio-physics lab.

RICK JONES (CONT'D)

Jeez, I've busted in tougher places than this. You sure they got what you need?

Banner throws the covering back from an electron microscope.

BANNER

I hope so.

But meager compared to what Leder is working with.

CUT.

A CONVOY OF SUPPLY TRUCKS

EXT. LOS OSOS - NIGHT

They RUMBLE down Los Osos' main street. The General strides from his office, cigar in mouth and flags down the lead truck.

GEN. ROSS

Hold it. What's going on here?

The driver shows a clipboard with papers.

DRIVER

Where's the Gamma facility?

GEN. ROSS
Gamma..? It's closed. Who
requisitioned this?

LEDER (O.S.)
I did.

LEDER strides across the street, his jacket flapping, loose
and scarecrow-like. HE COUGHS heavily, looks frail.

LEDER
It's been re-opened.

GEN. ROSS
Without funding?

LEDER
Presented properly, the National
Security Council saw things in a
new light. I made an impressive
case for the peacetime applications
of Gamma technology. Communications
technology, health-care, even law
enforcement. I'm running this as a
defense conversion. It will be a
co-operative venture with private
industry and soon will even be
turning a profit, putting this
whole town to work.

The General smiles, impressed by the verbiage.

GEN. ROSS
It's about time someone around
here showed some initiative.

LEDER
When you stare death in the face,
General, you re-evaluate your
life. With Banner turning out to
be a spy, well it made me sick. I
felt somehow responsible.

Leder is saying all the right things.

GEN. ROSS
We'll get Banner. You just keep
serving your country.

LEDER
I'm no soldier, but I'll do my
part.

Leder salutes and motions the convoy back to --

EXT. GAMMA LAB - NIGHT

Down a ramp into a huge hangar area. Soldiers unload equipment under the direction of technicians. The last truck drives up and GUS and MARY get out.

LEDER

Good to see you.

GUS

This all looks pretty official.
Brings back memories.

LEDER

Oh, it's official. My situation has changed since our last conversation. I need people I can trust.

GUS

Hey, you know us.

LEDER

Did you bring the supplies I requested?

Mary pulls the flap on the cargo hold back --

MARY

The best money can buy.

INSIDE - two rows of the baddest, meanest-looking MERCENARIES we've seen --

GUS

I rounded up all the usual suspects. What's the deal?

LEDER

I decided that, rather than sell the store, I might try running it myself.

GUS

Hell, it's your dime, boss. When I saw that government check...

LEDER

Leader will be fine. And it's your dime, you're a taxpayer, aren't you?

Gus smiles and then LAUGHS. Leder stays real cool. He's got Gus figured just right. He's got everyone figured. And now the lunatics are running the asylum.

CUT.

INT. HOTEL RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Ross and Maj. Talbot share a casino dinner. Talbot checks his Keno card.

MAJ. TALBOT

Damn, lost again. Do you think Banner's linked to this... green monster? Maybe it's something he built in the lab.

ROSS

He's a physicist, not Dr. Frankenstein.

MAJ. TALBOT

And you think he's innocent.

ROSS

How can you be so sure he's guilty?

MAJ. TALBOT

Because all the evidence points to him. For starters.

ROSS

You don't like him.

MAJ. TALBOT

Honestly, Agent Ross? No.

ROSS

Why, because he's smart? What is it with you jocks? Why are you always threatened by intelligent men?

MAJ. TALBOT

I had a well-adjusted childhood. I had a good time at my prom. Yes, I was captain of the football team. I graduated number one in my class at West Point. I'm supposed to feel guilty because of this?

ROSS

You're right, I'm sorry.

MAJ. TALBOT

What do you have against me?

ROSS

You're a winker, Major. You know, the kind of guy who lets you know you're his friend with a wink? (winks) "Hey."

MAJ. TALBOT

(laughs)
I'm a winker?

ROSS

That's my take.

MAJ. TALBOT

I think you don't like me
because your father does.

Talbot looks self-satisfied.

MAJ. TALBOT (CONT'D)

Just like he doesn't like
Banner. But that wouldn't have
anything to do with your fond
regard for him, would it?

ROSS

Do you know anything about
Banner's childhood, Major? Did
you know his father was an
alcoholic who couldn't hold a job?
A classic abuser. Banner's mother
died in a domestic dispute which
he witnessed at age 9.

MAJ. TALBOT

I'm aware of all this. So what, we
just excuse him? It's alright, spy
on your country, sell secrets,
break the law, you had a tough
childhood. I don't buy that.

ROSS

Neither do I. I'm just trying
to understand him.

MAJ. TALBOT

So am I. You read Doc Samson's
file: Banner's a control freak.
He turned off his emotions in the
name of science and threw himself
into his work. Any Bruce Banner
who resembled a human being with
human emotions died a long time
ago.

ROSS

Perfect for military use. Just
add funding.

MAJ. TALBOT

Maybe. But Los Osos gave him a
life.

If it's supposed to make us hate Banner, it has the opposite effect: We feel sorry.

ROSS

Exactly, and just like that, he throws it all away?

These are two intelligent people.

ROSS (CONT'D)

And worst of all, the General's daughter likes him.

Talbot has a sense of humour. He flashes a charming grin.

MAJ. TALBOT

Right this instant that is the worst of all.

Talbot checks his keno card again. Another loser.

MAJ. TALBOT (CONT'D)

Look at that, I just can't win.

Talbot gets a smile out of her. He finishes his glass.

MAJ. TALBOT (CONT'D)

So I'm going to get some sleep.
(stands, then)
Don't let your bias interfere with your job, Agent Ross.

BETTY

Kids don't have a lot of choice in their life, Major. My father was transferred when I was seven and I didn't see Banner again until last week. If he's guilty, I'll do my job but if he's not... I'm a grown-up, I get to make my own choices now.

Talbot smiles and winks --

MAJ. TALBOT

Deal.

Leaving her smiling.

CUT.

INT. UNIVERSITY LAB - DAWN

Banner is deep in it. Rick climbs in the window, carrying a box.

RICK JONES
I found one, doc. What you
asked for.

Banner looks up with serious intent.

RICK JONES (CONT'D)
Extra meat.

Rick opens the pizza box proudly. Banner folds a slice,
takes a bite, returns to work.

RICK JONES
How's it going?

BANNER
It doesn't make sense. My
blood seems normal in every
respect.

He takes a pin and pokes a finger not already covered by a
band-aid. Greases a slide with a drop of blood and slides
a coverlet over it. He centers it in the electron
microscope guide. He motions Rick over --

BANNER (CONT'D)
Take a look...

RICK JONES
I wasn't much for school.

BANNER
Never to late to start, son.

Rick smiles back and takes a look --

ANGLE - THROUGH THE MICROSCOPE

Blood. Looks normal to us.

RICK JONES
Yeah? Looks okay.

BANNER
It is. I took over ten thousand
rads of gamma radiation. But
there's no cerebral edema, no
neurological disturbance, no loss
of fluid or electrolytes into
intercellular spaces, no
depressed white count, none of the
signs of radiation poisoning which
should be there. Hell, I think my
ulcer cleared up. No organism
could recover from that much
radiation...

RICK JONES

Maybe you're tougher than you thought, doc.

(then)

And it's probably easier to draw your blood than the big guy's. You know, when you...

That's a lightbulb for Banner --

BANNER

That's it! You're better at this school stuff than you thought.

RICK JONES

Yeah? What'd I say?

BANNER

What triggers the change?

RICK JONES

When you got pissed off...

Banner is moving quickly now, on a creative jag.

BANNER

Anger. Fear. Fight or flight. Emotion. Metabolic effects. Elevated blood pressure. Restricted flow. Adrenaline.

Banner goes to the drug cabinet and finds what he's searching for: A SMALL VIAL. Taps it.

BANNER (CONT'D)

Here we go. Human adrenaline, from cadavers.

Banner flips a tiny vise into place over the slide. He tightens the calibration to hold the slide in place, clamping it over the coverlet --

He takes a titration from the vial and drips it onto the edge of the coverlet, watching through the microscope as he does --

UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

Regular blood platelets swimming through the plasma. From the edge where the adrenaline was introduced -- coalescing, seeming to appear out of nowhere: Large green masses: Gamma-radiated cells.

THE CORPUSCLES squeeze as the now-green white cells expand and swell violently --

BANNER (O.S.)

My God...

The blood cells swell and strain against the glass.
Suddenly the slide CRACKS AND SHATTERS --

BANNER jumps back, breathing heavily --

RICK JONES

Doc, relax. What is it?

BANNER

Adrenaline triggers the
change...

RICK JONES

Deep breaths, come on...

Banner tries to fight it --

BANNER

When I get excited it... he comes
out. I was completely irradiated.
The potential energy of that bomb
blast was stored up in the nucleus
of every cell, every atom of my
body! Any excitement, any emotion
triggers a jump in the sub-atomic
level, releasing the stored
energy. I've become a kind of
battery. Every second, my cells
are building up gamma energy and -
as I almost just demonstrated
again - it's taking less and less
to trip the change.

RICK JONES

Like an H-bomb with a hair
trigger.

BANNER

And unless I can find a cure,
Dr. Bruce Banner may become
extinct...

RICK JONES

You'll think of something. I
bet you always got straight
A's. You'll figure this out.

Banner's look is anything but optimistic. He takes an envelope from his pocket, hands it to Rick.

BANNER

If something happens to me,
Rick, I want you to make sure
that Betty Ross gets this.

RICK JONES

Sure, Doc. But nothing's going to happen to you...

