

The Player
by
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based on the novel

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First Draft

"The Player"

1 INT. GRIFFIN'S OFFICE - DAY 1

No introduction, without any set up we are listening to WRITER #1, 28, pitching a story. This is the first of four.

WRITER #1

Here's the idea for the movie. Kevin Costner and Michelle Pfeiffer are cops. He's burned out because his last partner was just killed in a drug bust that went bad. She's his new partner.

2 INT. GRIFFIN'S OFFICE - DAY 2

WRITER #2 is about forty, tired looking, anxious, failing.

WRITER #2

Kevin Costner and Harrison Ford are brothers. They hate each other. They find a gold mine in Borneo. And that's what the story is, a gold mine. We open on...

3 INT. GRIFFIN'S OFFICE - DAY 3

WRITERS #3 AND #4 are a team, two sissy comedy writers. They're bouncing around the room, acting out the story, and as they do, we see the person to whom they're pitching: GRIFFIN MILL, early thirties. He gives nothing away.

WRITER #3

Antique shop...

WRITER #4

Million dollar vase...

WRITER #3

Bette Midler...

WRITER #4

She drops it...

WRITER #3

Shattered. Total loss.

WRITER #4

A million pieces, a million dollars.

He looks out the window, and we see a sound stage, the door open, and a large camera crane. BEGIN TITLES.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

WRITER #3
Everybody turns. And what does
Bette say?

WRITER #4
(acting it out)
"It's all right, I'm okay!"

WRITER #3
They throw her out... Onto the
street right into a guy carrying
a big package coming out of
another store, and she knocks
him down, and who is it?

WRITERS #3 & #4
(together)
Kevin Costner.

4 INT. GRIFFIN'S OFFICE - DAY

4

WRITER #5 is mid-thirties, looks like a graduate student, horn
rimmed glasses, neat shirt, jeans, running shoes.

WRITER #5
And at the end he has to choose
between Geena Davis and Glenn
Close. I think he should go with
Davis, the smartest thing to do
would be to stick money in the
budget for two endings, and let
the audience decide. And I think
it would be a terrific part for
Kevin Costner.
(a hesitant pause)
That's it.

Griffin appears to be thinking. He takes his time.

GRIFFIN
Let me get back to you.

WRITER #5
You're not saying No?

GRIFFIN
Let me get back to you.

The Writer gets up and Griffin walks him to the door. As the
door opens we see JAN, Griffin's secretary. She's a black woman,
early forties. Her desk is surrounded by owl figurines and owl
imagery. As WRITER #5 walks out the door, Jan looks up at
Griffin.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

JAN
Good idea?

GRIPPIN
(disdain)
What idea?

The phone rings.

JAN
Griffin Mill's office... One
moment please.
(to Griffin)
Adam Silverstein.
(Off Griffin's thumbs
down)
He's in a meeting, he'll have
to call you back.

GRIPPIN
I'll be back.

Griffin walks down

5 INT. STUDIO HALL - DAY

As he walks down the hall he passes production stills from the movies that made the studio a household name. Stills from every studio, classic stills from classic movies. Griffin passes secretaries, executives, a few actors in the halls, and everyone defers to him, everyone is nice to him. He passes a door marked

BONNIE SHEROW, Story Editor.

6 INT. BONNIE SHEROW'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

He pokes his head in and Bonnie's Secretary is away from the desk. He opens the door to

7 INT. BONNIE SHEROW'S OFFICE - DAY

BONNIE SHEROW, 28, sits behind her desk reading a script. She's stylish, attractive. Ambitious. Worried about her job, but you only see confidence. She's afraid to show fear.

BONNIE
(can't talk)
Lunch, Griffin, I have to finish
this in ten minutes.

GRIPPIN
I'll pick you up.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

BONNIE
I'll meet you.

He leaves and goes back into

8 INT. STUDIO HALL - DAY

He comes to the end of the hall, the president's office. A door opens and he sees LEVISON, his boss, with a group of CORPORATE OFFICERS. Levison frowns at Griffin and closes the door. Levison has two secretaries, the one we talk to is CELIA.

GRIFFIN
What's going on, Celia?

CELIA
Go back to work.

GRIFFIN
(concerned)
Am I in or am I out?

CELIA
(don't press)
Griffin...

9 EXT. BURBANK STUDIOS NEW YORK STREET - DAY

Griffin walking through the New York Street. He crosses in front of the Court House. Writer #5 is on the steps.

WRITER #5
So, make up your mind yet?

GRIFFIN
About what?

WRITER #5
The story, I just pitched you a story.

GRIFFIN
I didn't recognize you without my office.

Writer #5 kneels on the steps and says, strangely:

WRITER #5
"He used to be a big shot."

GRIFFIN
Are you all right?

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

9

WRITER #5

He used to be a big shot. It's the last line of the Roaring Twenties. This studio? 1939? Cagney shot Bogart over there... Bogart's men shot Cagney over there... Cagney came stumbling down the street and died over here, on this step... And then everyone rushes over, including his old girlfriend and then the cop says, "Who was he?" and she says, "He used to be a big shot." This is a holy spot. They should put up a shrine.

GRIFFIN

The company bought a cable network. This is where the offices are going.

WRITER #5

(with resigned humor)

It figures.

GRIFFIN

I'll get back to you.

And Griffin turns away from the Writer. Out of sight, out of mind. END TITLES.

10 INT. CITY RESTAURANT - DAY

10

Griffin walks in. Heads turn, subtly. Bonnie is already at a table with other people, agents, lawyers. AARON JASTROW, ELLEN ALDER, STEVE MARCUS, GINNY CLARR. Young. Focussed. Griffin sits down. Kisses Bonnie on the cheek.

ELLEN ALDER

What do you hear about Larry Levy?

GRIFFIN

Strictly minor league.

BONNIE

Aaron says he's coming to the studio.

AARON

So they say.

BONNIE

And he's over there.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

Griffin sees him: LARRY LEVY, his age, with two other men. Levy looks like a contender. Levy's eyes brush Griffin's, and betray the coming fight. He knows more than Griffin.

ELLEN

You should have run Columbia when you had the chance.

GRIFFIN

Can we talk about something other than Hollywood?

BONNIE

God, what would that be?

11 EXT. CITY RESTAURANT - DAY

11

Bonnie is getting into her car, a BMW. Griffin's is behind her. Griffin does not see a post card stuck under his windshield wiper.

ON BONNIE AND GRIFFIN

GRIFFIN

(weary)

This business...

BONNIE

I like it.

GRIFFIN

Maybe I'm tired of it.

BONNIE

That's a bad attitude. You can't make it if you create a lot of negative energy for yourself.

GRIFFIN

(there are things he just can't share with her)

See you tomorrow.

She drives off. Griffin goes to his car. He gets in.

From inside the car he can read the postcard:

WE HAD A MEETING. I
TOLD YOU MY IDEA AND
YOU SAID YOU'D GET BACK
TO ME. WELL?

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

He turns on the wiper, brings the card over to his side, and reaches out the window to pluck it off. He turns it over. PARIS AT NIGHT. He puts it into the glove compartment next to five other cards that say, YOU SAID YOU'D GET BACK TO ME.

12 INT. GRIFFIN'S OFFICE - DAY

CLOSE UP of another postcard, PALM SPRINGS HOMES OF THE STARS: with little shots of Bob Hope's, Sinatra's, Liberace's, Dinah Shore's. Griffin turns the card over. Written neatly:

STILL WAITING.

JAN

Griffin, five in two weeks.
Please, Griffin, call studio security.

GRIFFIN

Right...I'm supposed to call -
Walter Stuckel. What do I say?
(acting it out)

Walter, Walter, listen, Walter,
my job's on the line, and some
actress is sending me poison pen
letters because I didn't give
her a job she thinks I promised
her. Walter... make me the object
of curiosity and ridicule while
things are already shaky for me.
I think that would really help
me get ahead at the studio.

JAN

I think they're coming from a
writer.

GRIFFIN

(dismisses the notion)
Nah. A writer? Nah.

The phone rings.

Jan

Griffin Mill's office... one
moment.

(to Griffin)

Bonnie Sherow.

Griffin nods, he'll take it.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

JAN
 (to phone)
 Just let him get off the line.

Griffin gives her a thumbs up and goes into his office.

13 INT. GRIFFIN'S OFFICE - DAY

13

Griffin picks up the phone. While he's talking he opens a desk drawer and empties a manila envelope, spilling half a dozen postcards.

GRIFFIN
 Bonnie?

BONNIE (V.O.)
 Did we have a date tonight?

Griffin turns the postcards over one at a time. The first one:
 YOU SAID YOU'D GET BACK
 TO ME

GRIFFIN
 We did.

The second postcard: STILL WAITING

BONNIE (V.O.)
 I'm running late.

The third postcard: IS IT YOU OR IS IT ME?

GRIFFIN
 That's okay. Maybe you can come
 by later. Anyway, my lawyer wants
 to have dinner with me.

The fourth and fifth postcards are the same:

YOU SAID YOU'D GET BACK
 TO ME

BONNIE (V.O.)
 Griffin? Are you there?

GRIFFIN
 I'm in the middle of a meeting.
 Let me get back to you.

He hangs up. He puts the postcards back in the envelope.

14 EXT. SPAGO - NIGHT

14

Griffin drives up in his Mercedes. The valet takes the car.

15 INT. SPAGO - NIGHT

15

Everyone knows him. On his way to the maitre'd he glad hands five people. We just have to watch him. He's led to a table where DICK MELLEN, 70, a tan silver fox, stands to shake hands with him.

MELLEN

You look like shit, Griffin. No Perrier tonight, have a martini.

GRIFFIN

I'll have a headache for a week and don't make fun of me when I order a salad.

MELLEN

You wouldn't have lasted five minutes in the old days, Griffin. I was once at the Brown Derby with Bogie when the Duke came in. This was lunch. We didn't leave until three in the morning. And I got up and worked the next day.

Griffin loves hearing these stories.

GRIFFIN

What's going on with my job?

MELLEN

You are such a stiff. What's going on with my job? What's going on with my job? You know Larry Levy?

GRIFFIN

(bitterly)

I know him. Am I in or am I out?

MELLEN

Think of it as sharing.

GRIFFIN

Why didn't Levison tell me himself?

MELLEN

He will, tomorrow, at breakfast.

GRIFFIN

I want to run Columbia.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

MELLEN

Griffin, you can't turn back the clock.

GRIFFIN

Dick... something's going on... I've been getting.... these postcards.

MELLEN

(takes it seriously)

Who are they from?

Griffin is about to tell him.

GRIFFIN

Well.. I'm not sure exactly, but I think they're from...

MELLEN

Who?

GRIFFIN

(it is impossible for him to tell the truth)

Some actress. I promised her a job. She's a television actress and she wanted to get in the movies. She's a little too pretty.

MELLEN

Did you fuck her?

GRIFFIN

Of course I fucked her.

MELLEN

You've got to pay your debts. Now in the old days, they made a lot of prison movies. And every time they needed a shot of all the wives and girlfriends who'd come to the big house for visiting day, all the producers would have their girl friends in the shot....

FADE OUT:

16 EXT. BEL AIR HOTEL - DAY

16

Griffin gives his car to the valet. He walks over the bridge, looks at the swans.

17 INT. BEL AIR HOTEL RESTAURANT - DAY 17

Griffin and Levison at their table. Griffin is ordering from the WAITER.

 GRIFFIN
Bran muffin.

 LEVISON
The same.

They are awkward for a moment, silent.

 GRIFFIN
I will not work for Larry Levy.

 LEVISON
It's not official.

 GRIFFIN
I report to you. I'm not going through Levy. If I have to report to Levy, I quit.

 LEVISON
You can't quit. I won't let you quit. You have a year and a half on your contract, and I will sue you for breach if you don't come every day.

 GRIFFIN
Why do you care?

 LEVISON
I like you. I need you. Levy was available, and I thought we, ya, could use him. Do you know him?

 GRIFFIN
I know him.

 LEVISON
He can make us all look good.

 GRIFFIN
So I'm not the flavor of the month anymore?

 LEVISON
Not for a year. And with the run of flops we've had, I should be history too, but here I am.
(more)

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

LEVISON (Cont'd)
 If you want to quit, I'll give
 you a production deal.
 (fate worse than death)
 Maybe you'd like to be a salesman
 instead of a buyer.

GRIFFIN
 I'll stay.

18 INT. GRIFFIN'S OFFICE - DAY

18

Jan hands Griffin a souvenir packet of postcards, folded and
 taped. Griffin opens the cards. The pictures dangle in front
 of Jan, while Griffin reads the message to himself.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)
 Dear Griffin... I told you my
 idea, you said you wanted to think
 about it, and you said you'd get
 back to me.

JAN
 Read it, read it....

She grabs for it and he pulls it away, with a big, happy grin,
 teasing her, no sign of panic.

GRIFFIN
 It's from the actress, let me
 finish it...

GRIFFIN (V.O.)
 My agent said that was a good
 sign, the part about getting back
 to me.

JAN
 Griffin...

GRIFFIN
 Shh.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)
 I've waited long enough. It's
 obvious you have no intention
 of making my movie.

The phone rings.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

13

JAN

Griffin Mill's office... Oh, hi, Celia, he's in a meeting right now, he'll call back...

GRIFFIN (V.O.)

In the name of all the writers in Hollywood who get pushed around by executives who know nothing more about movies than what did well last week and have no passion for the cinema, I'M GOING TO KILL YOU.

Griffin is stunned. Jan hangs up. She turns to him, and he composes a sly grin.

JAN

Tell all now.

GRIFFIN

Actresses.

He opens the card again and pretends to read.

GRIFFIN

Dear Griffin, listen dude, I've just been having fun with you. Had you guessing, didn't I?

JAN

That's the truth.

GRIFFIN

(continues to pretend)

Let me make it up to you and take you out to dinner. I know how hard it is to cross over from tv to film, but I want to try, and I'm not holding you to any drunken promises. Love and kisses...

And then he tortures Jan by folding the card and putting it in his pocket.

JAN

Television. Is she a star?

The phone rings. They stare each other down. Jan ignores the phone.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED: (2)

18

GRIFFIN
Aren't you going to get that?

JAN
What's her name?

GRIFFIN
Come on, Jan. I could tell you,
I could tell you and it'd be so
easy to tell you, but if I tell
you, you won't respect me.

A second line rings.

JAN
I don't respect you now.

GRIFFIN
Get the phone.

JAN
Griffin Mill's office. One moment
please.

 (second line)
Griffin Mill's office.
 (looking at him)
He's in a meeting right now, can
he get back to you? ...

Griffin dances into his office and closes the door behind him.

19 INT. GRIFFIN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

19

Griffin and Bonnie are making love. He comes. She doesn't. They
separate. He starts to stroke her with his hand. She shakes her
head No.

BONNIE
It's okay.

They lie together, quietly.

GRIFFIN
I heard a pitch today. It's not
bad, but I'm stuck on a story
point.

BONNIE
I'm the story editor.

(CONTINUED)

GRIPPIN

New York City. Madison Avenue.
Big advertising agency. An account
executive makes a presentation
to someone he wants as a client,
and the client promises to get
back to him.

BONNIE

Does it have to be advertising?

GRIPPIN

That's not the problem. The
account executive keeps waiting
for the client to call him back,
to tell him what he thought of
the idea, to tell him if he got
the job, and the client doesn't
call him. The account executive
gets so... pissed off... so
frustrated, that he decides to
drive the client crazy.

BONNIE

What does he do?

GRIPPIN

Wait, here's the problem. How
long do you think the account
executive needs to stew before
he sends a postcard threatening
to kill the client?

BONNIE

Does it have to be advertising?

GRIPPIN

How long?

BONNIE

Well, if it were me...

GRIPPIN

A month?

BONNIE

Five. Five months. To kill? Five
months.

GRIPPIN

That's what I said.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED: (2)

19

BONNIE
Who's the writer?

GRIFFIN
I don't know.

BONNIE
You don't know the writer who
pitched you this story?

GRIFFIN
(recovers)
A couple of kids William Morris
sent over. TV writers.

She looks at him, puzzled by his first response. She reaches
for a script in her bag beside the bed.

BONNIE
Back to work.

He gets his own script and they read, side by side.

20 INT. JAN'S OFFICE - DAY

20

He comes out of his office with a script.

GRIFFIN
Could you get this copied for
me?

JAN
How about tomorrow?

GRIFFIN
I need it now. I want to give
it to this Australian director
I'm seeing tonight.

JAN
It's not in your date book.

GRIFFIN
Jan, I forgot.

JAN
Don't do that to me.

She leaves. When she shuts the door Griffin locks it behind her
and starts to go through all the drawers and file cabinets in
the room.

He finds what he's looking for, LAST YEAR'S DATE BOOK. He unlocks
the door and goes into his office, shutting the door to Jan's
office.

21 INT. GRIFFIN'S OFFICE - DAY

21

He goes through the date book. He counts back five months.

GRIFFIN

One, two, three, four, five.

The calendar is dense with names, cancelled meetings, travel plans, breakfast to dinner appointments, screenings. He taps his pen beside a few names.

GRIFFIN

Where are you, you son of a bitch?
Is it you? Is it you?

He takes a WRITERS GUILD DIRECTORY from a shelf next to his desk and matches unfamiliar names. He makes a short list. DANNY ROSS, STUART KAUFMAN, SANDRA PARTENZA, ALLAN BEHR. He gets up, and races back to Jan's office. He gets LAST YEAR'S TELEPHONE LOGS. Back to his desk. He goes down the phone log (NAME, PHONE NUMBER, TIME CALLED, AND TIME RETURNED). He looks down the TIME RETURNED column. A few blanks. He turns the calendar and the phone log ahead another month, and finds a week with ten unreturned calls. DAVID KAHANE. He turns to the next week. Five unreturned calls. DAVID KAHANE. The next week. Two calls. DAVID KAHANE. He checks Kahane's name in the Guild Directory. He's there. Under credits: a blank space.

GRIFFIN

Gotcha!

Jan knocks on the door. Griffin dumps everything from the desk into the waste basket as she comes into the office with two copies of the script. She's aware that he's been interrupted, that he's guilty about something, that he's hiding something.

JAN

What are you doing?

GRIFFIN

Nothing.

JAN

(she knows something
is wrong)

The script.

GRIFFIN

Thanks.

22 EXT. BURBANK STUDIOS - NIGHT

22

Everyone's going home. We see Griffin in his office, reading a script. Jan comes in.

23 INT. GRIFFIN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

23

Jan and Griffin.

JAN

Night.

GRIFFIN

Night.

She leaves. He picks up the phone. He dials.

24 INT. JUNE'S HOUSE - EVENING

24

JUNE MERCATOR, thirty. She's smart, she's strong, she has a sense of humor and irony. She's wearing a loose t-shirt and running shorts, and she's drinking a beer. The phone rings. INTERCUT with Griffin.

JUNE

Hello.

GRIFFIN

David Kahane, please.

JUNE

He's not in.

GRIFFIN

Oh.

JUNE

Who's calling?

GRIFFIN

Griffin Mill.

JUNE

(impressed)

Now it's my turn to say 'oh'.

GRIFFIN

(this costs him to admit)

I promised David I'd get back to him.

JUNE

I didn't know he'd seen you.

GRIFFIN

Well, it's been awhile.

JUNE

Do you always work until seven-thirty?

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

24

GRIPPIN

Sometimes until ten. How late
does David work?

JUNE

I don't think I should give away
trade secrets. He'd kill me if
I told you that.

GRIPPIN

Is he the violent type?

JUNE

Well, you know, he's a writer.
He gets drunk before dinner and
throws empty vodka bottles at
my head.

Griffin likes her. Something between them is already sparking.

GRIPPIN

And who are you?

JUNE

My name is June Mercator.

GRIPPIN

You in the business?

JUNE

Baby sitting writers? No, I'm
an art director for Wells Fargo.

GRIPPIN

That's show business, isn't it?

JUNE

Paste-ups of interest rate
brochures is show business?

GRIPPIN

You have to make the public happy.

JUNE

I have to make my bosses happy.

GRIPPIN

Will David be back soon?

JUNE

He went to the movies.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: (2)

24

GRIPPIN

You don't go?

JUNE

They're all the same. If they don't end in a chase they end with a contest, and if they don't end with a contest, then they end with revenge.

GRIPPIN

What about love stories?

JUNE

Someone gets hurt.

GRIPPIN

What about comedies?

JUNE

Only if they're really stupid.

GRIPPIN

So what's your husband seeing tonight?

JUNE

My boyfriend is seeing The Bicycle Thief.

GRIPPIN

Ah. And why didn't you go?

JUNE

I've seen it three times.

GRIPPIN

Is it that good?

JUNE

No wonder I don't go to the movies anymore. You run a movie studio and you've never seen The Bicycle Thief?

GRIPPIN

I'm just giving America what it wants.

JUNE

Not this American.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: (3)

24

GRIFFIN
I'll try harder for you.

JUNE
Much obliged.

GRIFFIN
Tell David I called.

JUNE
Roger and out.

Griffin smiles and hangs up the phone. She was fun. Then he grabs the LA Times from his coffee table, the Calendar section, and scans the movie ads. The Bicycle Thief is playing at the Rialto in Pasadena.

25 EXT. PASADENA FREEWAY - NIGHT

25

Griffin driving.

26 EXT. PASADENA - NIGHT

26

Griffin passes the Rialto Theater. Double Bill: THE BICYCLE THIEF and OPEN CITY. Griffin parks on the street, the next block down.

27 EXT. RIALTO THEATER - NIGHT

27

Griffin buys his ticket from the TICKET GIRL.

GRIFFIN
When does the Bicycle Thief start?

TICKET GIRL
It's almost over. You can see Open City, but you've missed The Bicycle Thief.

GRIFFIN
Big crowd tonight?

TICKET GIRL
(are you kidding?)
No.

27A THE BICYCLE THIEF

Towards the end of the movie, outside the soccer stadium. The father tells the son to go away, and he steals a bike. The father is slow, and he's chased and caught. The father and son are let go by the bike's owner, who refuses to press charges against such a poor man. The father and son continue walking and crying.
THE END.

28 INT. RIALTO - NIGHT

28

The lights come up. Griffin is in the back row, a few seats in from the aisle.

A small crowd of slightly depressed film lovers, dressed in dark clothes. Ten people. Griffin studies them. An older couple, a few women. Couples together. And here comes a single WHITE MAN, the right age. Griffin approaches him, tentatively.

 GRIFFIN
David Kahane?

 WHITE MAN
I don't think so.

He passes. And then behind him we see: DAVID KAHANE, 32, wire framed glasses, plaid shirt, dark straight hair. He's scowling.

Griffin falls in behind him.

29 INT. RIALTO LOBBY - NIGHT

29

Kahane goes into the bathroom. Griffin waits in the lobby, pretending to study a film poster.

Kahane comes out, drying his hands on his pants. Griffin turns, and then acts surprised to see him.

 GRIFFIN
David? David Kahane?
 (introduces himself)
Griffin Mill.

 KAHANE
I know who you are.

 GRIFFIN
Don't you love the classics?

 KAHANE
You couldn't get a screening of
it yourself?

 GRIFFIN
It's not the same. People,
popcorn. These neat old theaters.

 KAHANE
You're not thinking of doing an
American remake of The Bicycle
Thief?

 GRIFFIN
You want to write it?

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

KAHANE

You'd give it a happy ending.

GRIFFIN

What's wrong with happy endings?

KAHANE

What's wrong with sad endings?
What's wrong with tragedy?

GRIFFIN

The audience wants escape.

KAHANE

So do I. See you around.

GRIFFIN

(tries to be casual)
God damn it, I didn't, did I?

KAHANE

What?

GRIFFIN

What a jerk...I never got back
to you on that idea you pitched
me last fall. It's been five
months.

KAHANE

No, you didn't.

30 EXT. RIALTO - NIGHT

30

The two men are on the sidewalk. There's an awkward moment.

GRIFFIN

I guess you're going home now?

KAHANE

Well, what do you have in mind,
Mr. Mill?

GRIFFIN

Dinner?

KAHANE

I've eaten.

GRIFFIN

Let's let the studio buy us a
drink.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

KAHANE
 (likes the idea, he's
 getting control: Griffin
 is subordinate)
 A beer? Yeah... Follow me.

GRIPPIN
 What are you working on these
 days?

KAHANE
 A few things.

They walk down the street.

31 EXT. CLUB HAMA - NIGHT

31

A pod mall bar with a Japanese sign.

32 INT. CLUB HAMA - NIGHT

32

Griffin and Kahane enter. A smoky bar, fifty or so Asian men in suits, a slew of hostesses and a piano bar, with a WOMAN PIANIST playing Japanese standards. A drunk JAPANESE MAN holds a microphone and sings, badly. A JAPANESE FRIEND grabs the mike and completes the song, and he's a better singer. The men in the room are barely paying attention. The HOSTESS comes up to Griffin and Kahane and the writer starts talking to her in fluent Japanese. We can see that Griffin is threatened by Kahane's mastery. The Hostess leads them to a table, joking with Kahane. When they're seated....

KAHANE
 Beer okay?

GRIPPIN
 Beer's fine.

KAHANE
 (to hostess)
 Two beers.

She nods and leaves.

KAHANE
 You ever been to Japan?

GRIPPIN
 Once, on a location scout with
 Steven.
 (more)

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

32

 GRIFFIN (Cont'd)
 (just a tenth of a second
 pause, catches his name
 dropping)
Spielberg.

 KAHANE
I lived there for a year. Student
year abroad.

 GRIFFIN
I wish I'd done that.

The Businessman stop singing, and the Pianist improvises a little
background music.

 KAHANE
I think about it all time.

 GRIFFIN
You should write about it.

The beers arrive. Two tall bottles of Kirin.

 KAHANE
When did you change your mind?

 GRIFFIN
What?

 KAHANE
My idea, about an American student
in Japan. That was my pitch. You
don't remember, do you?

 GRIFFIN
I remember.

 KAHANE
You called my house from your
office at seven-thirty. You
couldn't have seen the whole
movie. You came to the theater
looking for me.

 GRIFFIN
No.

 KAHANE
Right after you hung up, I called
home, I'd just gotten to the
theater.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: (2)

32

KAHANE (Cont'd)

I thought I'd lost my briefcase
and I wanted to let my girlfriend
know it was in the car. She told
me you were looking for me. Why
did you call? What are you doing
here?

GRIFFIN

I'm apologizing.

KAHANE

For what? All your shitty movies?

GRIFFIN

I said I'd get back to you.

KAHANE

But you didn't.

Kahane gets up and walks to the piano bar. He whispers something
in Japanese to the pianist. She's delighted by his Japanese,
and she starts to play the opening chords of "Goldfinger." Kahane
sings the song. Everyone in the club stops talking and listens.
At one point Kahane faces Griffin and sings to him, showing off.
Griffin can't look him in the eyes.

Kahane finishes, to wild applause. He bows to Griffin, and then
drops five dollars in the pianist's snifter, she refuses, he
makes her keep it. As Kahane leaves the bar the bad singer grabs
the microphone and in Japanese starts singing "From Russia With
Love." Everyone in the room boos and he stops. The pianist leaves
the piano and puts on a tape.

The pianist passes Griffin. Griffin taps her arm.

GRIFFIN

Was he singing about me?

PIANIST

Are you Goldfinger?

GRIFFIN

No.

PIANIST

Then don't worry about it.

Griffin goes back to his table, and finishes his bottle of beer,
and then bolts out of the club.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

33

Griffin looks for Kahane. Kahane is up the block, crossing the street to a parking lot behind the Rialto. Griffin runs after him.

Kahane is passing through an alley when Griffin calls to him.

GRIFFIN

David!

KAHANE

What do you want?

GRIFFIN

You sing very well.

KAHANE

Let's put out an album.

Kahane starts to walk into the dark, empty parking lot. Griffin follows. They come to Kahane's car, a new black Saab, with the dealer's sticker still in the window.

GRIFFIN

New car.

KAHANE

(this is what you're
thinking:)

How can a guy you never heard of
buy a twenty-five thousand dollar
car?

GRIFFIN

Is that a lot of money? Don't you
want to go to the Ferrari store
and ask for one in every color?
Hollywood. That's why I'm here,
I wanted to apologize for treating
you badly, I wanted to start over
with you. I wanted to help you.

KAHANE

Why did you have to pretend that
you were just out here to see a
movie?

GRIFFIN

It's the post cards. I was trying
to trip you up. I wanted to
surprise you. And then, also...
I thought that...
(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

33

GRIFFIN (Cont'd)
 (giving up on the whole
 thing)
This is crazy. I feel like I just
woke up.

KAHANE
And you thought what?

GRIFFIN
And I thought that if I... if I..

KAHANE
What?

Griffin is embarrassed, he feels silly.

GRIFFIN
I thought that if I told you...
told you I was sorry... if you
weren't sending the postcards,
that it would... make everything
right and that the... person who's
been sending me the cards...

KAHANE
 (siezes Griffin's
 weakness, turns it back
 on him)
You mean that if you make a ritual
apology to me, then the Gods would
forgive you all of your sins, for
wasting everybody's time.

GRIFFIN
 (can't believe he's
 admitting it)
Right.

KAHANE
How'd you find me?

GRIFFIN
You called my office a million
times, and I never got back to
you.

KAHANE
No you didn't.

Kahane opens his door and starts to get in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

33

KAHANE
I wish I had a car phone.