THE DOOR is thrown open. Two campus COPS bust in with a pony-tailed PROF. KRIEG.

PROF. KRIEG

I knew I heard noises. What are you doing in my lab?

(then recognizing Banner)
You're Dr. Bruce Banner! Your paper on electromagnetic destabilization of the binding energy of organic atoms was brilliant.

COP

That's that spy they're looking for.

COP 2

Call the real cops, Jerry. Now nobody move.

The first cop races from the room. The cop draws his gun and gets real nervous --

RICK JONES

You don't understand...

COP 2

Get back! Hands in the air!

RICK JONES

Stay cool, mister, please, he's sick...

The cop swings the gun toward Rick. Rick looks at Banner.

BANNER is experiencing stress. He grabs his head. The cop swings the gun back --

COP 2

Hands in the air, mister, I mean it.

The first cop returns, picks up on his partner's mood, and pulls his gun too --

COP

They're on their way. We just caught ourselves an FBI most-wanted spy.

Just then, Banner lurches forward, collapsing actually. But the cops don't know that and the second cop's nerves get the better of him. He FIRES --

Banner is hit high in the arm --

It spins him around and into a tray of equipment, crashing to the floor, out of sight, trailing blood --

PROF. KRIEG
I'll call an ambulance.

Krieg exits. The cops approach round the equipment. Banner's foot comes into view. Then the LIGHTS start to FLICKER. THE HEARTBEAT rises. Banner's foot splits fine Italian leather with skin more leathery and green.

RICK JONES
You better get out of here.

COP
Shut up, kid.

RICK JONES
I mean it, you don't know what you're messing with...

THE ELECTRON MICROSCOPE is torn from its mountings and takes out the first cop and most of a wall --

COP 2
(scared to death)
Jerry!

In the darkness of the destroyed lab, a huge shadow rises. The second cop gets his FLASHLIGHT on and points it, with his gun at --

THE HULK. Five hundred pounds of snarling, pissed-off mad.

COP 2
Where'd he go? What the hell is that!?!

RICK JONES
Run!

The cop unfreezes himself, wisely decides not to fire, and runs. The Hulk turns to Rick. A tense moment. Rick holds his ground.

RICK
Doc, it's me.

The Hulk SNARLS an annoyed grunt --

RICK (CONT'D)

You know me, doc... you saved
my life...

An angrier GROWL and he moves toward Rick. Each footstep
shakes and reverberates the room --

RICK (CONT'D)

Okay, I won't call you Doc.

Rick stands his ground.

RICK (CONT'D)

Try to remember who you are...
Or were...

SIRENS in the night. The Hulk turns like an animal at
their sound. For something so big, the Hulk moves
surprisingly fast, leaping to the window sill, frozen for a
moment like William Blake doing Dante. Then the glass
SHATTERS.

EXT./INT CAR - SAME

Ross, Maj. Talbot and Capt. Siegel in one car. In front of
them, a string of POLICE CARS, SIRENS wailing. The
HEADLIGHTS of the lead car suddenly illuminate --

THE HULK. Frozen like a deer. More like a Sasquatch, too
big and bizarre to believe. His black-green pupils
contract in an instant in the glare of the lights --

The car plows into the Hulk with a metal-rending CRASH.
Totalled. Men's heads spider the windshield like crash-
test dummies as the car goes from 60 to 0 in an instant.
In the middle of this, there is an animal ROAR. ANOTHER
CAR plows into the mess. Then a third. The rest SCREECH
to stops.

THE HULK is unharmed, just steps back from the accident. A
jumble of broken headlights and light bars play over him.

ROSS is out of car. Talbot and Capt. Siegel beside her.

CAPT. SIEGEL

What is that? What in God's name
is that?! It's seven feet tall!

A lot of law enforcement officials draw a lot of guns. The
riot gear comes out as they spread, find cover, flanking
the Hulk. Capt. Siegel grabs a megaphone from the car --

CAPT. SIEGEL

Hold it. You are under arrest.
Put your hands in the air.

Siegel turns to Ross --

CAPT. SIEGEL (CONT'D)
Does it understand english?
What am I doing?

COPS close in on the Hulk, guns pointed. The HULK ROARS and swats at the closest man. He knocks the gun out of his hand which incidently breaks the man's arm with a loud SNAP. The man collapses, screaming with pain.

CAPT. SIEGEL
Oh, shit.

MAJ. TALBOT
Get those lights over here.

Ross takes the megaphone.

ROSS
This is agent Ross with the
FBI...

THE HULK turns to the sound of Ross' voice and lets out a quiet, puzzled sound as SPOTLIGHTS light up the street --

A COP
Holy cow, the guy's green.

THE HULK. His expression is soft, almost pleading, as he advances on Ross. This throws her.

ROSS
Hold it right there.

The Hulk doesn't. Ross grabs a gun.

ROSS (CONT'D)
We'll be forced to fire if you
don't hold your position.

But the Hulk gives no sign he understands. Ross raises the gun. She steps back. As do the other officers. The Hulk reaches toward her.

ROSS AND THE HULK. He's right in her sights. But maybe she recognizes something in the monster, a dim humanity --

MAJ. TALBOT (O.S.)
Open fire!

A HAIL OF BULLETS before the words are out of his mouth. Everyone fires except Ross.

But the damage is done. The Hulk ROARS in surprise. The bullets hurt. Of more concern, they make him angry. He's still standing, the Bullet's hitting his skin like tire rubber, some bouncing off, some impacting with a tiny THUNK.

CAPT. SIEGEL
Sweet mother of Mary!

THE HULK endures. He turns to Ross with a puzzled, hurt expression.

ROSS
No! Stop firing!

But who can hear her? The fusillade continues. Guns are re-loaded. The Hulk has had enough. He sweeps the nearest cops aside, sends some flying onto the hoods of cars, spidering windshields. He BELLOWS and stamps the ground with a massive foot, SPLITTING THE ASPHALT, unbalancing a handful of cops and tilting a cop car into a fissure.

THE HULK gathers himself, as if about to make a charge --

CAPT. SIEGEL
He's gonna charge.

No. He hunkers down in a powerful crouch and LEAPS --

The GROUND SHAKES and in an instant, he's gone. Talbot, Siegel and the officers look around. SILENCE.

SUDDENLY, A CRASH sixty yards away, behind them, in the darkness. Everyone turns. SPOTLIGHTS follow the sound --

COP
Over there..!

But only for an instant. Another spring and the SOUND of his landing is another DISTANT THUMP, farther away --

COP
Where did he..? That way...

Another rumble and the Hulk is gone.

ON ROSS AND TALBOT. Capt. Siegel approaches Ross, holstering his gun.

CAPT. SIEGEL
Before I endanger the lives of my men further, you want to tell me what we're hunting here?

ROSS
Dr. Bruce Banner.

CAPT. SIEGEL
What about... that?

ROSS
Captain, I honestly have no idea.

Ross and Talbot have no answers for him.

CAPT. SIEGEL

(sighs)

We're gonna need helicopters,
right?

CUT.

INT. GAMMA LAB (LOS OSOS) - NIGHT

The place is buzzing again. With some exotic new equipment and Leder's re-designs, it's more diverse, yet strangely scattered, incomplete, a sinister air to the whole enterprise. LAB ANIMALS are being unloaded.

Leder works on a remote armature, plugged directly into a computer through a hundred exposed electrode wires. The exo-skeleton of a hand articulates just like a normal hand. Leder puts a brick in it, programs it and it closes, popping the brick into dust. Beside the hand, a leg and a torso, designed so a man might fit inside.

GUS

That's some suit. 42 long?

LEDER

You like it?

Leder moves through the lab, stopping to correct everyone he passes. A bee-hive of activity. The mercenaries from the truck are scattered strategically, keeping an eye on things, looking out of place in lab coats.

Leder stops at a pair of SCIENTISTS we recognize from Banner's earlier gamadium experiments, reads from a clipboard --

LEDER

Has the distillation of the
nuclear isomers yielded the
atomic numbers I specified?

SCIENTIST

Yes, but how did you know it
would work? It's never been
done before.

LEDER

Because I ran the experiment up
here...

(points to his brain)

Before I let you idiots try it
down here.

Leder jots notes on the clipboard --

LEDER (CONT'D)

Not heavy enough. Now, run it again, using these specs. It's still of insufficient purity.

SCIENTIST

For what?

LEDER

Run it again. And get me more animals.

As insulting as Leder's tone, the scientists obey, almost automatically. As if Leder's will, when exercised, is too strong to be defied. Leder rubs his slightly bulging head in a momentary pain. Physically he looks weaker and weaker. Mentally: his words turn into the deeds of others.

Leder motions to Gus, Mary and a couple of the mercs.

LEDER

Project New Dawn must go forward, now. I need room, the underground access...

MARY

Look, Leder, we're not scientists, we don't know anything about...

LEDER

Just do what I tell you.

Nearby, two SCIENTISTS talk quietly.

SCIENTIST

I've never seen anything like it. The man's brilliant, obsessed. Every one of these is an industry-creating patent.

SCIENTIST 2

Yes, but who are these outside "consultants"? I don't like it.

Leder passes by --

LEDER

They're here to help...

As if the power of Leder's sentiment overwhelms the man's own thoughts. He's suddenly, genuinely enthusiastic --

SCIENTIST 2

I'm just glad they're here to help.

CUT.

EXT. LAS VEGAS ALLEY - NIGHT

In silhouette, a human-size figure digs in a dumpster for necessities. He comes up with pants and a dirty sweatshirt and puts them on.

BANNER looks weak. He lurches from the alley into the near-daylight glare of Las Vegas at night and stumbles into a couple of CONVENTIONEERS with "dates" --

CONVENTIONEER

Hey, watch it, you bum...

INT. MARLO'S SUITE - NIGHT

Banner knocks on the door and Marlo answers it, in evening gown.

MARLO

Look, it's not the best time.

When she sees his condition, she opens the door.

MARLO (CONT'D)

Oh, dear.

Sitting on the couch is VINCENT, a guy who thought fashion reached its zenith with "Miami Vice".

VINCE

Who's this guy, Marl?

RICK JONES

Marl?

Rick Jones arrives in time to hear this.

RICK JONES (CONT'D)

Doc, you okay? I thought you'd come back here.

VINCE

Who's the kid?

RICK JONES

I happen to be Marlo's boyfriend.
Who's the greaseball?

Marlo winces. Vince laughs.

MARLO

My 'friend.'

Rick makes a mental note and tends to Banner. Vince stands as Banner hits the couch.

RICK JONES

How you feeling, Doc? Whoa...

Rick examines Banner's bullet wound from earlier. It's healed right up.

VINCE

What's going on here, Marl? I had plans tonight...

Banner looks awful, worse each time back --

BANNER

...help me...

RICK JONES

(sotto)

I wish I knew how...

BANNER

I need something... to relax.

MARLO

I've got some valium.

Marlo exits to get it, Vince follows her, growing anger.

BANNER

I hurt people last night, didn't I? Oh, god...

RICK JONES

It wasn't you, Doc.

BANNER

Yes it was. I remembered some of it this time.

RICK JONES

Maybe you're getting better.

Banner's soul is bearing an increasing weight. He runs a hand through his hair and comes away with clumps --

BANNER

Maybe I'm getting worse. It's getting harder to hold it in.

Marlo returns, hands Banner a pill bottle. Vince is angry.

VINCE

...what are you doing..?

MARLO

(to Banner)

Maybe you should check with a doctor.

RICK JONES

He is a doctor.

Banner pops a big handful of them. Vince grabs Marlo roughly to face him.

VINCE

Hey, I'm talking to you, babe.
Who the hell are these guys!?

MARLO

They're friends of mine, Vince.
He's sick. He needs a place to
stay. Can we talk about this
tomorrow?

VINCE

No, we can't. Look, I pay the
rent here.

MARLO

Fine, tomorrow, I'm out. Now,
let go of me...

RICK JONES

Hands off the lady, Jack.

Rick grabs Vince. Vince shakes loose. Rick rears back punches him. Square on the chin. It moves him maybe a quarter-turn. He back-hands Rick hard, sending him over a chair.

VINCE

Kid, you're stupid.

Rick climbs to his feet, fighting mad and he's staring down the barrel of Vince's gun.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Sit down, short stuff. Max!

MAXIE enters from another door. An ex-heavyweight who's only gotten larger since.

MAXIE

Boss.

VINCE

Watch these guys.

RICK JONES

A gangster? You're dating a
gangster?

Marlo can only shrug helplessly and shake her head, she didn't know. Rick just slaps his head in amazement. Maxie looks long and hard at Banner.

MAXIE

Hey, that's that guy they was looking for on the television, the same guy.

VINCE

What?

Vince grabs the TV remote, but doesn't need it. Under it is the newspaper. Banner's picture is prominent. So are the words, "manhunt" and "spy". Vince reads, then walks crosses to Marlo --

VINCE

You bring a wanted federal fugitive to my place? Are you crazy?

Vince is about to slap her. Rick grows up fast.

RICK JONES

Hey, leave her alone. It's my fault. I forced my way back into her life. She never had a choice.

Nice words. If Rick weren't a kid, it might play better.

RICK JONES (CONT'D)

I've got to get him to a doctor. We'll get out of here and you'll never see us again. Come on, Marlo...

VINCE

"Come on, Marlo." Cute.

Marlo mouths 'thanks', to Rick.

MARLO

Vince, they're just passing through.

A KNOCK AT THE DOOR.

VINCE

They picked a lousy night. I'm expecting people. Put him in back. You stay here.

Maxie lifts Banner and carries him to the back bedroom. Rick sits tight. Maxie returns. Another KNOCK.

Vince puts away the gun and answers the door: Two PUNKS, pony-tailed, scraggly --

VINCE

My friends, come in... This is Marlo, my girl, Maxie you know, and my nephew... Marvin.

PUNK

Let's do some business...

RICK JONES

(sotto)

I don't believe this. Your taste in men stinks.

MARLO

(sotto)

I had no idea.

CAMERA PICKS UP THE TV IN THE B.G.

A DRAWING OF THE HULK. A really crappy, overmuscled artist's rendering of the Hulk by Rob Liefeld or one of the guys at Image.

NEWSCASTER (VIDEO)

College hoax or monster on the loose? The sightings of this... hulk, were reported all over Las Vegas last night. We have this exclusive video shot by a University student out his dorm window --

ROLL VIDEO - An unclear, shaky image of the Hulk's confrontation with the Ross and the cops --

CUT.

INT. HALLWAY - OUTSIDE THE GAMMA LAB - NIGHT

A sign: NO ADMITTANCE. A couple of scientists stand in front of it.

SCIENTIST

Locked out. He said he doesn't need assistants any more, we're just 'slowing him down.'

SCIENTIST 2

Who does he think he is? Bruce Banner.

INT. LAB - MONITOR ROOM - SAME

One figure sits alone in the darkened room facing the rows of computer monitors. They're all being used as televisions. Satellites pulling in signals from all over the world. Fifty different channels all going at once.

LEDER looks ill, a blanket around his frail shoulders. His now-delicate fingers play over the keyboard. All the other monitors respond, changing and resetting. A lot of info --

ONE MONITOR plays something familiar. A local news report. Police scene. Destruction.

CLOSER. Visible now is the -- SUPER: LAS VEGAS, NV

A weary police officer talks with the reporter. Now the eyewitness video. The same image now fills all the monitors, including the one in front of him: THE HULK.

LEDER WATCHES IN FULL ATTENTION

LEDER
(a whisper)
Banner...

CAMERA MOVES IN ON LEDER. The light coming off the monitor gives his skin a faint greenish glow. The light from the monitor, however, is not green --

CUT.

INT. MARLO'S SUITE - NIGHT

A BUNCH OF GUNS, in an aluminum suitcase. Vince shows them proudly --

VINCE
AK-47's. Glocks. What's your
pleasure?

MARGO
You're selling guns?

VINCE
I'm a businessman. I sell a
lot of things. I pay the
bills, what do you care?

Margo looks at Vince with disgust. A Punk takes out a sleek automatic and checks the action --

PUNK
Alright.

The punk sights down the gun and smiles at Rick Jones who'd like nothing better than to punch his lights out.

RICK JONES
(sotto)
Check this loser.

PUNK
What was that?

RICK JONES

I was wondering if you were a
Hoosier. I thought I heard an
Indiana accent.

PUNK

Orange County.

The punks unroll a bankroll of money. A KNOCK at the door.
Everyone turns. The punks grab guns. Maxie reaches for
his --

VINCE

What the..?

PUNK

What's going on? Who's that?

VINCE

Don't get itchy.

Vince motions to Marlo. She goes to the door. Opens it a
crack. It's Ross and Maj. Talbot with two COPS.

ROSS

Good evening, Ms. Chandler?

MARLO

Yes?

BETTY

Agent Ross, FBI, and Maj.
Talbot, U.S. Army. I was
wondering if we might talk with
you?

Maj. Talbot and the cops take free looks at Marlo.

MARLO

Not the best time.

ROSS

I'm sorry. But this is important.

INSIDE THE ROOM, Vince, Maxie and the two punks are trading
whispered accusations --

PUNK

The feds?! The damn army?!
What is this?

PUNK 2

I don't like the army, Scott.

Vince gestures, he has no idea.

AT THE DOOR - ROSS AND MARLO

ROSS
Have you seen this man?

She holds out a picture of Banner.

MARLO
Yes. At the club where I sing.
He came in the other night.

ROSS
Any idea where he might be?

IN THE BEDROOM, Banner rises groggily.

BANNER
Betty..?

IN THE SUITE, the guys with guns. Banner stumbles in. All guns point at him. All whispers:

RICK JONES
Doc, relax. It's okay.

PUNK
Don't move. Nobody moves.

VINCE
Sit down and shut up.

AT THE DOOR --

MARLO
I'm sorry.

ROSS
Well, if you see him, please
call us.

MARLO
I certainly will.

Marlo smiles and shuts the door. She's not a bad actress.

INT. HALLWAY - SAME

Ross and Talbot walk away.

ROSS
Something odd back there.

INT. MARLO'S SUITE - SAME

Marlo turns back to the room and breathes a sigh.

MARLO
Now, finish this crap, Vince.
Then I'm out of here.

VINCE
The hell you are.

Vince grabs her as, overlapping --

PUNK
Hey, nobody's leaving, alright!

MAXIE
Put the gun away, kid...

PUNK 2
Step back, big man...

MAXIE
I'm warning you...

Everybody is screaming at once. And dig that crazy HEARTBEAT. Banner grabs his head.

RICK JONES
Think good thoughts, Doc. Don't
get angry. Please.

VINCE
Sit down "doc", now.

Vince pokes him with the gun but Banner has taken the final turn. Banner grabs the gun --

BANNER
No, you sit down, you pathetic,
punk! What do you need these
for?