GRIPPIN
Why?

KAHANE
This is a great story. Studio executive, fearing death threats, offers bribe to unproduced writer.

GRIPPIN
It's not a bribe.

KAHANE
What is it?

GRIPPIN
Friendship.

Griffin puts a hand on Kahane's arm.

KAHANE
Friendship? You think you're my friend because you bought me a beer with the studio's money?

He grabs Griffin's hand and takes it off his arm.

KAHANE
Keep your hands to yourself.

He pushes Griffin away.

GRIPPIN
Don't push.

KAHANE
I'll do what I want.

He gets out of the car and he menaces Griffin. He pushes Griffin back.

KAHANE
I can't believe you didn't even remember the story you came to apologize for rejecting.

GRIPPIN
Maybe it wasn't any good.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

33

Kahane punches Griffin in the stomach, and Griffin doubles over. It's a real punch, and he hasn't been hit since fifth grade, and he's hurt, and he's humiliated.

KAHANE

(excited by what he's
done)

That was... that was... liberating.

He punches Griffin again. Now Griffin rams his shoulder into Kahane and throws him against his car. Kahane pushes Griffin back. Griffin sees their reflection in a window, it's like lovers, dancers. The two men struggle.

KAHANE

Bribing writers, picking fights
in parking lots.

And he punches Griffin again. Something changes in Griffin. He collects his energy. He throws himself at Kahane and drags him to the ground. They roll twice. Griffin is on the bottom, but he has his hands on Kahane's throat. The rest happens like a car crash, unstoppable, inevitable.

KAHANE

Won't this look good on your
resume?

GRIFFIN

Nobody cares.

He tightens his grip.

KAHANE

(forcing it out)
Then why are you here?

The effort to say this costs Kahane the advantage, and Griffin forces him off. They roll again. Griffin ends up on top, sitting on Kahane's chest. He has Kahane's elbows pinned under his knees and his hand is around Kahane's throat. Griffin is choking Kahane with all of his strength now. Their eyes lock, Kahane can't quite believe this is happening.

GRIFFIN

Don't be such an asshole!

KAHANE

(with effort)
Fuck you!

Their eyes lock, Griffin can't stop himself. He grabs Kahane's throat and now he won't let go.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: (4)

33

Kahane is shaking, kicking, but Griffin is possessed.

Kahane stops fighting. Griffin slaps his face. Kahane sputters.

NEW POV: Just a little ways off, Griffin getting off Kahane's chest, standing up, brushing the dirt off his jacket.

GRIFFIN

(tries to be light)

That's the last time I go to a
foreign movie.

Kahane moves just enough so we know we know he's not dead.
There's a pulse.

GRIFFIN

I'm willing to call an ambulance.
I'm willing to make a fool of
myself if that's you want, you
want the headlines? You can have
them.

Kahane waves his hand a little.

GRIFFIN

Have it your way.

And Griffin walks off.

34 EXT. THE STREET - NIGHT

34

Griffin gets into his car. The adrenaline rush is over. He's shaken, miserable, scared of the power he'd unleashed in himself.

He drives. But he can't drive. He's passing the theater.

He passes the sides street that leads to the parking lot.

The THEATER CASHIER has just run out to the sidewalk, and she's screaming. Griffin slows down and opens his window.

CASHIER

Murder! Help! Murder!

Griffin, in horror, makes a slow left turn. He passes the woman. He can see into the lot. A few people are huddled around a body lying on the ground. Kahane.

Griffin speeds up. He has mixed emotions: fear (because he has killed a man, and what if he gets caught?) and something else, excitement, a thrill (he has killed a man, he has crossed a line, and what if he gets away with it?).

- 35 EXT. BEVERLY GLEN - NIGHT 35
Griffin driving up cool Beverly Glen, up a side road, to his house.
- 36 EXT. GRIFFIN'S HOUSE - NIGHT 36
Griffin pulls into the driveway.
- 37 INT. GRIFFIN'S BATHROOM - NIGHT 37
Griffin in his bathroom. He looks at himself in the mirror. He's a murderer now. He opens the medicine chest. He has a vial of Halcion. He taps one out. Then he taps them all out. Suicide? No. He flushes them down the toilet. He empties a vial of valium down the toilet, too.

FADE OUT:

- 38 EXT. GRIFFIN'S HOUSE - MORNING 38
Griffin goes outside for the paper. He opens the paper, and out drops a postcard, unstamped, hand-delivered: Hawaii. The message:

Griffin, When will you
get back to me?

Griffin sinks to the lawn, and turns the postcard around in his hands. It's not over. He has killed, and he didn't want to, and he didn't even kill the right man.

- 39 OMIT 39
- 40 INT. LEVISON'S OFFICE - DAY 40
Levison and his production staff: Griffin, Bonnie Sherow, ALISON KELLY, NEIL KING, PETER KAPLAN.

LEVISON

Nobody leaves my office until we agree on fifteen reasons for going to the movies. Bonnie, when was the last time you bought a ticket to see a movie?

BONNIE

I am so embarrassed, but I just hate to stand in lines so I go to screenings. I think it's been two months since I paid for a film.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

40

LEVISON

Peter?

PETER

I don't know, a month.

LEVISON

Guy's, guys.... this is disgusting.
Griffin, when was the last time
you bought a ticket to see a
movie?

GRIFFIN

Last night in Pasadena. For The
Bicycle Thief.

Music, camera, Griffin's face... everything freezes... he's just
placed himself at the scene of a murder.

LEVISON

Why did you go?

In this shot we also see Bonnie, she's a little surprised that
Griffin would do something so out of character as drive to
Pasadena to see a movie.

GRIFFIN

- (in a fog)

It's a classic, and I'd never
seen it.

LEVISON

You could have had it screened.

BONNIE

Griffin Mill drove to Pasadena
to see a black and white film
with subtitles?

GRIFFIN

I wanted to see the audience's
reaction.

LEVISON

Learn from this man. Did they
like it?

GRIFFIN

They loved it.

LEVISON

Who were they?

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: (2)

GRIFFIN
Seven or eight people who hate
the movies we make.

LEVISON
Did you like it?

GRIFFIN
Yes.

ALISON
Remake potential?

GRIFFIN
We'd have to give it a happy
ending.

Levison writes **CLASSICS** on the blackboard.

LEVISON
Fair enough. This is one kind
of film which brings us out of
our houses. Let me add two of
my own.

He writes **ENTERTAINMENT** and **ESCAPE**.

ALISON
I still believe in musicals.

MUSIC.

LEVISON
Maybe, maybe... GUYS... GUYS....
doesn't anyone go to the movies
to see titty anymore?

And he writes **SEX** on the blackboard.

LEVISON
No wonder I run this show.

NEIL
I like driving fast after a James
Bond movie.

A pause. **ENERGY.**

PETER KAPLAN
I always like to see what people
are wearing.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: (3)

LEVISON
We're on a roll.

STYLE.

BONNIE
Come on, people go to see movie stars.

LEVISON
Absolutely.

MOVIE STARS.

LEVISON
Griffin, Mr. Show business, wake up.

Griffin is looking at his watch.

LEVISON
Are we boring you, Mr. Mill?

GRIFFIN
I have to call Paris.

LEVISON
Who's in Paris?

GRIFFIN
Shhh, if it doesn't work out,
I don't want to be embarrassed.

Levison looks at Griffin, he knows something is wrong. Griffin is out of the room. Levison is not happy with him.

41 EXT. HALLWAY - DAY

Griffin races down the stairs and out to the

42 EXT. STUDIO - DAY

He runs. Where is he going? What's his panic?

Pass a sound stage, the red light flashing, someone is making a movie inside. Prop truck. Teamsters. Griffin, in his jacket and tie, running.

To the STUDIO STORE. Newspaper racks. The Herald Examiner late edition. Quarter in. Drops out. Tries it again. Clicks. Opens the box. He turns the pages frantically. Inside, a small item: MAN FOUND DEAD IN THEATER PARKING LOT.

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED:

WALTER STUCKEL
(no warning)
Like David Kahane?

GRIFFIN
Who?

WALTER STUCKEL
Didn't you hear, he's dead.

GRIFFIN
Who's David Kahane?

WALTER STUCKEL
A writer. Sort of. You met him.

GRIFFIN
I meet a lot of writers.

WALTER STUCKEL
But this one got a pass at the
front gate five months ago. Did
you know I used to be a cop?

GRIFFIN
I thought you were FBI.

WALTER STUCKEL
That too. I got a call from
Pasadena homicide. David Kahane
was murdered last night.

GRIFFIN
Why are you telling me this?

WALTER STUCKEL
You called his house around seven
o'clock. His girlfriend told you
he was going to see a movie in
Pasadena.

GRIFFIN
What movie?

WALTER STUCKEL
The Bicycle Thief. You went.

GRIFFIN
I did not.

(CONTINUED).

45 CONTINUED: (2)

WALTER STUCKEL

You went. The police have a full report. You met Kahane at the theater, you got drunk with him in a Japanese restaurant, and he left before you did. That was the last time anyone saw him alive. Why are you denying this?

GRIFFIN

What do the police think?

WALTER STUCKEL

They don't know what to think. They're looking for a break. Now, I can tell the police you're acting like you've got something to hide, and they'll bring you down, for questioning. Or I can let you speak to them over the phone. Or they can come here. Or they can drop this. I don't think they'll do that.

GRIFFIN

I'll cooperate any way I can.

WALTER STUCKEL

Certain scandals can explode way beyond the people involved. I am in charge of studio security, in every definition of the word. It is my job to worry about a studio executive under suspicion for murder at a time when profits are down and the company is a vulnerable target for a takeover. It is my job to keep this very very very quiet. You're doing the right thing. Stonewall. It's your word against theirs. As long as nobody saw you actually kill the man, and as long as you have nothing to connect you, except for, well, how many meetings did you have?

GRIFFIN

One.

WALTER STUCKEL

Not counting last night?

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED: (3)

GRIPPIN

Not counting last night. I didn't kill him, Walter, but I did see him. I know I told you I didn't but I did. I also knew he was dead before you told me, it was in the paper.

WALTER STUCKEL

Why did you lie to me?

GRIPPIN

Good God, Walter, I didn't want to get involved. I'm vulnerable too.

WALTER STUCKEL

I'll tell that to the police.

GRIPPIN

I'll tell them that I went to see him because he'd pitched me an idea, I loved it so much, I wanted to buy it, and I didn't want to wait until he was home to tell him. That's the truth, Walter. I'll go to the police right now. You come with me.

WALTER STUCKEL

No, they'll come here.

GRIPPIN

Walter... here? No, let me go to them.

WALTER STUCKEL

You're talking like someone who's guilty. You're not guilty, are you?

GRIPPIN

The usual neurotic guilt.

WALTER STUCKEL

The first article about Kahane's death was in the afternoon Herald. You don't read the afternoon Herald. Why'd you buy the afternoon Herald?

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED: (4)

GRIPPIN

They have the closing prices from
the stock market.

WALTER STUCKEL

What stock do you own? Was it
up or down? How many points?

GRIPPIN

Walter... I have work to do.

He shows Walter the door. When the door is shut, he stands in
the middle of the room, frozen. Jan sticks her head in.

JAN

Griffin? Are you okay?

GRIPPIN

(complete recovery)
Never better.

JAN

What did Walter want? Did you
tell him about the postcards?

GRIPPIN

(annoyed and impatient)
Noooo. He pitched me a story.

JAN

Was it good?

GRIPPIN

What do you think?

She hands him a packet of message slips. Larry Levy is on top.
His mood switches immediately. He's on the offensive.

GRIPPIN

Call Larry Levy, I want to set
up lunch. Tell his secretary I'll
meet him at Angeli. And if he
wants to speak to me, I'm out,
I'll meet him there.

JAN (V.O.)

Maybe he'll want to go someplace
else.

GRIPPIN

That's why I won't return his
calls.

He's pumping himself up.

46 EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

A police car, siren BLARING, races down the street. For a moment we should believe this is real, then a SLATE comes into frame and we see we're in

47 INT. SCREENING ROOM - DAY

Watching dailies. Levison, Griffin, other EXECUTIVES. Five shots of a MOVIE STAR in a hospital bed, with a doctor shaking his head. Griffin sits two rows in front of Levison's con-ole.

LEVISON

Did he really need to shoot five takes?

GRIFFIN

I thought it was getting better.

LEVISON

Who asked you?

48 INT. GRIFFIN'S OFFICE - DAY

CLOSE-UP: GRIFFIN WRITING ON A PIECE OF PAPER.
The message: I SAID I'D GET BACK TO YOU.

He crosses it out, starts on another sheet of paper. NO MORE CARDS. WE SHOULD TALK. LEAVE YOUR NUMBER.

He opens a Variety, and finds the business office phone number
He dials.

GRIFFIN

Advertising please....
Advertising? Hi, how are you?
Yeah... how much do you charge
for a little one inch boxed
message, a three day run? ...
And can I send it to you in cash,
with the ad? Thanks...

49 EXT. LOS ANGELES - EVENING

Griffin in his car. The CAR PHONE rings. He picks it up.

SECRETARY (V.O.)

Mr. Mill?

GRIFFIN

Here.

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED:

SECRETARY (V.O.)

This is the studio, you have an urgent call from a Miss June Mercator, is it all right if we connect you?

GRIFFIN

(torn)
Put her on.

JUNE (V.O.)

Hello?

GRIFFIN

June? My God, I just heard. This is awful.

INTERCUT with June in her HOUSE. She looks exhausted.

JUNE

Have the police spoken to you?

GRIFFIN

We've had contact.

JUNE

What did they say?

GRIFFIN

They asked me what happened. You know I went to the theater after I called you.

JUNE

(a challenge, a bit cold)
Yes. I told them you'd called, and they asked me if you'd known each other.

GRIFFIN

If things had worked out, we would have. I wanted to talk to him about an idea.

50 EXT. GRIFFIN'S CAR - EVENING

50

A NEW P.O.V: Someone is following Griffin. Griffin's car turns, the follower, his Shadow, turns. This Shadow should have his own MUSIC.

JUNE (V.O.)

You were really going to give him an assignment?

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED:

GRIFFIN

If he wanted to do it. He liked the idea, too, it was about Japan.

JUNE (V.O.)

Japan. He always wanted to write about Japan.

GRIFFIN

He wasn't sure though, he wasn't sure if it would work, and he wanted to think about it. I told him to come in, in the morning, and he said he'd call me, because he didn't have his date book, and he didn't know if he was free.

Griffin pulls up to

51 EXT. WELLS FARGO - EVENING

The Shadow stops and watches. Griffin's car phone is cordless. He gets out of the car and continues to talk as he goes to the cash machine and enters his card and his code number. Return to INTERCUTTING with June.

JUNE

Oh, David...

GRIFFIN

Why do you say that?