Banner's fingers crush the barrel. Everyone is stunned.
Banner's voice changes --

BANNER (CONT'D)
Because you're weak?!

Banner slaps Vince and knocks blood out of his mouth.

BANNER (CONT'D)
Is that it? A puny coward?!

A lightbulb explodes overhead. Maxie grabs Banner.
Banner shoves him with one hand, but it's a big green hand.
Maxie flies through the room and takes a jacuzzi.

Banner looks at his arm as it ebbs and flows back to normal. He's out of control --

BANNER

No...

Banner bolts for the door.

RICK JONES

Doc!

PUNK

It's a set-up!

All the hair-triggers in the room go at once. Maxie from the jacuzzi. The punks pop clips in and fire back at him, flip chairs. Vince has another gun out, firing at the punks as he leaps horizontal. Bullets rip the room. Rick throws Marlo down behind the bar. Grand opera style. Banner makes it to the door.

INT. HALLWAY - SAME

Banner flies into the hallway. A hail of bullets chop the door to firewood behind him. Maybe he's hit, hard to tell.

ROSS AND TALBOT, down the hall, turn at the noise. They see Banner heading for the stairwell. As he runs, the overhead lights FLICKER AND POP as he passes --

ROSS

Banner?!

BANNER FREEZES. His eyes meet Ross's. But it's too late. He's changing. A wave of nausea passes over Banner and his skin seems to shimmer and crawl for an instant --

BANNER

Ross, I'm sorry...

He's down the stairwell door. The cops approach the suite with armed care. Talbot motions to the stairwell --

MAJ. TALBOT

Get him.

THE STAIRWELL, Banner seems distended, his shape awkward and wrong, changing, as he races downstairs.

HULK

NO... LOOK...ME...

ROSS AND TALBOT right after him, followed by the cops. CAMERA STAYS on what they miss: A handprint in the metal doorframe --

Blood on the landings until - suddenly the trail is gone. Ross and Talbot stop, puzzled.

INT. CASINO FLOOR - SAME

The stairwell door blows off it's hinges and the HULK crashes through. Amazed stares from the gambling crowd. Across the casino floor, toppling slots and bounding across tables. Pandemonium.

EXT. HOTEL CASINO - SAME

People run madly. Once in the street, the Hulk's muscles bunch and he launches himself across the street, shattering the mammoth neon marquee as he lands on the roof, seventy feet away. A guy in a sharkskin suit watches --

SHARKSKIN

Look, up in the sky...

HOOKER

A goddamn flying green gorilla...

THE HULK leaps from the shattered marquee, doing more damage, making it to the roof of another casino --

Ross and Talbot are on the street. No sign of Banner. Just mass panic. She flashes her shield at Sharkskin --

ROSS

Did you see a white male, about five feet ten, a hundred and fifty pounds?

SHARKSKIN

No ma'am.

And he's not lying. It's futile, a panic riot. Ross takes out a handset and barks orders into it.

IN THE B.G. - RICK AND MARLO slip out with the casino with the crowd. CAMERA MOVES UP FROM ROSS' POSITION AND OVER THE CITY, across rooftops, too quickly for a man to move, blocks away to --

EXT. ROOFTOP - SAME

The Hulk, without a trace of the concerns Banner had a moment ago. Sitting like a stone gargoyle on a run-down tenement in a quieter part of town. Somewhere where there aren't people, where no one would hunt him, where no one would care --

Around him are PIGEONS. Lots of them. The Hulk watches a pigeon nibble at crumbs around him --

With one large hand, he reaches out and nudges the bird. The bird goes right on eating. The Hulk makes a small sound that sounds like a sigh --

A DOOR OPENS. The Hulk turns threateningly. Someone's on the roof --

An elderly black man, SIMPLE, retarded. Carrying stale bread: Pigeon food. He opens the cages and starts to feed his pets --

SIMPLE MAN

Here you go... Plenty for all you all...

He exits the cage, and tosses the leftover food to the strays on the rooftop. That's when he sees the Hulk. Without a pause, the man walks over to the Hulk --

The Hulk watches him come. And sit down beside him --

SIMPLE MAN

How'd you get all up here? I didn't see you.

The man offers the Hulk some stale bread. The Hulk doesn't take it so the man pushes it into his hand.

SIMPLE MAN (CONT'D)

It don't matter. Here... they come right up to you...

A few bold pigeons nibble on the bread, clutched in the Hulk's hand. The Hulk pulls it away from the birds and takes a bite himself --

SIMPLE MAN (CONT'D)

(laughs)

How'd you get so big if nobody feed you? That's a ridiculous thing.

(he stops laughing)

You're all green.

The Hulk turns a blank stare to the man --

SIMPLE MAN (CONT'D)

I never seen a green man. You probably got teased about that. Probably you come up here to be alone. Then I come up, talking...

The Hulk's gaze follows the man as he stands. The man smiles. Jarringly, A HELICOPTER rises behind him over the rooftop like a mammoth bird --

SIMPLE MAN (CONT'D)

What?

The man stumbles back. The Helicopter hovers there. Noise and wind, the peace is shattered --

VOICE (O.S.)
That's a roger, I've got him
right here...

SIMPLE MAN
Hey, why don'tcha leave the man
alone...

But before the man can plead his case, the Hulk gently
pushes him in the direction of the exit --

SIMPLE MAN (CONT'D)
You be careful... Don't let
'em push you around none...

HIGH ANGLE. The Hulk paces like a trapped animal. Another
HELICOPTER pens him in --

The Hulk caught in the middle. Sharpshooters lean out the
doors. The copters move closer.

ON THE STREET. Ross and Talbot pull up. Ross races up to
Capt. Siegel, at the command post. Helicopters overhead.

ROSS
Hold your fire...

Too late. The first helicopter lets loose with a rocket.

CAPT. SIEGEL
And how should we stop this
thing?!

ROCKET P.O.V. - THE HULK

Screaming in. The Hulk screams. BOOM. Not with a
rocket. The Hulk steps through the flames and growls
displeasure.

RADIO CACKLE (V.O.)
We got a big problem...

The Hulk kicks the brick chimney stack, sending the pieces
out like a mortar, right for the helicopter. METALLIC
WHACK as the main rotor folds, another chunk shatters the
windshield --

The HELICOPTER careens wildly against the side of an
abandoned building.

The other one moves in as the Hulk runs for the edge of the
building and leaps --

P.O.V. - FROM INSIDE THE HELICOPTER

The Hulk hurtles right at them --

PILOT (V.O.)

Oh no...

The helicopter turns and the Hulk plows right through the cabin --

INSIDE THE HELICOPTER. The pilot struggles with the addition of the sudden weight while looking over his shoulder at the bizarre attraction --

THE HULK exits the way he came. Down. To the street. Cracking a CRATER like a bomb drop. The helicopter tries to regain balance but the fuselage starts spinning out of control --

BELOW, the Hulk climbs out of the crater as the helicopter goes down smoking, O.S. He runs away through smoke. It swirls and eddies around him. On his eyes --

FADE TO:

BANNER OPENS HIS EYES

SIRENS. AN EXPLOSION. The first thing that greets him. And still, the sirens. He tries to close his eyes but he's awake now.

He clutches his torn pants to his waist to prevent them from falling down and heads down the alley to glimpse --

BANNER'S P.O.V. - THE DESTRUCTION

A war zone. In the distance, two columns of smoke from the downed helicopters. Nearby, POLICE CARS upended like toys. Thrown through storefronts. When did this happen? Flames. Firetrucks and ambulances on the scene. The raw power that must have caused this --

He can't look. He turns away and starts to walk off in the other direction --

Passing onlookers, would-be rescuers, a NEWS TRUCK, all going toward the disturbance --

Banner runs, holding what's left of his pants --

Now running all out and the pants drop --

HELICOPTER P.O.V. - A NAKED MAN RUNNING

Down an alley. The same path we saw on page one but from a God's eye view.

EXT. STREET - SAME

Rick Jones in the confusion, searching --

RICK JONES
Doc... where are you..?

POLICE COMMAND POINT

Amid the carnage. Ross and Talbot rejoin Capt. Siegel and a host of supporting uniforms.

CAPT. SIEGEL
I hope you have reinforcements coming because that hulk's taken our best.

INT. TENEMENT - SAME

Same as page one. Banner in there, huddled, cold and alone. Shivering.

OUTSIDE - SAME

An officer reports to Ross --

OFFICER
We got a positive on Banner.
He was seen running into a building around the corner...

They mobilize --

EXT. TENEMENT - SAME

Police throw a cordon around the building. SWAT men take position. Marksmen get to high ground. Capt. Siegel takes out a megaphone, is about to speak, hands it to Ross --

CAPT. SIEGEL
Your show, agent Ross...

She raises the megaphone --

ROSS
Listen to me...

WHMP. WHMP. WHMP. Drowned out by chopper blades beating the air. Larger and louder. All stop as an ARMY TRANSPORT HELICOPTER dwarfs the local equipment and puts down in the intersection.

LEDER exits and walks to Ross.

ROSS (CONT'D)
What's happening?

LEDER
I'm taking charge of the situation.

GENERAL ROSS is right behind him. Ross looks to her father. The General nods --

GEN. ROSS
We'll take it from here.

ROSS
If that monster is in there...

LEDER
That "monster" is exactly what I'm interested in. This "Hulk", as the media is calling it, is a matter of public safety and national security. It's been assigned to the Gamma Project for the purposes of scientific research.

ROSS
(to her father)
What about Bruce?

LEDER
Banner was your concern, Ms. Ross. You failed. I am in charge of this operation now.

ROSS
He's in there too.

LEDER
I don't care.

Leder smiles, knowing full well by now that the Hulk and Banner are one and the same. Ross can only watch as Leder's troops take over --

CAPT. SIEGEL
What are you going to stop it with?

LEDER
American ingenuity, Captain.

He takes the megaphone --

LEDER (CONT'D)
This is the United States Army. The area has been cordoned off. You are surrounded.

INT. TENEMENT - SAME

Banner grabs the soiled clothing and puts the rancid stuff on. It's too big.

INTERCUT - LEDER AND BANNER

LEDER

I'm going to count down from ten. If you don't come out, we're coming in. Whoever you are, you can't escape. Ten... Nine... eight... seven... six... five... four... three...

BANNER. Hands over his ears to drown out how own HEARTBEAT. The hands distort; knot and ripple, bunching beneath the skin like animals ready to pounce --

LEDER (CONT'D)

two...

BANNER

...please no... don't make me...

LEDER (O.S.)

One.

BANNER

I'll hurt you...

INT. TENEMENT - SAME

BANNER CHANGES. Start to finish this time. Putting the "Incredible" in Hulk. He bends double, clutching his pounding head. His HEARTBEAT fills the room, a booming geiger counter to the unbelievable metabolic changes taking place --

BANNER/HULK

You want me...

HAIR coarsens, thinning and re-knitting itself according to a new set of DNA blueprints. Under the skin, his SKULL thickens. Stored energy is converted by his Gamma-radiated cells into raw power --

HIS HANDS broaden and darken as the skin color deepens --

He lunges to his feet, thrashing, breaking the window board-ups --

It is these movements that tear the seams of his clothing but the overcoat and duster hang together better than previous wardrobes --

Dr. Bruce Banner is gone. In his place, the unreasoning brutish, HULK. He SNARLS defiance --

EXT. TENEMENT - SAME

The Hulk's tortured shout echoes like a caged beast. Cops shift in anticipation and --

LEDER smiles. A DEEP RUMBLE. Something takes out a structural support and three floors of the building collapse onto themselves in partial demolition. Like an inside job by a wrecking ball.

The second floor explodes outward with the force of a cannon. Bricks and cement tumble. The Hulk jumps from the gutted second floor as if twenty feet were two --

The ground shakes when the Hulk lands. A ROAR that sounds like "Alone..." A primal snarl as he sizes up the odds, facing off with about a hundred armed officers --

RICK JONES looks up from the police perimeter and sees the face-off --

RICK JONES

Uh oh. Ladies and gentleman,
let's get ready to r-r-r-u-
umble...

We're worried about the cops until --

GEN. ROSS

Hold your fire!

The Captain relays the command. The General turns to Leder.

GEN. ROSS (CONT'D)

This better work.

Leder flips a slim-communications stalk into place in front of his mouth. The back of the transport helicopter opens, revealing --

CYBER-SOLDIERS

You saw the armatures at the lab. This is the finished product. Dark, malevolent, post-punk. Four prototypes of the Leder's design. Computer-assisted, strength and ability-enhancing armor wired directly into a human interface. That means a human inside --

GEN. ROSS

Are there men inside those
things?

The General is lost somewhere between impressed and horrified --

LEDER

Patriotic volunteers, General.

Leder looks confident. Whatever he mumbles into his headset is inaudible but the Cyber-Soldiers respond instantly --

Seven feet tall, taller and more V-shaped than the thick-bodied Hulk. They flank him. The Hulk SNORTS unimpressed.

CYBER 1 steps up, his movements jerky but fast as a though, advancing. The Hulk doesn't wait. He throws a double-hand hammer punch at CYBER 1 --

The futuristic mix of man and machine takes it, swaying backward with the force of the blow but not falling --

The Hulk looks surprised. But only for a second. Servos kick in and CYBER 1 raises a leg and thrusts out a kick --

THE HULK takes it in the gut and is lifted off his feet, propelled like a wrecking ball into a building --

HULK sits up, can't believe it. He looks at --

LEDER, clearly in command. Their eyes lock. The rest of the CYBERs advance on Hulk --

The Hulk crouches and runs toward Leder. He hits CYBER 1 half-way there, catches him low. Hulk and CYBER 1 plow into a police car as cops scatter.

The Hulk is up, advancing toward Leder again. CYBER 1 rises a beat more slowly behind him --

LEDER

Incredible. The angrier he gets, the stronger he gets.

Leder whispers into his communications stalk --

ROSS

Don't. You can't kill him...

LEDER

Of course not, Ms. Ross... I want to study him.

RICK JONES tries to fight his way through the police line.

RICK JONES

Come on, Doc, you can whip these guys.

BACK TO SCENE

As Hulk lumbers toward the police line and Leder, CYBER 2 makes a grab from behind. The Hulk thrashes and tries to throw him off but the armored pest locks down tight --

CYBER 3 rains a series of blows down on the struggling Hulk. Like a hydraulic drill-press against flesh, no matter how tough. Pounding him senseless --

THE HULK ROARS and throws himself backwards into a building, CYBER 2 cushions the blow nicely. The Hulk tries to scrape CYBER 2 off as CYBER 1 rushes toward him --

CYBER 2 loses his grip, the Hulk turns and CYBER 1 connects with CYBER 2, discharging a powerful burst of electricity, frying the man inside CYBER 2 --

LEDER shrugs, impressed maybe. CYBER 2 is out.

RICK JONES quietly celebrates the victory in the midst of a crowd rooting for the other team.

RICK JONES

Yes.

THE HULK advances on Leder, Ross and The General.

GEN. ROSS

This isn't working.

LEDER

It's not intended to. It's a test.

GEN. ROSS

For crying out loud, he's got to be stopped!

LEDER

I've seen enough.

He mumbles into his stalk and CYBER 4 lifts a futuristic-looking BAZOOKA to his shoulder --

THE HULK still moving forward. Ross reads something in the Hulk's face and she steps forward --

GEN. ROSS

Betty, no!

BETTY

Who... are you?

There is something familiar. Does she know? The Hulk stops. Cyber 4 aims. Leder's lips move --

CYBER 4 fires. The Hulk is hit dead center in the back with a souped-up GOO-GUN blast. Like a flame-thrower, a thick stream of sticky foam envelops the Hulk, expanding on contact, enveloping his arms and legs like tar, making every movement an impossible effort --

Still the Hulk keeps walking, struggling, inch by inch as the stuff hardens --

GEN. ROSS
What is that stuff?

LEDER
Goo. Though it's a bit more technical than that. But now he's fighting himself...

And winning --

LEDER (CONT'D)
Incredible.

The three remaining CYBER-soldiers fire wire-strung darts into the gooey mass, plunging deep until they contact skin. Then they discharge glowing, Gamma-powered energy sources, like massive tasers, into the Hulk. The air crackles with green electric bursts --

THE HULK looks directly at Betty as he takes the full, awful power of the Leder's devices. He struggles but cannot move to pull the tasers out. His muscles are locked rigid. The effort is almost beyond him but he utters a strangled plea, a word. His voice is deep, it sounds like a noise issuing from deep within the earth.

HULK
BETY... LEAV... LONE

His eyes roll back in his head and he collapses --

Radiation-suited TECHNICIANS run forward and douse the Hulk with buckets of a pink solvent. The goo runs off him like jello that hasn't had time to set --

More TECHNICIANS wrap the Hulk's prone form in cables and the CYBER-Soldiers lift his massive weight into what looks like a lead-lined sarcophagus. A fast HYDRAULIC HISS as the locks seal.

NEWSMEN break through police lines, hungry for an exclusive. Microphones are stuck in Leder's face as he negotiates past the crush of reporters to the helicopter.

REPORTERS (VARIOUS/OVERLAPPING)
... Is this a secret government experiment run amok? ...
Why is Washington hiding clear evidence of extra-terrestrial beings? ...

LEDER
No comment. I'm sorry.

As he turns from the reporters, a single bead of green sweat trickles down his brow. He takes a handkerchief from his pocket and mops it. Unnoticed by all. His skin has a pasty color to it, where the sweat wiped off the make-up.

The General and Talbot follow. Ross stops them.

ROSS

What about Banner?

GEN. ROSS

If he was inside, he's dead. If not, he's a civilian fugitive. With Leder around, Banner's obsolete. He's the FBI's problem. Sorry, honey.

MAJ. TALBOT

Agent Ross, it's been a pleasure. You get out to Los Osos again, look me up.

He winks without meaning to.

THE HELICOPTER rises and heads out to the desert, leaving Ross at the scene.

RICK JONES watches from the crowd as the wrap-up ensues. Marlo catches up to him.

RICK JONES

They completely forgot about me. They don't even care. I'm off the hook.

MARLO

What about your friend, the Doc?

MEANWHILE - ROSS talks to some COPS.

ROSS

Anything?

COP

Nothing alive in there. We're still searching though.

Ross can't believe it.

CUT.

INT. UNIVERSAL CASINO - D'ANGELO ROOM - MORNING

Ross has coffee but no appetite. Rick Jones sits down opposite her.

ROSS
I should arrest you.

RICK JONES
But you're looking for the Doc.

ROSS
He said he'd be here. He's
dead.

RICK JONES
He's not dead.
(then)
If you want to find him, you're
going to have to trust me.

CUT.