JUNE

Of course he was free. Poor David. He had a lot of pride.

The machine asks how much he wants. \$300.00.

GRIFFIN

Did he have parents, family?

JUNE

Everything. Parents, a brother, a sister, a grandmother, a niece.

Removes his card.

GRIFFIN

When's the funeral?

JUNE

You don't have to go.

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED:

GRIPPIN

June, when is it?

The money comes out.

JUNE

Tomorrow. Eleven. Hillside. It hasn't really hit me yet. It's very complicated. I'm just going through the motions of my life.

He puts \$200.00 in an envelope addressed to Variety, attn: Ad department. There's a mailbox on the corner. He walks to it.

GRIPPIN

I can't imagine.

JUNE

Griffin, you know, maybe you don't even know it, maybe you saw the killer, maybe you saw a car or something that's been near other murders. Maybe if you were hypnotized you'd remember something that would lead to the killer's arrest.

He puts the envelope in the mail box and walks back to his car.

GRIPPIN

I don't think so. But if I can help in any way, I'll be there. Goodbye June.

He turns the phone off. Traffic passes him. He's still being watched.

52 INT. GRIFFIN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

He's watching the last scene from The Roaring Twenties on television. Cagney dies on the steps.

COP

What was his business?

KANSAS

He used to be a big shot.

53 EXT. HILLSIDE MEMORIAL - DAY

Kahane's black Saab. The sticker has been taken from the window. Griffin is in the parking lot of the funeral home, peering into the car. We see Griffin from a new P.O.V. The Shadow is still with him.

54 INT. CHAPEL - DAY

We HEAR the KAHANE'S BROTHER over a p.a. system. Griffin takes a black yarmulke from a basket and puts it on.

BROTHER

Einstein said that God doesn't play dice. I'd like to say that we could console ourselves with the thought that in God's plan, David Kahane's death is necessary for the universe to unfold its majestic design...

He opens the door to the chapel.

55 INT. CHAPEL - DAY

The coffin. About thirty MOURNERS. The brother, 25, continues.

BROTHER

... but I can't say that, because David always laughed at mindless faith. Someone in the night killed him, and that person will have to bear his guilt, and he'll never know what he took from David's friends and family.

Griffin takes a seat in the back row. A few people in the front row turn to see who has come in. June looks at Griffin. She says something to the MAN sitting next to her, who turns around to see the last man who saw Kahane alive.

BROTHER

My brother died after seeing a movie, which I guess is sort of fitting. I hope you don't take this the wrong way, but he really loved movies, and I'm glad he didn't die on his way in, you know, before he saw it. That would have hurt me a lot more and this hurts a lot.

The pressure is too much for Griffin. He goes outside. We hear the KADDISH from inside.

56 EXT. HILLSIDE MEMORIAL - DAY

Mourners shovel earth onto the casket in the open grave. Finished. People walk away. June walks to Griffin and offers her hand.

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED:

55

JUNE

Mr. Mill? I'm June Mercator.
Thank you for coming.

GRIFFIN

He was a rare commodity, he was
talented.

JUNE

Was he? I don't know... I thought
he was... but he had such a hard
time in Hollywood, the executives
gave him such a hard time. Oh,
God...you're an executive.

GRIFFIN

I didn't make his life any easier.
He just needed some luck.

JUNE

He didn't get that, did he?

GRIFFIN

No. And you, how are you?

JUNE

They gave me a few weeks off from
work at the bank. I don't know
why I'm telling you all of this,
actually it would help if I went
back today, but I think that if
I go back, they'll be disturbed.
It wouldn't look good, would it?
I should wait.

GRIFFIN

You do what you have to do.

Kahane's brother motions for June to come with him.

JUNE

Thank you.

GRIFFIN

Let me know if you hear anything.

JUNE

You too.

GRIFFIN

Right.

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED: (2)

There is an undeniable spark between them. And the grave is still open.

SMASH CUT TO:

57 INT. ANGELI - DAY

CLOSE -UP: A WAITRESS gives the day's specials to Griffin and Larry Levy, wearing a \$500 sweater and expensive jeans.

WAITRESS

Can I tell you today's specials?
We have a carpaccio of fresh
Oregon salmon with a lemon dill
butter, and today's pasta is
linguini with New Zealand mussels
in a sauce of black olives and
goat cheese rom Sonoma county.

LARRY LEVY

(the hard charger)
Is there any cheese in the house
salad?

WAITRESS

Fresh grated Parmesan.

LARRY LEVY

One salad. No cheese. No olives.

WAITRESS

Anything to drink?

LARRY LEVY

Just bring us a large mineral
water.

GRIFFIN

And a coke for me.

WAITRESS

Diet?

GRIFFIN

Classic.

WAITRESS

What'll you have to eat?

Griffin butters a roll while Levy stares at it, hungrily.

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED:

GRIPPIN

Gimme a pizza. This one, with
the Mozzarella and the Gorgonzola.
I like cheese.

The waitress leaves.

LARRY LEVY

You eat cheese?

GRIPPIN

Do you want to talk about
cholesterol or do you want to
talk about the studio?

58 EXT. ANGELI - DAY

The MUSIC and P.O.V. of the Shadow.

59 INT. ANGELI - DAY (A BIT LATER)

Lunch is over. Griffin's dessert arrives: chocolate cake.

GRIPPIN

You want to know if I worry about
my weight, don't you?

LARRY LEVY

Okay, Griffin. I know how you
feel, you don't want me at the
studio. Fine. I'm coming. That's
life. I'll be right down the hall.
Let's be friends. Okay?

GRIPPIN

(offers it on his fork)
Have some chocolate cake.

LARRY LEVY

No.

GRIPPIN

(Jewish mother)
Larry...

And he feeds Levy from his fork. Griffin is happy. The tide just
turned.

60 INT. JAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Griffin comes into the room. Jan is concerned.

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED:

JAN

You got a phone call from the Pasadena Police, and Walter Stuckel came back, and Celia told me they called Levison too. And our friend is back.

She shows him a new card:

YOU SAID YOU'D GET BACK
TO ME.

Griffin can't focus on it now, and he tosses it away.

GRIFFIN

Actresses. Maybe I will tell Walter. And maybe I'll tell Celia she's got a big mouth.

JAN

What's going on?

GRIFFIN

It looks like I was one of the last people to see someone before he got murdered. A writer. Someone who pitched to me once.

JAN

Oh, Lord, how awful. Did you know him well?

GRIFFIN

He pitched to me once.

JAN

There's no shame in being a witness.

GRIFFIN

I wasn't a witness. I didn't see anything.

JAN

What's the problem?

GRIFFIN

Any special attention is bad. I get enough attention. I told Walter, all I did was see the guy after a movie, that's it. Get me Levison, I'd better speak to him before Stuckel or the police get there.

61 INT. LEVISON'S OFFICE - DAY

61

Levison and Griffin. On the blackboard: THE MONSTER DIES TWICE.

LEVISON

Did you know this guy? Did we ever hire him for anything?

GRIFFIN

I was thinking about it.

LEVISON

I never heard of him.

GRIFFIN

Sometimes I like giving a kid his shot.

LEVISON

Somebody beat you to it.

GRIFFIN

I think he was stabbed.

LEVISON

Strangled. Can you imagine. Some kid wants your money so he can buy crack, and boom, you're dead. Why didn't you tell me that you'd seen him?

GRIFFIN

I've got more important things to worry about.

LEVISON

I'm your friend, forget boss, when you're in trouble, you're supposed to come to me.

GRIFFIN

Am I in trouble?

LEVISON

You didn't kill him.

GRIFFIN

So what should I do now?

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

LEVISON

Leave it to Walter Stuckel. After the cops see you, Walter'll give them passes to a screening where they can sit two rows behind Michelle Pfeiffer, and this will all go away.

GRIFFIN

Yeah.

LEVISON

How long after you saw this guy was he killed?

GRIFFIN

I don't know. Pretty soon, I think, ten minutes? Fifteen?

LEVISON

Aiee. Creepy.

62 INT. GRIFFIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Walter Stuckel comes in with DETECTIVES SUSAN AVERY, late thirties, a light gray suit, blond hair, an athlete's haircut; and PAUL DELONGPRE, 40, mustache and shaggy hair, like a ballplayer.

WALTER STUCKEL

This is detective Susan Avery, Griffin Mill, detective Paul DeLongpre, Griffin Mill.

GRIFFIN

Make yourselves comfortable...

They do.

WALTER STUCKEL

This is the first time Detective Avery has been to a real studio.

SUSAN AVERY

Other than the Universal Tour.

GRIFFIN

(bull by the horns)
I'm sorry I didn't call you as soon I heard that Kahane was dead.

SUSAN AVERY

Heard or read?

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED:

GRIFFIN

Read.

DELONGPRE

So that was the afternoon.

SUSAN AVERY

Why didn't you?

GRIFFIN

Walter asked me the same question. I wish I had a better answer this time, but all I can say is, it was like running into anyone, nothing special happened. I didn't see anybody following him, he didn't act like anything was going to happen to him, and it was just so... casual.

DELONGPRE

You went out there just to see him, didn't you?

GRIFFIN

His wife told me he was seeing the Bicycle Thief...

SUSAN AVERY

Girlfriend.

GRIFFIN

I didn't know either of them. I was feeling itchy, so I thought I'd go see the movie, and if he was there, I'd talk to him about a job I thought he'd be good for.

SUSAN AVERY

You met him inside the theater. What happened then?

GRIFFIN

We went for a drink, this Japanese bar he knew, this incredible scene, it was like Tokyo.

DELONGPRE

(not impressed with his
enthusiasm)

He left before you did. Why didn't you leave together?

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED: (2)

62

GRIFFIN

I told you, it was a great scene.

SUSAN AVERY

Then why did you leave so quickly?

GRIFFIN

They closed up the piano. After that it was just a bar. And I don't drink.

DELONGPRE

You drank with Kahane.

GRIFFIN

When in Rome.

SUSAN AVERY

Did you know Kahane socially?

GRIFFIN

No.

SUSAN AVERY

Were you ever in his house?

GRIFFIN

Never.

SUSAN AVERY

Did you know anything about him personally?

GRIFFIN

No.

SUSAN AVERY

Did you think he might have been homosexual? Or bisexual?

GRIFFIN

We didn't get that friendly. Why do you ask?

SUSAN AVERY

Some homosexuals in the neighborhood have complained of attacks.

GRIFFIN

Any murders?

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED: (3)

The tension in the room drops. The interrogation is now a conversation.

DELONGPRE

Two. This may be related.

Walter Stuckel shoots his cuffs and slaps the arm of his chair.

WALTER STUCKEL

Griffin, maybe we can let you get back to work now.

Everyone gets up. As they're leaving, while they walk, Griffin can sense Avery's dissatisfaction.

GRIFFIN

Something's bothering you, what is it?

SUSAN AVERY

Did you follow David Kahane to the parking lot after he left you? Did you see him in the parking lot?

GRIFFIN

No, I parked on the street. I drive a Mercedes and I always feel safer when it's visible, you know? Out on the street, who's going to smash the window?

SUSAN AVERY

You mean if you owned a cheaper car you might have used the parking lot?

GRIFFIN

And maybe I'd be the dead man.

SUSAN AVERY

No. You're too lucky.

They're in the hall. Griffin watches them walk away. Walter taps a picture of William Holden.

WALTER STUCKEL

This man... this man was special...

Griffin picks up the Variety on Jan's desk. Flips to a back page and his ad: NO MORE CARDS... WE SHOULD TALK.

63 EXT. STUDIO - LATE AFTERNOON

63

SOMEONE'S POV of Griffin as he walks towards a screening room.

Griffin KNOWS he's being followed. He wheels around. It's Walter Stuckel.

WALTER STUCKEL

If I were a Pasadena homicide detective with enough time, I'd find out all I could about young bucks like yourself, and when I learned what a Walter Stuckel knows about them, I'd call you down to the station for another chat.

GRIFFIN

What does a Walter Stuckel know?

WALTER STUCKEL

He knows that young bucks don't hang out in theater lobbies waiting for writers. Did you know he used to be a drug dealer?

GRIFFIN

Really?

WALTER STUCKEL

I checked up on him. He was smart. He didn't put the profits up his nose and he made a small killing in real estate. Out of the trade for three years. The police don't think his death had anything to do with his past. You don't do drugs anymore, do you?

GRIFFIN

I haven't touched a joint in two years, and I've forgotten what cocaine looks like.

WALTER STUCKEL

It's white.

GRIFFIN

David Kahane was never my dealer. I did not know the man.

WALTER STUCKEL

If you say so.

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED:

GRIPPIN

Last week he said he was Knute Rockne.

JAN (V.O.)

What are you talking about?

GRIPPIN

Okay, Jan, I'll see you later.

He hangs up.

LARRY LEVY

I don't get it, this guy calls your secretary all the time and she doesn't recognize his voice?

GRIPPIN

Larry, does it really matter?

He stares him down.

65 INT. GRIFFIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Jan is mad at Griffin.

JAN

Are you leaving the studio?

GRIPPIN

No.

JAN

Your tone of voice changes every time you talk to me. I think you're leaving, and you're not going to take me with you.

GRIPPIN

I'm not looking for another job.

JAN

Who's Joe Gillis?

GRIPPIN

He's a tax planner my business manager put me on to.

JAN

Griffin, are you seriously going to take the tax advice of someone who meets you for drinks at ten o'clock?

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED:

Griffin studies her. He wants to make her happy.

GRIPPIN

Go to Beverly Hills and get a
massage today. Bill it to the
studio.

JAN

(she'll do it, but she's
not won over)
You're bad.

66 EXT. BEVERLY HILLS HOTEL - NIGHT

Griffin drives to the hotel's entrance. The Shadow's P.O.V. He
leaves his car with the valet. Griffin walks into the hotel.

67 INT. BEVERLY HILLS HOTEL - NIGHT

He's on his guard. People in the lobby, which one is the postcard
writer? Someone calls out his name.

CIVELLA

Griffin Mill!

Griffin turns, is he about to die?

CIVELLA

Mr. Mill himself!

Griffin relaxes, it's ANDY CIVELLA, a happy, fat, rock-and-roll
manager, bearded, thick hair, sunglasses. A buccaneer. Standing
beside him is TOM OAKLEY, an English director, 38, a little soft.

GRIPPIN

Andy, you still living in New
York?

CIVELLA

I can't live here, I'm allergic
to happiness. You know Tom Oakley.

GRIPPIN

Of course.

CIVELLA

He's directed three bombs in a
row...

OAKLEY

One broke even...

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED:

67

CIVELLA

Yeah, and it was the worst of the lot... Come on Griffin, let's have a drink.

GRIFFIN

I can't. I'm meeting someone.

CIVELLA

Any friend of yours is a friend of ours. Oakley, is that right?

OAKLEY

Of course.