A ROW OF CYBERS stand against the wall like marionettes waiting for commands. THICK LEADED GLASS SEPARATES Leder from where --

INT. GAMMA LAB - CONTAINMENT CHAMBER - DAY

BANNER reclines in what looks like a dentist's chair, hooked up to monitoring devices. EEG's wired to his scalp, EKG's to his chest. An IV drip distributes a milky fluid to his strap-restrained arm.

Leder controls the equipment from the monitoring room. He dials down some digital numbers and Banner's eyes open groggily.

LEDER
Good morning, Doctor.

BANNER
You were the spy...

LEDER
I know, I was thinking small.

Banner squints through the thick glass that separates them.

BANNER
You look sick...

Sure enough, Leder looks worse. Nearly bald, his hairline has receded over a slightly bulging expanse of forehead. His eyes are sunken and heavily bagged. He looks frail. He looks like he's dying --

LEDER
You should've seen yourself about
two hours ago. I was
contaminated, Banner.

LEDER (CONT'D)

Like you, but different.
Different genes. Different
exposure. You got the full
treatment, a complete and
instantaneous mutation of your
cell structure.

Leder starts to undress as he talks. First the lab coat --

LEDER (CONT'D)

I, on the other hand, am facing
a slow transformation...

Banner watches in horror as the shirt comes off next --

LEDER (CONT'D)

That my body is not likely to
survive. The damn shame is...

Leder is thinner and frailer than a living human being has
any right to be. Transparent, almost alien in appearance.
[NOTE: Computer-processed image will 'freak' the actor for
this scene.]

LEDER (CONT'D)

That my mind, Banner, is so
...healthy. I can see things,
you have no idea...

Leder taps his healthy-looking forehead --

BANNER

You need help.

LEDER

Who doesn't? Don't worry, I have
the most brilliant mind on the
planet working on it. Mine. I
wish you were even half as
brilliant as I've become just so
you could really appreciate my
brilliance. Look around this lab.
I've improved everything I touch.
These loyal CYBER-soldiers, my
invention. Human reaction and
instinctive decision-making
combined with the trusty obedience
of a computer.

Leder removes the helmet from one of the CYBERs to reveal
GUS. A direct neural-link to machine has rendered him a
drooling, blank-eyed, vegetable. Yet still alive. Leder
caresses his dead-eyed face --

LEDER

Yes, Gus, the clothes make the man. The trick is when you ask for volunteers, never tell them exactly what they're volunteering for. A direct neural-link to the central nervous system. The rest was obsolete, so I disconnected it.

Leder is so flip. It's pathetic and tragic. We're horrified. A drugged Banner tries to turn away --

LEDER (CONT'D)

But what good is all my brilliance if I can't find a way to stop dying? You were the key. My mutant half-brother. Do you realize the odds against us both surviving those dosages? Two million seven hundred thousand thirty three to one. It should have killed us. It is killing me. But why isn't it killing you? That's the question that's been bothering me ever since I realized you and that hulking green monster were one and the same. So I'm glad you stopped by. I'm took the opportunity to run some tests. Somehow, your cells manage to store and discharge the gamma build-up, without any damage to the organism. Of all people to survive this... It had to be you...

Singing the song of the same name, Leder flicks some controls and Banner's red blood runs up an IV tube, passes through the barrier wall and separates into a variety of samples. Banner tries to pull free but he's too weak.

LEDER (CONT'D)

Don't bother. You're incredibly sedated. You're also inside a pressure chamber that reads your metabolism and corrects to balance that massive strength you develop when you get stupid. In your condition, you'd be crushed before you made it to the door.

BANNER'S PUPILS NARROW. Like a caged animal. Green flecks rise to the surface... and just as quickly subside.

LEDER (CONT'D)

Be proud. You're making a contribution to science.

CUT.

EXT. LOS OSOS - DAY

Ross drives. She flashes her I.D. at the guard gate.

GUARD

Sorry, the base is sealed for security reasons.

ROSS

I'm with the FBI, I was assigned to this base. Check with Gen. Ross.

GUARD

Sorry, miss, it doesn't matter. Base is sealed for security precautions. Leder's orders.

ROSS

Leder? Does Gen. Ross know about this?

GUARD

Expect he must.

Ross nods, looks straight ahead and floors it. The gate arm and perimeter fence break. The guard grabs a rifle and fires a warning shot or two into the cloud of dust after the car but it's over a rise and down.

EXT. LOS OSOS - SAME

Ross' car like a bat out of hell through the main drag. SOLDIERS wait for her. She stops the car, keeping her hands in plain view. Maj. Talbot greets her.

ROSS

You said to look you up.

Talbot doesn't smile. On the hill, the Gamma lab smokestacks billow ominous plumes.

INT. GEN. ROSS' OFFICE - DAY

Betty faces the General, Talbot and Samson.

GEN. ROSS

The base is sealed because we're conducting a top secret investigation into that hulk creature.

ROSS

Who is?

DOC SAMSON

Leder.

ROSS
When did Leder become an expert
on biology? And advanced
weaponry? And robotics?

GEN. ROSS
Leder has made some impressive
breakthroughs.

DOC SAMSON
He's an engineer. And he's a
brilliant man.

ROSS
Yes he is, since the accident.
...Banner's here.

GEN. ROSS
Ridiculous. Don't you think
we'd know about it?

ROSS
I don't think you'd ask any
questions as long as you were
getting what you wanted.
How much do you know about
Leder's Gamma project?

GEN. ROSS
I know he's done what Banner
couldn't. He's got the
government funds flowing again
and he's already demonstrated
some impressive innovations in
law enforcement technology. As
you saw.

ROSS
And he's got a free hand, doesn't
he? When was the last time you
were inside the Gamma lab?

EXT. GAMMA LAB - DAY

Ross, Gen. Ross, Maj. Talbot, Doc Samson and two armed MPs.

GEN. ROSS
I'm going to show you that
you're making a mountain out of
a molehill...

MAJ. TALBOT
The place is locked, General.

The General unholsters his sidearm and uses the butt end to
KNOCK loudly on the doors. High above, a surveillance
camera swings around. A moment later --

LEDER opens the door. His body is spidery and angular under the drape of the lab coat.

LEDER

General.

GEN. ROSS

I thought I'd come take a look around. Tour the facility. Check out your progress.

A moment. To their surprise --

LEDER

It's time you did. Come in.

INT. GAMMA LAB - SAME

Leder walks them through the extensive lab. Bits and pieces of experimental brilliance lie strewn about the messy space.

LEDER

I've been making great strides in all facets of my work. But you're probably most interested in my work with the hulk and my radiation effects experiments.

HALLWAY - RADIATION CHAMBERS (LEDER'S HOUSE OF HORRORS)

Line both sides of the hallway. Like the ones he and Banner were brought to after the blast. With insulated, leaded double-glass walls. In disarray. Empty for the most part until --

A PILE OF LAB ANIMAL CORPSES, badly burned, vivisected, lying in a pile as if discarded. Fur and blood. Before they can react to that, CAMERA SWINGS across the hall --

CHARRED HUMAN REMAINS burnt to a cinder in the middle of a strap-down table. Clothing remains are army issue.

MAJ. TALBOT

My God.

Samson retches. The General reserves judgement.

ROSS

What is that?

LEDER

As you know, the effects of radiation are horrible for the most part.

Leder keeps walking, stops in front of the next chamber. What was once a man is now A DECAYING, DEFORMED FIGURE, skin blistered around bony-like protrusions, arms reduced to little more than flippers.

GEN. ROSS

This is outrageous.

LEDER

Isn't it? Gamma radiation creates mutations in only a small fraction of exposure cases. These were beyond hope.

Another chamber. MORE CREATURE THAN MAN, oozing, corroded flesh, useless from the waist down. But the upper torso still alive and covered by a hard carapace shell. The head too. No eyes, ears or distinguishing features other than what used to be a mouth, now a small dark opening. Shivering in its own juices in the wet cell.

LEDER (CONT'D)

But some survived.

GEN. ROSS

You had some accident in the lab...

Leder smiles enigmatically and steps through double doors.

LEDER

How to save them? So that we may save ourselves.

INT. CONTAINMENT CHAMBER - SAME

Behind glass at the far end of the control room: Banner.

GEN. ROSS

Banner?!

ROSS

Bruce...

(to Leder)

What have you done to him?

Banner looks weak, barely conscious. Even the General is horrified.

LEDER

He's just drugged for his own good. He wouldn't be himself without it.

Leder turns to face the group.

LEDER (CONT'D)

That concludes our tour. I'm sorry you weren't able to see our prized hulk exhibit but he's not in at the moment. Any questions?

Leder enjoys his power. Knows the feelings and questions he's stirred up in them and relishes their confusion.

DOC SAMSON

This is insane, you're conducting human experiments.

LEDER

To make an omelet, you've got to break a few eggs.

GEN. ROSS

I'm putting a stop to this now.

The General draws his sidearm. The two MP'S unholster their guns.

Instantaneously, the CYBER-soldiers step forward and take position around them. Integrated weaponry at the ready. Leder's lips move and a CYBER levels an impossibly large caliber machine gun at Ross.

LEDER

I'll take those. I'll be running things from now on, General.

Gen. Ross is a good soldier and isn't about to give up his gun. He goes to fire and a CYBER beats him to it, shoots him twice in a blink, the arm and hand. The gun falls.

ROSS

Dad!

Talbot nods and the MP's give up their guns.

LEDER

Don't bleed on the equipment.

Leder tosses The tough General a shop rag and Ross helps him stanch the blood.

GEN. ROSS

You can't just take over a military base like this.