CIVELLA

It's ten o'clock Griffin, you can't be doing business now.

GRIFFIN

I'm doing business.

CIVELLA

In that case, do business with us. We've got an idea.

GRIFFIN

Call me at the office.

And he's on his way to the Polo Lounge.

68 INT. POLO LOUNGE - NIGHT

68

Griffin approaches the MAITRE D'.

MAITRE D'

Mr. Mill, how many?

GRIFFIN

Is there anyone waiting for me?

MAITRE D'

You can see for yourself.

Griffin studies the room. No one looks like a writer. Fat Italian producers, a few hookers at the bar. Griffin feels exhausted.

GRIFFIN

Give me a booth.

Civella and Oakley barrel into the room.

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED:

6

CIVELLA
Give us all a booth.

GRIFFIN
Not now.

CIVELLA
When she comes, we'll go. How's that?

GRIFFIN
No.

CIVELLA
Yes... we're going to tell you the story of a movie. And you're going to give us a deal.

OAKLEY
He doesn't want to.

GRIFFIN
Thank you, Tom. I can't.

CIVELLA
Fuck can't. You can, you will.

Civella goes to a table where the WAITER delivers an order.

CIVELLA
Champagne, something expensive.

They take a booth.

CIVELLA
So you've been stood up, huh?

GRIFFIN
Looks like it.

CIVELLA
She's a whore Griffin, she was no fucking good for you.

OAKLEY
(shocked, envies
Civella's freedom)
Andy...

CIVELLA
Fuck you, Tom, tell him the story.

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED: (2)

GRIPPIN
Guys, the doctor isn't in.

OAKLEY
We'll take it to Paramount.

GRIPPIN
With my blessings.

CIVELLA
Just listen.

The champagne arrives. Griffin has his eye on the door. No one.

GRIPPIN
(relents)
All right. Shoot.

OAKLEY
There's this district attorney
who's feeling confused.

CIVELLA
Tom... no. Come on...

OAKLEY
(nervous, desperate,
he needs this one.)
You're outside the largest
penitentiary in California.

GRIPPIN
Why California?

OAKLEY
Because it's a death penalty state
with the gas chamber, and that's
important to the story.

CIVELLA
Don't be so impatient.

GRIPPIN
Twenty-five words or less. You
know the rule.

OAKLEY
It's night. It's raining. A line
of cars is going in, and they
have to pass a small demonstration
near the entrance, maybe a hundred
people, a candlelight vigil.
(more)

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED: (3)

68

OAKLEY (Cont'd)

The candles are under the umbrellas, the umbrellas are glowing like Japanese lanterns.

GRIFFIN

That's nice... I've never seen that. That's good.

OAKLEY

There's a demonstrator blocking the way, a black woman, the eternal Mammy. The driver of the car she's in front of wants to move ahead, but his passenger tells him not to. The woman sees the passenger, and the moment is awful for both of them.

GRIFFIN

He's the District Attorney and she's the mother of the person who's being executed.

CIVELLA

You're good.

GRIFFIN

Keep going.

OAKLEY

The DA...

(not played for a joke)

Kevin Costner... believes in the death penalty. And the execution is a hard case, black, 19, retarded, and definitely guilty. Costner watches the execution, and it bothers him. He can't stand it. The next time he sends someone to die, he's going to be rich, smart, and white.

CIVELLA

Cut to the chase, Tom.

OAKLEY

We cut from the D.A. to Bel Air, and a rich couple, Michelle Pfeiffer or Melanie Griffith and whoever... They have a fight, he drives away in a fit, it's the same rainy night...

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED: (4)

68

GRIFFIN

The same rain storm is in San Quentin and Bel Air, they're 800 miles apart.

CIVELLA

Come on... we'll make it Hillsborough.

OAKLEY

Where's Hillsborough?

GRIFFIN

It's the Bel Air of San Francisco, it's half an hour from Quentin. Tom, keep going.

OAKLEY

The husband gets in the car, spins out on a road, and the car goes into a ravine...

GRIFFIN

The Bay.

OAKLEY

The Bay. The body is washed away, and when the police examine his car, they find that the brakes have been tampered with. It's murder, and Costner decides to go for the big one on this, and put the wife in the gas chamber.

GRIFFIN

In twenty-five words or less, what is the story?

CIVELLA

We're professionals Griffin, you have to hear it all.

GRIFFIN

No I don't. I don't have to hear any of it.

OAKLEY

The third act. Of course he wins. He sends her to the gas chamber, and then finds out the husband is alive, that he faked his death.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED: (5)

61

OAKLEY (Cont'd)

And at the end of the movie, while we see all the preparations for an execution, we have Kevin Costner break into the prison, run down death row, and then after, after the gas has been released, he blasts open the gas chamber with a shot gun.

GRIFFIN

That's more than twenty-five words.

CIVELLA

It's fucking brilliant. Habeas Corpus, that's what we're calling it. Habeas Corpus, produce the corpse. Yes or no?

The Maitre d' comes to the table.

MAITRE D'

Mr. Mill, for you.

He gives Griffin a post card.

CIVELLA

What the hell is this?

GRIFFIN

Who gave this to you?

MAITRE D'

It came from the front desk.

Civella grabs it. There's nothing on the back, no message, it's just marked: Griffin Mill, Polo Lounge.

GRIFFIN

Thanks.

OAKLEY

What is it?

GRIFFIN

It's a signal from the guy I was supposed to meet here tonight. He's telling me that the reason he couldn't have drinks with me was that he's getting laid.

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED: (6)

68

CIVELLA

I thought you were here for a girl.

OAKLEY

All that on a blank card?

GRIFFIN

We understand each other.

Griffin wants to leave.

GRIFFIN

Call me at the studio.

CIVELLA

Do we have a shot?

GRIFFIN

Yes.

Griffin drops three twenties on the table.

CIVELLA

Don't you want the receipt?

GRIFFIN

You keep it.

And he leaves.

69 INT. BEVERLY HILLS HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

69

Griffin is on full alert. Is the Postcard Writer here? Griffin studies one man who might be the writer. The man is a little dishevelled, nervous, not richly dressed, furtive eyes, and his glasses are taped at one of the temples. A MOVIE STAR comes into the lobby, and the man gets up laconically. The Movie Star shakes hands with him and they go off to the Polo Lounge.

Griffin goes outside.

70 EXT. BEVERLY HILLS HOTEL - NIGHT

70

He gets his car. Tips the valet.

THE SHADOW'S P.O.V. Watching Griffin drive away.

71 INT. GRIFFIN'S CAR

71

Griffin drives towards Sunset Boulevard. When he pulls up to the light, he sees a car in the rear view mirror. He crosses Sunset. He thinks he's being followed. Is he?

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED:

He drives down Beverly Drive. He slows down to let the car pass. It drops further back. Griffin speeds up. He makes a left. He turns into an alley. He's being followed. He drives slowly. The car behind him gets closer in the alley. The other driver pulls out a gun. Griffin sees it in his side view mirror. Ahead is Sunset Boulevard, the traffic is a river, safety. He closes his eyes. The gun is fired, and Griffin's windshields are shattered. He slumps forward onto the wheel of the car, and the HORN goes off. The other driver is trying to see into Griffin's car without getting out of his own.

Griffin, without looking up, tears away, bringing his car to Sunset Boulevard. This is Beverly Hills and the police are quick. We can already HEAR SIRENS and there's a HELICOPTER overhead. Griffin makes a U-turn at the next street and comes back west on Sunset. He slows down to look into the alley. Five police cars are caught in the hot beam of the helicopter overhead. A RESIDENT in a bathrobe is talking to the cops. The Postcard Writer is gone.

Griffin turns off Sunset and takes the back roads to BEVERLY Glen. He's shaking with excitement, with being alive.

GRIFFIN

Yes! Yes!

He picks up the car phone. He dials. He gets June Mercator's answering machine.

JUNE (V.O.)

Hi, this is June. Leave a message at the sound of the tone, and I'll get back to you as soon as I can, but if I don't call back for a while, I hope you'll understand. Thank you.

(beep)

GRIFFIN

It's Griffin Mill. Call me at the office or call me at home tonight, whenever you get in. The number is 937-9112.

He puts the phone down, and then he turns on the radio, searching the dial for something. He finds an Eddie Van Halen guitar solo. He turns it up loud. He starts to shout with joy.

GRIFFIN

Fuck you! You can't kill me you motherfucker! Fuck you!

(more)

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED: (2)

71

 GRIFFIN (Cont'd)
I'm alive you piece of shit, you
fucking dogshit writer, you
fucking loser, try to kill me,
you fucking asshole, try to kill
me, you don't fucking know, you
don't fucking know who I am you
cheap wimp limp dick, you pussy,
I'm the killer, I'm the killer.

He leaves the mansions in his noisy wake.

72 INT. GRIFFIN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

72

Bed. Phone rings. June Mercator. INTERCUT with June in her
bedroom. She's been out, she's had wine, she's showered, she's
in her nightgown, she's on her bed, the lights are low.

 JUNE
Is it too late?

 GRIFFIN
No, no, of course not.

 JUNE
I was out all day. Friends took
me to the museum and then dinner.
Do you have any news?

 GRIFFIN
No, I'm sorry.

 JUNE
I thought that's why you called.

 GRIFFIN
No, I'm sorry, I was wondering
if you had heard anything.

 JUNE
No.

 GRIFFIN
I just wanted to tell you that
whenever you feel like it, give
me a call, just to talk. I'm
pretty shaken up by this myself.

 JUNE
Then you should call me.

 GRIFFIN
Can I?

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED:

72

JUNE

Of course.

GRIFFIN

Have you been back to work?

JUNE

I couldn't stay away. And everyone is incredibly nice to me. Too nice.

GRIFFIN

What are your plans?

JUNE

I don't have any.

GRIFFIN

Listen. I'd like to see you. I don't know if that's possible. I don't know you, I don't know what your life is like, I'm sure you've got good friends who can help you through this a lot better than I can, but I think there's a connection between us.

JUNE

I don't know if we should say anymore, and I don't know exactly how I feel right now, but there is a connection. The night you called, to speak to David, I had a feeling about you, that I'd hear from you again. I suppose that's awful to admit, but I've learned a lot from this, and it's important to say what you feel. You can't find out what you feel until you start to admit all your feelings. And these feelings change. Oh, God, I'm running at the mouth, aren't I? Well, I'm not going to apologize.

GRIFFIN

It would have been easier calling you if he was alive.

JUNE

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED: (2)

72

GRIFFIN

But I called you anyway.

JUNE

I'm glad you did.

GRIFFIN

It's easy talking to you. Is it
easy talking to me?

JUNE

Yes.

GRIFFIN

There's a lot we aren't saying.
But I'm proud of our restraint.

JUNE

It has a certain elegance, doesn't -
it?

GRIFFIN

Good night.

JUNE

You too.

Phone down.

73 INT. LEVISON'S OFFICE - DAY

73

The production executives. Levison, Griffin, Bonnie, the others,
and Larry Levy.

LEVISON

Tomorrow morning, the manuscript
of Tom Wolfe's new book will be
in a room at the Sherry
Netherlands. You go in, you read
it, you make your bid. You can't
copy it, can't circulate it, can't
take it home. I want you to go,
Griffin. It's too soon for Larry
to take that trip. I want him
here.

GRIFFIN

Send Bonnie.

BONNIE

Griffin, I'm not even a
vice-president.

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED:

73

GRIFFIN

You should be.

(to Levison)

Let her go. She'll know if it's
a movie or not. And if it is a
movie, we know the bid. A million.

The phone rings, annoying Levison.

LARRY LEVY

That's kind of high.

LEVISON

(barks into phone)

Not now.... Can't this wait? All
right... Just a second...

GRIFFIN

I think it's fair.

LEVISON

(hand over mouthpiece)

Bonnie, pack your bags and don't
take the red eye, you'll need
your sleep.

BONNIE

Just a second, Griffin, we had
that thing at the Hilton tomorrow.

LEVISON

Phone for you, Griffin, it's Andy
Civella, he says it's important...

GRIFFIN

(lightly, going for the
phone)

Oh... well, if you don't want
to be a vice-president.

BONNIE

No no no no. I'm going.

Griffin takes the phone.

GRIFFIN

Okay, Andy, are you ready to
pitch?

A new voice. Not Andy. It's the POSTCARD WRITER, and he has a
weak voice, he whines, his voice breaks.

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED: (2)

73

THE WRITER (V.O.)
I've been waiting for your call.

ON GRIFFIN, he's panicked. He's aware that everyone is watching him.

GRIFFIN
Why don't you leave your number with Jan so I can call and hear the pitch?

THE WRITER (V.O.)
I already pitched. You have my number.

LEVISON
Do you have to do this now?

THE WRITER (V.O.)
I could have killed you, but I didn't want to. I don't want to put you out of your misery.

GRIFFIN
(hanging up)
Okay, Andy. See you later.
(to the group)
Where were we?

74 INT. STUDIO HALLWAY - DAY

74

The meeting is over, everyone walks down the hall. Griffin and Bonnie stop to talk in front of a still from The Roaring Twenties.

BONNIE
Are you seeing someone else?

GRIFFIN
No.

BONNIE
I get this vibration from you.

GRIFFIN
Bonnie... Have a good trip.

He goes into his office. She goes into hers.

75 INT. GRIFFIN'S OFFICE - DAY

75

Phone messages. SUSAN AVERY is on top. Griffin takes a breath, puts on a smile, and dials.

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED:

75

GRIFFIN
Detective Susan Avery please....
Griffin Mill.....

SUSAN AVERY (V.O.)
Hello, Mr. Mill.

GRIFFIN
Griffin, and is that Officer or
Detective Avery?

SUSAN AVERY (V.O.)
Lieutenant actually, but
Detective's all right.

GRIFFIN
So, you have news.

SUSAN AVERY (V.O.)
I was wondering if you could come
to the station.

GRIFFIN
For what?

SUSAN AVERY (V.O.)
We'd like to ask you a few more
questions.

GRIFFIN
When?

SUSAN AVERY (V.O.)
Now.

GRIFFIN
I've got a studio to run. I can
come down in an hour, for about
half an hour.

76 EXT. PASADENA POLICE STATION - DAY

76

Griffin drives his Mercedes into the parking lot.

77 INT. PASADENA POLICE STATION - DAY

77

Walking through the station. Notice a uniformed COP who we'll
see again.

SUSAN AVERY
Your work must be very exciting.

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED:

77

GRIFFIN

It's not all movie stars and caviar, but it changes all the time. I imagine you don't have much routine.

SUSAN AVERY

Paperwork.

They come to her desk by the wall. Poster of a kitten dangling from a chin-up bar, HANG IN THERE.

SUSAN AVERY

Coffee?

GRIFFIN

No. Thank you.

SUSAN AVERY

I limit myself to a gallon a day.