Leder leans over a computer console and types a few keys. Over the loudspeakers --

GEN. ROSS' VOICE (PLAYBACK) (V.O.)
 You can't just take over a
 military base like this.

Leder fiddles with the console. The computer regenerates a
 numbered coding of Ross' speech patterns and --

ROSS' VOICE (RE-GEN) (V.O.)
 This is General Ross. All
 military and non-military
 personnel will be confined to
 barracks until further notice.
 Repeat, this is a security
 emergency...

EXT. LOS OSOS (VARIOUS) - SAME

The General's voice booms from the P.A. system and SOLDIERS
 and CIVILIANS double-time it to their stations.

INT. BARRACKS - SAME

Inside. Soldier's on bunks. The General's voice echoes.

SOLDIERS (VARIOUS)
 What's up? ... Must be
 something big...

INT. GAMMA LAB - BACK TO SCENE

Leder confident of his power and with every reason to be.

LEDER
 I can't? It's done. All outside
 communications have been cut.
 I've got loyal soldiers and
 plenty of firepower. Now, go to
 your quarters.

The CYBERS escort them out, back to the radiation chambers.

LEDER (CONT'D)
 Except you, dear. Too pretty
 for that. I have need of a
 nurse...

Ross stays. Leder sits fragily at his desk. One CYBER
 remains with Leder, always --

LEDER (CONT'D)
 They make an effort but they
 just don't care.

As Ross watches, Leder takes out a vanity mirror and
 applies make-up to a patch of sweat-run, light green skin.

HALLWAY - LEDER'S HOUSE OF HORRORS

The CYBERS toss Doc Samson in the first chamber. He looks up at the gamma-ray generator built into the ceiling --

CUT.

EXT. LOS OSOS - SAME

A deserted street. The car that Betty drove up in. SOUND of a lock opening. Rick Jones climbs out of the trunk, rolls into the shadow of the car.

RICK JONES

This was my plan? Some plan, Jones. I hope she's got things taken care of.

With that, he runs off in the direction of the Gamma labs.

CUT.

INT. GAMMA LAB - CONTAINMENT CHAMBER - SAME

Ross is at the glass to Banner's chamber --

LEDER

He should see this. After all, he is responsible...

Leder dials the IV flow down. Banner groggily responds.

LEDER (CONT'D)

Better? I solved the puzzle, Doctor, thanks to you. How to stay alive without losing what I've gained? To cure my cells of what's left of their humanity will require a massive release of energy, a concentration of Gamma-rays sufficient to wipe the slate clean genetically-speaking. A crucible of fire in order to be reborn, to reprogram my DNA in an instant.

The Leder snaps his fingers --

LEDER (CONT'D)

Like what happened to you. But bigger... a lot bigger.

Leder turns a switch and a dark wall of the lab is suddenly lit from within and rendered transparent. A hangar-sized room ringed by catwalks. In the center of it, a GAMMA-BOMB. Modernized and a lot bigger than Banner's original.

LEDER (CONT'D)

I suspected as much so I started on project New Dawn immediately. My specifications. I've made some improvements, I hope you don't mind. But I needed a look at your mutant DNA to define the variables.

ROSS

If you detonate that, you'll kill millions of people.

LEDER

I love smart women, don't you, Doctor?

Leder sits at a computer terminal and punches up a map of the south western United States. He starts a computer-generated model and considerably swivels the screen for Banner to see.

COMPUTER SCREEN

Ground zero is Los Osos, the red ground zero obliterates. Colors decreasing toward yellow expand outward. A cloud of fallout darkens the southeastern United States.

LEDER (CONT'D)

Weather permitting, 98.5% exposure fatality within the first six-weeks. The lucky few survivors, with that special something extra in their DNA, will turn out... interesting.

ROSS

You're a... monster.

LEDER

No, he's the monster. I'm the genius.

(then)

There's a reinforced shielded chamber below the gadget. It's designed to focus the blast effects to my specifications.

Leder keys in what looks like scientific gibberish at a mind-numbing rate of speed. Actually he's rewiring a DNA sequence, a map for the radiation filters. Formulas fly across the screen.

LEDER

By the way, I have your DNA broken down here, Banner. I can offer you a chance to be the Hulk forever...

Ross reacts in surprise. Her worst fears confirmed, well maybe no longer her worst --

ROSS

What..?

Leder spins around in his chair, responds to Ross --

LEDER

You didn't know? Banner and the Hulk are one and the same.

Ross looks in horror at Banner, then dawning compassion. Leder give mock compassion to Banner. He enjoys poisoning a genuine human emotion like love --

LEDER (CONT'D)

She had no idea you were a monster? I'm sorry.

RICK JONES - OUTSIDE THE GAMMA LAB

Using all his juvie sneaking skills to explore around back of the massive Gamma facility. Up high: An air vent. wire hangs off the roof twenty feet away. Rick tests it.

INSIDE - THE GAMMA LAB - SAME

Leder addresses Banner --

LEDER

I've built a chamber beneath the bomb, a type of synchrotron. Designed to direct the blast effects to my specifications. Think of the power you'd have. And with my brains...

Leder exhales, impressed by the possibilities --

BANNER

You're insane.

LEDER

I'll take that as a no.

He finishes his key-coding and enters the whole thing. ON SCREEN: COMMENCE DETONATION SEQUENCE. Leder types a code and presses return.

THE SCREEN: Moves to a countdown: 2 hrs. 30.59.00

And starts counting --

RICK JONES - OUTSIDE

High up the building, hanging by the wire. The air vent is twenty feet away but he starts running along the side of the building, holding the wire, swinging like a rock climber until he... grabs the vent.

INSIDE - LEDER, BANNER AND ROSS

LEDER (CONT'D)

Of course, if you prefer, I could probably reverse the particle flow and cure you just as easily. Yes, that might work.

Hope flares in Banner's eyes. Ross looks at him. Leder smiles with the power.

LEDER

They were right, knowledge is power.

ABOVE LEDER, a shadow passes above an air vent. Rick Jones makes his move. He drops from the ceiling, knocking Leder to the floor --

RICK JONES

It worked!

ROSS leaps up and dials down the IV to Banner. She races to the glass --

LEDER starts to speak into his communications stalk and Rick slugs him as hard as he can. The CYBER takes a step forward and then stops cold.

RICK JONES (CONT'D)

You've gotta get outta there, Doc.
That was the end of my plan.

Banner's head clears a little. He unstraps a hand, rips the IV out.

BANNER

... can't... think.. numb.

He stands at the glass. No way out. Ross tries from her side. No luck.

RICK JONES

I didn't tell her.

ROSS

It's okay, I know. Leder's got him drugged.

RICK JONES
But he doesn't have the Hulk
drugged.

Banner's fear of his dark side rises.

BANNER
No...

RICK JONES
Doc, you gotta...

He's looking at Ross --

BANNER
No, I'll... hurt you...

ROSS
It's our only chance, Banner.
Let the monster out.

BANNER tries. Concentrating, relaxing. But the drugs make it difficult to focus.

The door to the room breaks in and Leder's personal guard of CYBERs are there. Rick looks back: Leder's conscious.

Banner keeps trying. THE HEARTBEAT comes up but it's slowed, like it's underwater. Still, Banner fights.

Rick takes a shot at Leder but a CYBER sends him flying.

BANNER
Rick, no..!

A CYBER grabs Ross in a vise grip, immobilizing her arms while Leder gets to his feet. He walks over to her and hits her.

ON BANNER - THE DREAM - BUT IT'S ROSS

Leder gets to a keyboard and works it --

LEDER
Your father is going to be so
disappointed in you, Princess.

The image of GEN. ROSS comes up on the monitors. About to become another radiation victim --

RICK JONES rips a computer monitor out and hurls it across the room toward Leder. This gives Betty enough opening kick. The CYBER pulls her back but the damage is done --

LEDER falls across the keyboard and the monitors glitch, switching to a view of Doc Samson's cell and then the tell-tale flash of radiation.

ROSS

No!

ON VIDEO, Samson screams as he takes a radiation bath.

The LIGHTS FLICKER but it's the lights in the lab. Banner is changing. It's different this time.

ON ROSS - WATCHING. Mesmerized. We've never seen anything like it.

BANNER. Weakened by the drugs, distorted by the ever-increasing pressure, caught somewhere between Banner and the Hulk, a half-human monster. But he continues to pound on the glass. Harder. Until it cracks--

LEDER

I don't believe it.

And shatters. In a rush of air, the half-Hulk tumbles out.

RICK JONES

You did it...

HALF-HULK

BETTY...

Ross is being held by the CYBER so we don't know what she would do. Banner reaches for her, as he does -- changing back into Banner from exhaustion.

Leder watches. A CYBER extends a gun to Ross's head. BANNER stands up, as a man.

LEDER

Very impressive.

BANNER

It's over, Leder.

LEDER

But I'll die...

BANNER

You'll kill millions.

LEDER

So?

BANNER

The problem with bombs is there's always some nut around ready to use them.

LEDER

Some nut?! Do you know who you're talking to?

BANNER

A third-rate engineer with a big head.

LEDER

How dare you? I can give you your humanity back. I can offer you the chance to be a man again.

Banner looks at Ross, advances on Leder --

BANNER

All those years I was afraid to feel anything, I wanted power to destroy the things that hurt me. That's what the Hulk does. But I'm not scared anymore. Not of myself, not of you, and not of the Hulk. I'm angry at the things that are wrong with this world, with people... and I can change them... now...

As he speaks, his fists clench. His HEARTBEAT rises and he starts to change. On purpose.