GRIFFIN

(smiling)

You must have a break in the case.

SUSAN AVERY

What makes you say that?

GRIFFIN

Why else would you bring me here?

SUSAN AVERY

Did you follow David Kahane to his car?

GRIFFIN

No.

SUSAN AVERY

What were you wearing?

GRIFFIN

I went straight from work, so, I don't know.... what I'm wearing now, I guess. A dress shirt, slacks, leather shoes.

She opens a file of mug shots.

SUSAN AVERY

I want you to look at some pictures.

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED: (2)

77

A thin man with a fixed nose. A depressed black man. A dark-haired man with a mustache. A large man with blond hair.

Griffin nods at him.

GRIFFIN

Him? I don't know. I mean.... maybe... something... I don't know.

SUSAN AVERY

Could you have seen him the night David Kahane was murdered?

GRIFFIN

Aah.... Look, I could never say that in court. This is a very bad position you've got me in... I'd hate to get this guy arrested.

She takes the pictures back.

SUSAN AVERY

It would have to be on more than your word.

GRIFFIN

There's a witness.

SUSAN AVERY

I can't tell you that.

GRIFFIN

Either there's a witness, or these are suspects in similar murders.

SUSAN AVERY

You'd make a good detective.

The tension is ebbing. He's not under suspicion, or she's covering up very well.

GRIFFIN

Are these real suspects?

SUSAN AVERY

What do you mean by real?

GRIFFIN

Motive and opportunity.

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED: (3)

77

SUSAN AVERY

A lot of killers have strange motives.

GRIFFIN

Well, was this a robbery?

SUSAN AVERY

If that's the motive, then all we need to show is opportunity. Even you had opportunity.

GRIFFIN

I'd hate to think that all that separates anyone from murder is lack of opportunity. I guess you see the dark side a lot more than I do, but I try to believe that people are basically good.

SUSAN AVERY

I thought Hollywood was a sea of sharks.

GRIFFIN

There are a lot of decent, honest people in the business, people you can trust. Me, I'm in the middle.

He smiles. Avery is confused.

SUSAN AVERY

You mean it?

GRIFFIN

Oh, yeah. I'd be lying if I said you could trust me completely.

SUSAN AVERY

What about friends?

GRIFFIN

I guess I'm okay with them, but the office, the job, demands a certain amount of game playing. It's... you don't want to lie, you don't want to be cruel... but if I get a hundred calls a day, I know I'm slipping. I should get one twenty-five. And all those people, they want one thing.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED: (4)

77

GRIFFIN (Cont'd)

They want me to say Yes to them, and make their movie. They think that if I say Yes to them, and make their movie, that come New Year's, it's just gonna be them and Jack and Anjelica and Don Johnston in Aspen. That's what they think. And I can only say yes... my studio can only say Yes twelve times a year. And collectively, we hear about fifty thousand stories a year. So... so it's hard, and you can't be Mr. Nice Guy. And how did we get into this Doctor? And should I start telling you about my childhood?

SUSAN AVERY

(flirting)

Go ahead.

He wags a finger.

GRIFFIN

Uh-unh, that would have to be after hours.

SUSAN AVERY

Maybe that can be arranged. You probably go out with lots of actresses.

GRIFFIN

Lieutenant, Detective, Miss Avery, Susan... I'd love to help you find the person who killed David Kahane. I'm sorry he died, but I barely knew him, so I can afford the luxury of being fascinated by the whole process of how you go about your work. But I don't have time, this afternoon, to talk about... my very sad love life.

SUSAN AVERY

When would you have time?

GRIFFIN

I'll get back to you.

78 INT. GRIFFIN'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

78

Griffin comes in.

JAN

I told them to wait outside...

Griffin enters

79 INT. GRIFFIN'S OFFICE - DAY

79

Oakley and Civella are already there.

GRIFFIN

Have you worked out the story?

CIVELLA

When we tell you the story, are you prepared to commit within eighteen hours?

GRIFFIN

Why not twenty-four?

CIVELLA

I have meetings scheduled tomorrow afternoon, at three other studios. We want the answer by tomorrow morning, by eleven.

GRIFFIN

What if it took me three days to say yes?

CIVELLA

Then you'd lose it.

GRIFFIN

And if you were turned down everywhere else? And I still wanted it? Then I could tell Business Affairs to see how hungry you were.

CIVELLA

So listen to the story already.

GRIFFIN

So you have to wait already... I want Larry Levy to hear this.

OAKLEY

He's at Fox.

GRIFFIN

Not anymore.

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED:

79

CIVELLA
 (senses Oakley's misery)
 What's wrong with him?

OAKLEY
 I pitched him something a few
 months ago and he hated it.

GRIFFIN
 (to Jan)
 Get me Larry Levy.

A moment in the room, waiting. A buzz, Levy is on the line.

80 EXT. BEVERLY HILLS - DAY

80

Larry is driving in Beverly Hills, talking to Griffin on his
 car's speakerphone. He drives a Jeep.

LARRY LEVY
 Griffin.

GRIFFIN (V.O.)
 Larry, I've got Andy Civella and
 Tom Oakley here, and I wouldn't
 be bothering you if I didn't think
 they had an idea that you should
 hear.

LARRY LEVY
 Hi guys.

CIVELLA
 The next voice you hear will have
 an English accent, and it belongs
 to Tom Oakley. I'm Andy Civella.

LARRY LEVY
 Hi, Andy. I know Tom, how are
 you Tom?

OAKLEY
 Very well, Larry, and yourself?

LARRY LEVY
 Fine. What's the story?

OAKLEY
 You're outside San Quentin. It's
 night. It's raining.

DISSOLVE TO:

81 INT. GRIFFIN'S OFFICE - DAY

81

Oakley is pacing, talking to the speakerphone. Civella is rubbing his shoulders, and Griffin sits quietly, but he's supportive.

OAKLEY

Kevin Costner breaks into the prison, runs down death row, and then after, after the gas been released, he blasts open the gas chamber with a shot gun. He grabs Michelle Pfeiffer in his arms... and says something brilliant, and the movie is over.

He's drained. Civella hugs him.

82 EXT. LARRY LEVY'S CAR IN BEVERLY HILLS - DAY

82

Levy pulls into a parking lot in a medical building. He parks his car and takes out the telephone and walks with it. INTERCUT with Griffin at the studio.

LARRY LEVY

Take me off the speakerphone.

Griffin turns off the speakerphone and picks up the receiver.

GRIFFIN

What time are you coming back?

-LARRY LEVY

About six. How late are you staying?

GRIFFIN

I'll be around.

LARRY LEVY

Has anyone else heard this?

GRIFFIN

No.

LARRY LEVY

It's good.

GRIFFIN

Mmm-hmm.

LARRY LEVY

We should make a deal, now. Tomorrow will be too late. It's guaranteed they've got other meetings on this.

(CONTINUED)

82 CONTINUED:

82

GRIFFIN

Mmm-hmm.

LARRY LEVY

I'll see you when I come back.

He goes into a Psychologist's office (LEO BUCKNER, PH.D.).

83 INT. GRIFFIN'S OFFICE - DAY

83

Griffin hangs up.

CIVELLA

Well?

GRIFFIN

Tom, you did a good job.

CIVELLA

It's pass or fail Griffin, what did he say?

GRIFFIN

Get out of my office, and don't pop the cork till I call.

Griffin watches them go. Jan comes in.

JAN

They were happy.

GRIFFIN

They have a completely fucked up idea that has no second act. It has a few hot scenes, but the boy and girl don't get together until the very last shot. Larry Levy went for it because he's a dick brain. He doesn't think critically, he doesn't think clearly. He'll sell it to Levison, and then I'll let Levison have the brilliant idea of letting Larry take over the project.

JAN

How does that help you?

GRIFFIN

Oakley can't write that script, he's not good enough.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

83 CONTINUED:

83

 GRIFFIN (Cont'd)
Larry's going to find that out,
but it'll be too late. And
Levison will just think that much
less of him.

 JAN
You're awful.

 GRIFFIN
You can always quit.

The phone rings.

 GRIFFIN
I'm not in.

She closes the door. He picks up the phone. He dials. INTERCUT
with June Mercator at work, at an easel, working on a brochure.

 GRIFFIN
June.

 JUNE
Hello.

 GRIFFIN
Listen, I know this is short
notice, are you free tonight?

 JUNE
(tentatively)
Yes.

 GRIFFIN
You wanna go out?

 JUNE
You mean in public?

 GRIFFIN
Very public. A thousand people.
Black tie. Can you handle it?

 JUNE
I don't have anything to wear.

 GRIFFIN
Listen to her tell a lie.

 JUNE
What time?

(CONTINUED)

83 CONTINUED: (2)

83

GRIFFIN
I'll pick you up in three hours.

JUNE
Aaaggggh! Three and a half.

GRIFFIN
Three and a quarter.

JUNE
Three and a half.

GRIFFIN
Deal.

84 INT. LEVISON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

84

Levison, Griffin and Larry Levy.

LARRY LEVY
Twenty-five words. Dustin Hoffman sends Kathleen Turner to the gas chamber. When he finds out she's innocent, he has to break into prison to save her life.

LEVISON
Can Oakley do it?

GRIFFIN
I think so.

LEVISON
You never worked with him.

GRIFFIN
No.

LEVISON
Do they fuck?

GRIFFIN
Who?

LEVISON
Dustin and Kathleen Turner, in act two, do they fuck?

SEE GRIFFIN'S SATISFACTION when Larry Levy says:

LARRY LEVY
We'll get there.

(CONTINUED)

84 CONTINUED:

84

LEVISON
Griffin, I'd like Larry to take
this one.

A look between Griffin and Larry Levy. Griffin obliges, so
politely.

LARRY LEVY
If you feel strongly....

GRIFFIN
Tom and Andy might object...

LARRY LEVY
I feel awkward getting a project
that started with you. Would you
talk to them?

GRIFFIN
Anything for the team.

85 INT. LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

85

Griffin is in black tie. The limousine heads up Outpost Drive.

The long car comes around a corner, and we know which house is
June Mercator's, David Kahane's black Saab is in the driveway.
The dealer's sticker is gone, but two stripes of glue have yet to
be soaked off.

Griffin opens the door for himself and walks up the path. He
rings the bell. The driver gets out of the car and leans against
it, waiting.

June opens the door. The limousine surprises her, but she doesn't
say anything. She has a cordless phone in her hand.

JUNE
Come on in.

86 INT. JUNE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

86

Griffin looks at the house while June talks. Someone played the
piano. Someone collected original comic book art. There are a
few Mission pieces, a few modern pieces. No atomic furniture,
no Memphis, nothing too trendy.

A picture of Kahane is on the piano.

(CONTINUED)

96 CONTINUED:

85

JUNE

(on the phone)

The bank is very unhappy. Do you understand? It's Wednesday or never, Ben. Deliver the brochures by Wednesday or throw them out. It's up to you, Ben, it's on your shoulders.

She pushes the antenna back into the phone.

JUNE

Okay.

GRIFFIN

You were having fun.

JUNE

Actually, we have two weeks before. We need the brochures, and Ben knows that, but he's slow. Would you like a glass of wine? No, of course not, we have to go.

GRIFFIN

Beautiful house.

JUNE

It was either clean it up or find something to wear. I'll give you the tour another time.

GRIFFIN

I'd like that.

Something sexual begins.

JUNE

Let's go.

87 EXT. SUNSET BOULEVARD - NIGHT

87

The limousine.

88 EXT. SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD - NIGHT

88

A river of limousines going to the Beverly Hilton.

89 EXT. BEVERLY HILTON HOTEL - NIGHT

89

The entrance to the hotel is like a patient in surgery, under bright light, the center of attention. Griffin's driver gets out to open the door. June gets out first.

(CONTINUED)

89 CONTINUED:

89

JUNE

There's Robin Williams.

As Griffin gets out the Driver whispers to him:

DRIVER

We were followed. From the time we left the studio.

GRIFFIN

What?

DRIVER

I wasn't sure until we picked up your friend, but the car that followed us drove past her house, and then, when we started back down the hill, he was after us again. He pulled into public parking when I made the left back there. A Dodge Charger.

GRIFFIN

Did you see the driver?

DRIVER

Short hair and a mustache.

GRIFFIN

Thanks.

Griffin turns away from the Driver and catches up with June, who's watching Robin Williams' performance. Williams smiles at Griffin.

90 INT. GRAND BALLROOM - NIGHT

90

As Griffin walks through the crowd he's greeted by people every step of the way. This is his room, these are his people. We watch June watching him. He's smooth, he's popular. The studio's table is at the front of the room. Levison is there with his wife, ANDREA. Griffin introduces June to ALLAN SPERBER, his wife MELANIE, JOHN ANTOVICH and his wife BECKY.

GRIFFIN

June Mercator, Doug and Andrea
Levison, Allan and Melanie
Sperber, John and Becky Antovich.

General hellos. An approving wink from Levison.

(CONTINUED)

90 CONTINUED:

90

ANDREA

Maybe you can help us solve a
mystery.

ANTOVICH

Show them the postcard.

GRIFFIN

(alert)
Postcard?

ANDREA

Who has the postcard?

LEVISON

You gave it to Melanie.

MELANIE

Here it is.

A naked Polynesian woman standing in a Tahitian waterfall.

LEVISON

It was underneath my plate.

ANDREA

Actually it was underneath
Griffin's plate, but we switched.

LEVISON

We think it's about a door prize.

JUNE

Does it say anything?

LEVISON

(shows him)
Yes. Surprise.

The house lights dim. A movie screen drops from above and a film
about Industry Charities begins.

GRIFFIN

(whispers to June)
I have to go to the bathroom.

As Griffin leaves the table, Levison tugs at his arm.

LEVISON

So it's over between you and
Bonnie?

(CONTINUED)

90 CONTINUED: (2)

90

GRIFFIN

Bonnie's out of town, June is just the friend of a friend.

LEVISON

Friend of a friend? What did you do, steal her from her boyfriend?

GRIFFIN

No.

LEVISON

You're blushing.

He pats Griffin, and Griffin walks through the dark. A voice, "Hey, Griffin," a hand, Griffin is gone.

91 INT. BEVERLY HILTON LOBBY - NIGHT

91

Griffin is on edge. Limousine drivers are smoking cigarettes outside the lobby entrance. Griffin's driver sees him and straightens up, ready to get the car. Griffin shakes his head, No. He crosses the lobby, looking for a short-haired man with a mustache.

There he is, near the elevators. Griffin walks through the lobby to the coffee shop.

92 INT. COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

92

Griffin buys a candy bar. The SHORT-HAIRED MAN follows him into the coffee shop. Griffin goes back into the lobby and heads to the elevators. He waits for the short-haired man to catch up.

They enter the same elevator with a bellboy carrying luggage. Griffin pushes 5. The bellboy gets off on the third floor. The elevator continues up.

GRIFFIN

You have to understand, it's a difficult job. I see people all day long. My phone rings a hundred and twenty-five times a day.

The elevator opens and Griffin gets out, so does the man. The hallway is quiet.

93 INT. HILTON HALLWAY - NIGHT

93

GRIFFIN

I don't know how I can make it up to you.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

93 CONTINUED:

93

 GRIFFIN (Cont'd)
 I'm sorry that I hurt other
 people's feelings along the way.
 I'm trying to be better, I really
 am. But you're going too far.
 It's an incredibly difficult
 business. It's hard for all of
 us.

He pushes the elevator buttons, up and down.

 GRIFFIN
 Come in again and tell me a story.
 Tell me everything you've got.
 Usually we only like to hear one
 at a time, but it's obvious you
 have an active imagination, maybe
 we can channel all that anger
 into something good. What do
 you say?

No response.

 GRIFFIN
 And we'll forget all this nonsense
 about killing me.

 SHORT-HAIRED MAN
 I'm not going to kill you.

 GRIFFIN
 Who are you?

 SHORT-HAIRED MAN
 I'm not who you think I am.

An elevator door opens. They get in. As the doors close, Griffin
 runs out into the hall. The short haired man stays in.

Griffin runs down the long empty hall to the Fire Exit.

94 INT. FIRE STAIRS - NIGHT

94

He races down the fire stairs, like a five year-old chased by
 his demons.

95 EXT. SIDE ENTRANCE - NIGHT

95

He comes outside a back entrance of the hotel. He pulls himself
 together and walks back in to the main entrance.

96 INT. BALLROOM - NIGHT

96

NEIL DIAMOND is singing. Griffin comes up behind June and kisses her behind the ear, moving her hair aside to kiss her neck.

JUNE
Where were you?

GRIFFIN
I wasn't feeling well.

JUNE
Oh, babe... Why didn't you say something? Is it your stomach?

GRIFFIN
Sometimes I get a little nervous in a crowded room. I needed some air. I took a walk.

JUNE
Are you okay now?

GRIFFIN
Fine.

JUNE
Poor baby.

She kisses him on the cheek, like a sister. He wants more. While Diamond sings, Griffin kisses June again, at the top of her spine. She drifts back to him. He reaches around and holds her waist, and then draws his thumb up to touch the bottom of her breast. He kisses her on the cheek and on the ear. She lowers her head and offers her neck again.

Griffin catches Levison watching him. Levison grins. Neil Diamond finishes his song. Everyone CHEERS.

GRIFFIN
Do you want to stay?

JUNE
You have to, don't you?

GRIFFIN
No.

JUNE
(sex)
Let's go.

They get up.

97 INT. BEVERLY HILTON LOBBY - NIGHT 97

Griffin and June walk through the lobby. He's on edge. She can feel it.

JUNE
What's wrong?

GRIFFIN
Nothing.

She doesn't believe him. Their Driver sees them and runs for the car.

98 EXT. BEVERLY HILTON - NIGHT 98

Griffin opens the door for June. The Driver stops Griffin before he gets in. They have a whispered conversation.

DRIVER
I found the Dodge Charger. It's a police car. Pasadena Police.

GRIFFIN
(recovers immediately)
Maybe he was following you.

DRIVER
I haven't been to Pasadena since the Rose Bowl four months ago.

GRIFFIN
I haven't been there in two years.

DRIVER
Maybe they're after your friend.

GRIFFIN
Should we tell her?

DRIVER
That's up to you.

GRIFFIN
Hey, this is a first date. Let sleeping dogs lie.

And with a wink he gets into the car.

99 EXT. WILSHIRE BOULEVARD - NIGHT 99

As they pull onto the Boulevard, Griffin sees the Dodge Charger beside them. Griffin looks to the Driver and their eyes meet in the rear view mirror.

(CONTINUED)

99 CONTINUED:

99

JUNE

That was fun. But I guess you go to these things all the time.

GRIFFIN

It's all part of the job.

The Dodge Charger stays close. The limousine Driver changes lanes, the Charger follows. Intersection. The Charger is still at their side. The Driver STALLS the limo.

DRIVER

Sorry.

The Charger is forced to continue on with the traffic.

GRIFFIN

That's okay.

The limo makes a left onto Santa Monica Boulevard. Griffin and the Driver look at each other in the mirror. A job well done.

GRIFFIN

Do you have to be at work early?

JUNE

Not really.

GRIFFIN

You didn't love him.

JUNE

David?

GRIFFIN

David.

JUNE

Yes. No. I liked him a lot. We were comfortable together. We were wonderful friends.

GRIFFIN

Were you breaking up?

JUNE

I don't know. Yes. He was frustrated. He'd made some money in... in real estate, but that isn't what he wanted. He wanted to be an artist.

(CONTINUED)

99 CONTINUED: (2)

99

GRIFFIN

So what was he doing in the movies?

Griffin kisses her, with conviction, and he forces her to kiss him back, not by pulling her to him, but by keeping his face against hers, by demanding from her an increase in passion. By telling her that the passion is there.

GRIFFIN

I had to do that.

JUNE

Would you mind coming back to my house?

GRIFFIN

Sure.

They kiss again.

100 EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

100

The limousine in traffic. Up to Outpost, to June's house.

101 EXT. JUNE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

101

GRIFFIN

I'll take a cab home.

Griffin signs for the limousine and tips the driver a hundred dollars.

DRIVER

Thanks.

June waits on the path. She watches Griffin, and she's not sure about what to do next. He catches up to her. He puts his arm around her and they walk into the house.

102 INT. JUNE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

102

JUNE

Do you want something to drink?
A glass of white wine?

GRIFFIN

Just mineral water.

She goes to the kitchen. He follows her. They're silent while she pours two mineral waters.

(CONTINUED)

102 CONTINUED:

102

JUNE

I can't sleep with you tonight.

GRIFFIN

I was wondering about that myself.

JUNE

Really?

GRIFFIN

I was feeling a little weird.

JUNE

Why?

GRIFFIN

It would be the first time you've made love... I'd be the first person you've been to bed with since David died.

JUNE

That's right.

GRIFFIN

That's... that's a powerful... responsibility. I don't know... that's a very charged event.

JUNE

We should have gone to your house. I can't make love in that bed. If we'd gone to your house... at your house it would have been easier....

(the weight of it all)

GRIFFIN

Let's stay up and talk. Tell me about your childhood, tell me about college, tell me about your job. We'll go somewhere this weekend.

JUNE

Where?

GRIFFIN

Mexico. Puerto Vallarta.

JUNE

Really?

(CONTINUED)

102 CONTINUED: (2)

102

GRIFFIN

Yes.

She throws herself into his arms and starts to cry. She's sobbing.

JUNE

It's funny how people meet, isn't it?

GRIFFIN

Yes. Isn't life strange?

103 INT. GRIFFIN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

103

Griffin sleeping. The phone RINGS. Griffin picks it up, alert.

GRIFFIN

Hello?

POSTCARD WRITER (V.O.)

Surprise.

GRIFFIN

Go to sleep.

POSTCARD WRITER (V.O.)

You said you'd get back to me.

GRIFFIN

And I'll never get back to you, you know why? You're a loser. You can't get a movie made, and you're blaming it on Hollywood. You know why you can't get a movie made? Your ideas are terrible. Those postcards are probably the best thing you've ever written.

POSTCARD WRITER (V.O.)

You're corrupt, and your system is corrupt.

GRIFFIN

How do you know? You're not in the system.

POSTCARD WRITER (V.O.)

I could have killed you.

GRIFFIN

No you couldn't. You'd have no one to bate.

And Griffin hangs up on him.

104 INT. GRIFFIN'S OFFICE - DAY

104

Walter Stuckel is in the office.

WALTER STUCKEL
There's a chance they think it
was you.

GRIFFIN
That I killed the guy?

WALTER STUCKEL
You fit the description.

GRIFFIN
They haven't said anything to
me.

WALTER STUCKEL
Of course not.

GRIFFIN
Aren't you supposed to know your
accusers?

WALTER STUCKEL
It's time for you to get yourself
a real good lawyer.

GRIFFIN
I had a drink with the guy,
Walter, that's all.

WALTER STUCKEL
If you went to Pasadena with the
intent to kill, you could go to
the gas chamber.

GRIFFIN
I went to Pasadena with the intent
to hire.

WALTER STUCKEL
So you say.

Jan comes into the office.

JAN
The Schecter brothers are here.

The two SCHECTER brothers, CARL and ERIC, manic film school
grads, in love with their bad reputation, invade the office.

ERIC SCHECTER
Don't make us wait, Griffin.

(CONTINUED)

104 CONTINUED:

104

CARL SCHECTER
(indicates Walter)
Who is this man?

ERIC SCHECTER
Oh, and the travel agent called.
You're confirmed.

JAN
He grabbed the phone from me.

WALTER STUCKEL
Travel agent?

GRIFFIN
I'm going to Puerto Vallarta
tomorrow.

WALTER STUCKEL
You're leaving the country?

GRIFFIN
For the weekend.

The Schecter brothers watch this like a tennis match.

WALTER STUCKEL
That's a risk.

JAN
Why?

GRIFFIN
Because Larry Levy could have
my office in three days. That's
what Walter thinks.

JAN
(panicked for her job)
Have you heard something?

WALTER STUCKEL
No.

With a look at Griffin, he gets up.

WALTER STUCKEL
You're pretty smooth.

GRIFFIN
I sleep like a baby.

(CONTINUED)

04 CONTINUED: (2)

104

WALTER STUCKEL
You really should run the studio.

GRIFFIN
Tell a friend.

Walter leaves. He passes the gauntlet.

ERIC SCHECTER
Goodbye, Walter. You're a strange
man.

CARL SCHECTER
So long, Walter. It's been real.

As soon as Walter is gone...

ERIC SCHECTER
Give us a deal here, Griffin,
give us a home. Carl, how much
have our last three pictures
grossed?

CARL SCHECTER
A hundred and five million.

Griffin isn't listening.

ERIC SCHECTER
That's not bad, I know some people
do better, but we're consistent,
and we're always under budget.

CARL SCHECTER
Forget it Eric, he's not
listening. Let's go to Orion.

ERIC SCHECTER
We already went to Orion. They
said no. And he's still not
listening.

CARL SCHECTER
Where are you, Griffin?

ERIC SCHECTER
Fuck him, let's go to Paramount.

CARL SCHECTER
We already went to Paramount.

ERIC SCHECTER
What did they say?

(CONTINUED)

104 CONTINUED: (3)

104

CARL SCHECTER
They said No.

Griffin is silent, he's frozen.

GRIFFIN
I'm sorry.

Bonnie Sherow pokes her head into the office.

GRIFFIN
(panicked, contains it,
and annoyed by the
brothers' routine)
Bonnie.

BONNIE
I got the book.

GRIFFIN
Congratulations.

CARL SCHECTER
Bonnie, tell him to give us a
deal. We want a home.

ERIC SCHECTER
We're tired of shopping everything
around.

BONNIE
But I thought that's how you like
to do business.

CARL SCHECTER
We've changed our minds.

GRIFFIN
(to Bonnie)
I'll talk to you later.

BONNIE
Levison said you're going out
of town tomorrow.

GRIFFIN
Oh... right... just for the
weekend, it's a new project.

BONNIE
Are you going with someone named
June Mercator?

(CONTINUED)

104 CONTINUED: (4)

104

GRIFFIN

How do you know about June
Mercator?

BONNIE

You took her to a party with a
thousand of my best friends.

GRIFFIN

She's a location scout. I met
her last year. You weren't in
town so I asked her to come.

BONNIE

And now you're taking her to
Mexico.

ERIC SCHECTER

We better go upstairs Carl, Mom
and Dad are having a fight.

GRIFFIN

Okay guys, have your agent call
me, you've got your deal.

ERIC SCHECTER

Stop the presses. Griffin Mill
just said Yes.

GRIFFIN

What does that mean?

CARL SCHECTER

You know. It's like Ed McMahon's
Heere's Johnny! It's what people
say when they do a Griffin Mill
imitation. "Mmm, Let me get back
to you."

Bonnie doesn't follow this, she knows her affair with Griffin
is over.

BONNIE

Have a good trip.

And she slams the door. Carl and Eric smile, they love drama.

105 EXT. STREET - EVENING

105

Griffin driving and talking on the phone. INTERCUT with Susan
Avery in her office.

(CONTINUED)

105 CONTINUED:

105

GRIFFIN
Detective Avery, have you found
the killer?

SUSAN AVERY
How long have you known June
Mercator?

GRIFFIN
About three weeks.

SUSAN AVERY
Since David Kahane died, since
the night you called him.

GRIFFIN
Right, since the night I went
to Pasadena.

SUSAN AVERY
You didn't know her before that?

GRIFFIN
We met over the phone. We started
talking and felt very comfortable
together. We talked about that
feeling, and then one conversation
led to another. She thought that
I might have special information,
that you might tell me more than
you'd tell her.

SUSAN AVERY
Why?

GRIFFIN
Because I'm a powerful man in
a big industry.

SUSAN AVERY
You've been out with her.

GRIFFIN
Yes, we've been out. And you've
been following me.

SUSAN AVERY
You don't think it's a little
too soon for her to go out in
public?

Griffin starts to yell, full of indignation.

(CONTINUED)

105 CONTINUED: (2)

GRIFFIN

What is this, fucking Iran, Miss Avery? Since when does the state tell us how long and with whom we can handle our grief? Or are you just holding June Mercator to some special code of mourning reserved for women? Is that it?

SUSAN AVERY

(pushed back, after all,
he is a powerful man)
Mr. Mill.... Mr. Mill... I'm
sorry...

GRIFFIN

(now he's calmer)
I'm there for her as a friend,
that's all. But why don't you
call her, I'm sure she'll be happy
to pick over the horror of what
happened to her.

SUSAN AVERY

A murder investigation is
sometimes unpleasant. The bad
guys don't do us any favors. We
have to follow all leads.

GRIFFIN

Yeah, well think about how I feel.
I was the last person to see him
alive. It could have been me out
there. Me.

He hangs up.

DISSOLVE TO:

106 EXT. JUNE'S HOUSE - DAY

June is dressed for a vacation: white pants, expensive t-shirt,
green sweater tied over her shoulders, high-topped sneakers.
Griffin gives her a kiss. They go into the limousine.

107 EXT. STREETS OF THE CITY - DAY

THE LIMOUSINE'S dark windows reflect a police car.

INSIDE THE LIMOUSINE

Griffin watches the police car. The car pulls away and Griffin
relaxes.

(CONTINUED)

107 CONTINUED:

ANOTHER POLICE CAR pulls beside them and stays for a while before leaving. Griffin relaxes.