BANNER (CONT'D)

I've made my choice...now...

With a great effort, the HULK'S BOOMING VOICE fills the chamber --

HULK (CONT'D)

LEAVE HER ALONE

LEDER

It's going to take more than a talking monkey to...

The Hulk drops and hammers the ground with both heavy fists. The floor buckles and he digs in with his fingers, pulling the floor up.

The CYBER loses its balance, tumbles to the ground. Ross rolls with the quake. The Leder runs. For the chamber.

The Hulk breaks the metal kneecaps of the struggling CYBER. He rips the gun out of it's arm and follows Leder --

HALLWAY - RADIATION CHAMBERS

The CYBERs stand between the Hulk and the Leder. But the Hulk is mad --

A CYBER steps up and the Hulk smashes: Boxing the ears and pulping the helmet circuitry. He rips the helmet clean off, exposing the useless, slobbering merc face inside --

Enraged, the Hulk smashes his fists through the doors of the locked radiation chambers, freeing the prisoners --

INT. GAMMA LAB - SAME

Leder stumbles back. Hulk squares off with two CYBERs. One offers machine gun fire. Hulk keeps advancing through the bullets. Behind him, the last CYBER raises the goo-gun --

The Hulk grabs the machine-gun and rips it off like a sleeve, exposing a naked human arm inside. He hurls the robotic arm like a spear behind him --

Catching the goo-gun CYBER dead center, knocking him over. The Hulk covers the distance between them in a second, crushing the end of the goo-gun closed. The Goo explodes out the rear with a plop, covering the downed CYBER.

Just short of the catwalk to the G-bomb, Hulk turns to Leder who now draws the General's gun. He levels it at the Hulk, then turns it to -- ROSS. The Hulk stops. Leder moves toward Ross for protection --

LEDER's attention is focussed on the Hulk. His gun trained on Ross. That's the problem with conventional thinking --

ROSS is now close to Leder. Close enough to do this: She deflects the gun and at the same time, puts a palm into the bridge of Leder's nose. It breaks. Pours milky green blood. She finishes him off with a back kick like a pro.

Impressed stares all around. From the men. Until --

ROSS

I'm an FBI agent, for chrissakes!

Rick notices the computer terminals --

RICK JONES

Uh, we've still got a problem.

THE DETONATION SEQUENCE, ticking down:

RICK JONES (CONT'D)

We've got to get to the bunker.

DOC SAMSON

It won't matter if that thing goes off.

Everybody turns to Samson's voice. He's about six inches taller, square-jawed handsome and his hair has turned green.

GEN. ROSS
Samson?!

DOC SAMSON
It seems I survived a modest dose.

GEN. ROSS
There's eight thousand people
on this base.

ROSS
Millions more in the path of
the fallout.

DOC SAMSON
Our only chance is to stop the bomb.

ROSS
But only Leder can disarm it.

And he's not telling.

DOC SAMSON
Or Banner.

THE HULK stands there, staring uncomprehendingly --

LEDER
Well, Banner, what's the genius
think about that?

HULK GROWLS at the sound of the name. Ross turns to the
Hulk. The toughness is gone.

ROSS
Do you understand?

RICK JONES
The Doc's gone...

She refuses to give up. There's a tenderness and a
femininity we haven't seen. She cares for him.

ROSS
No. Bruce...

The Hulk ROARS again --

RICK JONES
He doesn't like that name.

ROSS
Bruce, listen to me...

The memory tortures the brute, summons the effort to --

HULK

NO.

Looks like he might kill her. He turns away. To leave?

ROSS

Yes. A decent man... Who means a great deal to me...

He stops and when he turns, there's a single tear running down the Hulk's cheek --

HULK

NOT BANNER!

The Hulk sits down heavily, the room quakes --

ROSS

Yes, you are, remember...

Seeming to shrink as he does so. The green slips away in patches and waves. The massive, Gamma-thickened skin, smooths and relaxes. Pinkens with a human glow --

And Ross does what no gun or bomb could. She brings Banner back. He's weak as a kitten --

ROSS

Bruce, there's no time...

BANNER realizes the situation. With a heroic effort of will, he stands, goes to a computer terminal to do what he failed to do the first time. All the monitors in the place show the detonation sequence. He plays the keyboard.

BANNER

What's the password, Leder?

LEDER

You figure it out, smart guy.

RICK JONES

You idiot! Give him the password...

LEDER

Or you'll kill me?

Leder laughs weakly. He's on his last legs.

LEDER (CONT'D)

This is my last chance. Yours too, Banner. The chamber can accomodate two...

BANNER looks at him in pity and disgust, continues trying key sequences --

BANNER
I can't crack this. I'm going
to try a backdoor to the
operating system.

Leder looks worried. But only for a second. He was
playing possum: AN ALARM SOUNDS. Leder smiles --

LEDER
Oops. I rewrote the operating
system.

COMPUTER (V.O.)
Warning. Unauthorized security
breach.

LEDER
That would be the built-in
protection, a virus. The system
will now consume itself, resulting
in detonation. You see, Banner, I
hate to lose.

Sure enough the screen goes green: CIRCUITRY FUSED.
DETONATION LOCKED. The software eats itself and the
countdown is irreversible. The counter jumps from 2 hours
to 2 minutes.

RICK JONES
Tell me you got an answer for
this, Doc?

Banner tries the keyboard without effect.

BANNER
There's no way to prevent the
core from going critical.

ROSS
Are you sure?

LEDER
Positive.

He's just too damn smart. But Banner realizes something.

BANNER
No. There's one way...

Banner races to the access tunnel and starts to climb the
ladder to the catwalk and the giant bomb casing beyond.
Leder looks puzzled, then angry --

LEDER
You fool! Self-sacrifice is
beneath you.

ROSS
What do you mean?

LEDER
He's going to try to manually
dismantle the core. The slow
radiation exposure will destroy
him. Stop him!

The last ploy of a madman or --

BANNER
He knows it'll work. It's the
only chance we've got and he
didn't count on it.

Didn't count on Banner's good heart --

DOC SAMSON
Get a suit...

BANNER (CONT'D)
No time. Hey, if anyone can
survive this, it's me...

Banner grabs a shielded container and heads across the
catwalk into the access tunnel. The rest of them can only
watch. Rick puts a hand on Ross's arm --

RICK JONES
The Doc knows what he's doing.
(quietly)
The Hulk'll protect him...

LOOKING DOWN INTO THE BOMB CASING

Banner moving down the access tunnel. He manually unlocks
the mechanism and drops down into the housing --

INSIDE THE GAMMA BOMB

Big enough to climb inside. Like his but different. The
grown-up version of a child's toy. Banner is surrounded by
the verdant glow of the outer jacket of radioactive
isotope. He's sweating almost instantly. But it's the
core he wants --

He carefully slides the glowing gamadium-282 cannisters out
of their seatings. One by one. Triggering periodic
FLASHES of light --

ROSS
What's going on?

DOC SAMSON
Spontaneous fission. The
nuclei are unstable...

Banner slides the first cannister into the shielded container. Then the next. Slowly. Carefully. The FLASHES are coming more often now and he's getting weaker with every step --

IN THE LAB - EVERYONE HOLDS THEIR BREATH

RICK JONES
That stuff could kill him?

GEN. ROSS
If anyone knows the answer to that question, it's Banner. That boy's got a lot of guts.

The General puts a comforting hand on his daughter's shoulder.

INSIDE THE BOMB. Is that the timer ticking down or Banner's HEART? TH-THUMP. TH-THUMP. TH-THUMP.

ABOVE THE CATWALK. A few lights blow --

IN THE LAB. THE VIDEO GLITCH runs through the monitors, meaning Banner is discharging Gamma Rays himself now, like a living battery, presaging a change. Banner pauses --

GLITCH. His hands shake as he chambers the last cannister. He grabs the shielded container --

GLITCH. He works slowly back up the tunnel towards the radiation doors. He stumbles --

GLITCH. GLITCH. Every step is a struggle --

Across the catwalk, just short of the hatch, he collapses.

Ross races up there, opens the door. Banner tumbles out. Samson takes the shielded container. Banner is dying but manages a weak laugh --

BANNER
Finally got rid of that ulcer...

She smiles through the emotion --

ROSS
Don't you leave me...

BANNER
All my life I was afraid to care about anything... or anyone. If didn't care, it couldn't be taken taken away from me...

ROSS
I'm not going anywhere.

Banner smiles, filled with the warmth of emotion --

BANNER
I know. I'm sorry.

He smiles and grabs her hand tightly. His eyes close.

ROSS
No! Don't leave me, Banner...
Not again.

Ross cries. And then, a peaceful change washes over Banner as the Hulk takes his place in Ross' arms. A sense of permanence to this last change.

ROSS
Banner..?

THE HULK GRUNTS uncomprehendingly and sits up. He draws himself to his feet and pauses for only a second to look at Betty before he turns away. The air is filled with the possibility of menace --

GEN. ROSS
Well, do something. Stop him.

MAJ. TALBOT
With what?

Talbot and the General wisely step back. Ross follows the Hulk. The Hulk stops and gently pushes her back.

ROSS
You have to remember...

Almost imperceptibly, he shakes his head and keeps walking, past Leder, past Doc Samson and the freed prisoners --

ROSS
Bruce... please.. come back....

But he doesn't. If the Hulk hears or understands, there is no evidence of it. No emotion shows on his face. Except maybe just a hint of regret as he walks out of the lab and into the night. Rick Jones following --

RICK JONES
Hey... wait up...

FADE OUT.

THE END