THE LIMOUSINE'S dark windows reflect the DODGE CHARGER that followed him to the Hilton. Inside is the short-haired cop with the mustache. Griffin sees him, but of course the cop can't see Griffin.

108 EXT. AIRPORT - DAY

Griffin and June leave the limousine while the Driver hands the bags to a SKYCAP. Griffin studies every cop, every possible plain clothes cop.

JUNE

Are you married?

GRIFFIN

No. Why?

JUNE

I once went out with a married man. Every time we were in public, I got this vibration off of him... like the one I'm getting from you.

GRIFFIN

I am a single man. I am not married. There is no one else.

More potential cops.

108A THE LONG CONVEYOR BELT TO THE TERMINAL

Everything in the world is strange to him. He is aware that he's being followed. The Short-haired cop with the mustache is behind them.

JUNE

Is somebody after you?

GRIFFIN

I thought I recognized my roommate from college.

JUNE

Go, go, go get a better look. I love running into old friends.

GRIFFIN

I hate it.

(CONTINUED)

108 A CONTINUED:

Griffin looks back. The short haired cop is twenty feet behind them.

GRIFFIN

 No.

JUNE

 Cheer up. Two quarts of tequila
 and you'll be as good as new.

108B THE GATE

 Tickets handed to Gate Attendant.

108C BOARDING RAMP

 Griffin and June walking to the plane, come to the dog leg leading to the door, he looks ahead, there are the stewardesses waiting for his boarding pass, he looks back, there's the short-haired man.

 He goes to the plane. MEN WHO COULD BE FEDERAL AGENTS are on the plane, but they turn out to be with the airline, and they leave.

109 INT. PLANE - DAY

 The plane is almost full. The door closes. On the ground, police.

 Is it almost over? The plane pulls away from the gate.

 Take off.

 The STEWARDESS moves through the first class cabin offering margaritas.

STEWARDESS

 Margarita?

GRIFFIN

 No, thank you. Can I have a mineral water?

JUNE

 Shut up, Griffin. Two Margaritas, thank you.

 She takes the drinks.

JUNE

 Drink.

 Griffin sips.

(CONTINUED)

109 CONTINUED:

109

JUNE

Better?

GRIFFIN

Better.

She kisses him, nibbles his ear. He smiles. He kisses her. In the back of the plane, college students give out movie bandito YELLS. It's party time.

110 EXT. PUERTO VALLARTA AIRPORT - DAY

110

The door opens as the rolling staircase is brought to the plane.

111 INT. PLANE - DAY

111

Griffin watches Mexican policemen on the tarmac, they're watching the plane.

He gets up with June. They pick up their bags and wait at the door.

STEWARDESS

Have a nice time.

The sun blasts Griffin as he steps outside. He leads June down the stairs and they hurry to the terminal. Police and soldiers seem to be everywhere.

112 INT. PUERTO VALLARTA TERMINAL - DAY

112

Waiting in line. Griffin is anxious as they approach passport control.

GRIFFIN

What's taking it so long?

JUNE

These things take time.

GRIFFIN

I'm not used to waiting.

JUNE

You need another drink.

She gives him another kiss and presses against him. He is being watched by a Mexican cop. He puts his arms around June and returns the kiss, as much to avoid the cop's stare as to make love.

PASSPORT CONTROL. No problem, but Griffin could crack at any moment.

BAGGAGE CLAIM. June gets her bag.

113 EXT. - HOTEL PLAYA DE ORO - DAY 113

Arriving at the hotel, cobblestones, palms, servants.

114 INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY 114

June goes straight to the refrigerator and opens a small bottle of tequila. She drinks it straight down and then gives him a deep, friendly look, amused and thankful for his generosity, that says she is honestly falling in love with him and that nothing about him could disappoint her. She pinches his belly.

JUNE

Come on fat boy, let's get a tan.

115 EXT. THE BEACH - DAY 115

Griffin rubs lotion onto June's back. While she talks, we see what he sees, that the net is closing in, and that now he can't be sure of anyone around him, anyone could be official.

An AMERICAN WOMAN snaps a picture of Griffin and June. Griffin thinks it's of him, but then the woman's LITTLE BOY appears behind him, wearing a big sombrero.

JUNE

I suppose I should worry about skin cancer, but... David was afraid of skin cancer and look what happened to him.

TWO Mexican COPS are at the bar. A HARBOR PATROL BOAT cruises back and forth just beyond the line of mild surf. The Policemen start walking to Griffin. One has his hand on his gun. The Policemen pass by. No arrest.

JUNE

I'm going back to the room.

GRIFFIN

I'll stay for a bit.

She leaves. One of the cops follows her. The other keeps his eye on Griffin.

DISSOLVE TO:

116 EXT. BEACH - LATE AFTERNOON 116

The beach is almost deserted. A few drunks are at the beach bar, waiting for the sunset. Griffin is walking back to his room, with a cop following.

117 INT. HALLWAY - LATE AFTERNOON

117

Griffin takes a deep breath outside the room, preparing for the worst. June opens the door. She's washed, clean, her skin is pink from the sun. She looks beautiful.

JUNE

There's a message for you.

GRIFFIN

And we haven't even been here
six hours

JUNE

It's from your lawyer.

118 INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

118

Griffin on the phone.

GRIFFIN

When will he be back?... Does
he want me to come back today?....

ON JUNE

Who shakes her head "No" at this. Griffin gestures to her: don't worry about it.

GRIFFIN

Did he say what this is about?...
Tell him I'll call tomorrow
morning.

He hangs up.

JUNE

Is it important?

GRIFFIN

I'm not going back until Monday.
Let me take a shower and then
we'll see the town.

119 EXT. PUERTO VALLARTA - NIGHT

119

Griffin and June stroll along the main street, past bars filled with drunk Americans. It looks like a movie set. They talk.

JUNE

So what is it going to be with
us?

He can't answer.

(CONTINUED)

119 CONTINUED:

119

JUNE

Griffin?

GRIFFIN

We have to move slowly.

He turns up a side street that climbs steeply up a hill. The street is dark. June follows him. A few moments pass....

JUNE

You're an interesting man, and I think you like me, and I don't think you're hanging around with me out of pity...

GRIFFIN

No.

JUNE

But I can't figure out what you really want.

He grabs her, not roughly, but she can't get away unless he lets her. She doesn't fight. He's testing her, how far will she go. He kisses her. He sees their reflection in a window, an echo of his reflection in Kahane's car window, the image is the same, they're in the same position.

He lifts her dress. She kisses him harder. He puts his hand in her underpants. She grabs his shoulders. He pulls her dress above her waist and he unzips his fly. He rubs against her wide, soft belly. He could come, but he doesn't want to. He lowers her dress.

JUNE

What's wrong?

GRIFFIN

Let's go back to the hotel.

120 INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

120

They pour mineral water into champagne glasses and watch the wind play with the palm trees, and listen to the surf. The garden below is empty. June comes up behind him. As she does, a Mexican COP slowly ambles into the garden below. He lights a cigarette and looks up at them. June hugs Griffin from behind.

JUNE

You're one of the best men I've ever met in my life.

(CONTINUED)

120 CONTINUED:

120

GRIFFIN

You've got me all wrong.

JUNE

I love you.

GRIFFIN

(quietly, not sure he
believes it, maybe he
does)

I love you.

JUNE

I don't know what I would have
done without you after David was
killed.

GRIFFIN

All I did was offer you a little
sympathy.

JUNE

Sometimes I think about the night
he died. What if the killer had
come to you instead of David?

GRIFFIN

I parked on the street.

JUNE

But if you hadn't. I wouldn't
have gone to your funeral. And
I think I would have felt awful,
somewhere in my, I don't know,
my soul, I would have thought,
whoa, if I hadn't told him that
David was in Pasadena, he wouldn't
have gone there and been killed.
You extended yourself. You have
no idea how much I respect that.

GRIFFIN

There's a long way from respect
to love.

JUNE

Well, you're cute and you're rich.
That doesn't hurt.

She undresses. He starts to close the window.

(CONTINUED)

120 CONTINUED: (2)

120

GRIFFIN

Let me turn on the air conditioner.

JUNE

No. We're in Mexico. If you turn on the air conditioner we won't smell the beach, and the flowers, and sun tan oils and tacos and fish... If you turn on the air conditioner we might as well be in Palm Springs. And Palm Springs is a creepy place to make love.

He looks back at the Cop. He turns away from him. She helps Griffin out of his clothes. She pulls him to her.

As with all the parts of his life, he needs to be in control. He guides her with his hands and with his voice.

GRIFFIN

Just lie there, just be quiet... just stay where you are. That's it...

He sits up beside her and strokes her body. He draws his hands from her shoulders to her feet, more like a massage than foreplay. She reaches out to touch him and he brushes her hand away.

GRIFFIN

Someone is watching us. Every move. They're watching us, they're watching us now.

She accepts this as a fantasy, and she succumbs to it. Now Griffin is stroking her, his fingers are inside her. She comes. He won't let go of her and she has to pull his hand away.

JUNE

Stop, stop.

She looks up at him through glazed eyes.

JUNE

(a smile, shy, inviting, promises Heaven)

Your turn.

GRIFFIN

No.

(CONTINUED)

120 CONTINUED: (3)

12

JUNE

I... I already put in my
diaphragm.

GRIFFIN

Shhh.

And he lies beside her, and holds her. She looks at him, their
eyes lock, she knows he's keeping something from her.

121 EXT. THE BEACH - DAY

12

Griffin and June are swimming slowly in a calm sea. Overhead:
tourists in parachutes, pulled by speedboats. Quiet for a moment.

JUNE

How come you don't have a
girlfriend?

GRIFFIN

I do. I did.

JUNE

The one who couldn't go to the
ball?

GRIFFIN

Yes.

JUNE

Does she know you're here with
me?

GRIFFIN

No.

JUNE

Where is she?

GRIFFIN

In Los Angeles.

JUNE

Why aren't you with her?

GRIFFIN

I told her I was busy. We're not
as close as we used to be.

JUNE

So she's not really your
girlfriend. You don't love her.

(CONTINUED)

121 CONTINUED:

121

GRIFFIN

I thought I told you that I love you.

JUNE

Men say lots of things they don't really mean.

GRIFFIN

I meant it at the time.

JUNE

Yes, that's one of the things you hear men say. They say that one a lot.

She splashes him, she's unhappy, a spell has been broken and she's the one who asked to smash it. She ducks under water, comes back up, splashes Griffin and then swims away. He catches up with her.

GRIFFIN

You're disappointed with me because I kept something from you, because I didn't tell an old girlfriend that I'd be in Mexico with another woman. I'm just a guy, June. Maybe I have a big office and a fancy car, and I know how to wear a tuxedo and call for a limousine, so it looks like I have my life together, but love confuses everyone. I'm no exception.

JUNE

(sober, but forgiving him)

Let's go to the room.

122 INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

122

In bed, naked. Again he plays her with his hand. She reaches for him.

GRIFFIN

Not yet.

123 EXT. MEXICAN HIGHWAY - DAY

123

Griffin and June in the cab. The police are behind them. June sees them.

(CONTINUED)

123 CONTINUED:

12

JUNE

There were a lot of police around
this morning.

GRIFFIN

Really?

She doesn't answer, it's not important to her.

124 INT. AIRPORT - DAY

12

Griffin sees that they're being escorted through Passport Control.

125 EXT. TARMAC - DAY

12

Griffin and June walk to the staircase to the plane. Police are everywhere. The SUPERVISING OFFICER, on his car's telephone, seems to be describing their progress to headquarters.

At the top of the stairs, June kisses Griffin.

JUNE

Thank you, Griffin. I had a
wonderful time.

126 INT. LAX - DAY

12

Griffin and June walk towards the crowd waiting for the arriving passengers. A LIMOUSINE DRIVER with a sign: MR. MILL.

127 INT. LIMOUSINE - DAY

12

Griffin on the car phone. He dials.

JAN (V.O.)

Griffin Mill's office.

GRIFFIN

I'm back.

JAN (V.O.)

How was Mexico?

GRIFFIN

Did Dick Mellen call?

JAN (V.O.)

Yes, and your old friend Susan
Avery. She told me to tell you
to call her as soon as you get
in. I asked her if there was a
break in the case?

(more)

(CONTINUED)

127 CONTINUED:

127

JAN (Cont'd)

And she said, she didn't want
to jinx anything. So I guess
there is.

GRIFFIN

I'll be back in an hour.

He hangs up. He dials another number.

JUNE

You'll be on the phone all day,
won't you?

GRIFFIN

All day.

128 EXT. LIMOUSINE - DAY

128

Heading up Outpost, to June's house.

129 INT. LIMOUSINE - DAY

129

Griffin on the phone with Mellen.

GRIFFIN

What's the news, Dick?

MELLEN (V.O.)

Levison is out.

GRIFFIN

So Larry Levy is taking over?

MELLEN (V.O.)

That's not what I hear. Don't
talk to anybody. I'll call when
I hear more.

GRIFFIN

Thanks.

(He hangs up.)

JUNE

Good news?

GRIFFIN

You're the only good news.

He kisses her. They're at her house.

130 EXT. JUNE'S HOUSE - DAY

At the front door. Griffin thinks he may be arrested soon, and that she may be arrested. He feels guilty now, but he doesn't know how to warn her of the crisis to come.

GRIFFIN

Ummm.... listen... whatever happens between us... whether it works out... well... let's say we got married....

JUNE

Are you proposing?

GRIFFIN

No.

JUNE

So you don't want to get married.

GRIFFIN

Look... big things may happen today. And... and I want you to know that... I... You have a right to whatever you want to think of me.

JUNE

What are you talking about?

Griffin kisses her, and walks back to the limousine. The Saab is still in the driveway.

131 INT. LIMOUSINE - DAY

Griffin on the phone as he waves goodbye to June.

GRIFFIN

Susan Avery please... Griffin Mill is calling.

He waits.

SUSAN AVERY (V.O.)

Griffin, this is sort of difficult, because I like you. But I was wondering if maybe you'd get in touch with a lawyer today and both of you come down to the station.

GRIFFIN

Is someone accusing me of the murder?

(CONTINUED)

131 CONTINUED:

131

SUSAN AVERY (V.O.)

I told the D.A. you'd come without a subpoena, but if you want to be served at the studio, be my guest.

GRIFFIN

When do you need to see me?

SUSAN AVERY

In an hour.

He hangs up. He dials another number.

GRIFFIN

It's Griffin Mill. Listen, we're stuck on a story point, I need to talk to a criminal lawyer, who does Dick like? ... Thanks.

(dials again)

Mr. Phillip Brophy, please... Tell him Griffin Mill.... Hello. Mr. Brophy, my name is Griffin Mill, I am a client of Richard Mellen at Mellen, Ottoway and Green... and I'm not quite sure what's going on, but I've been asked to bring a lawyer with me to the Pasadena police station. I'll explain it in person. I need help immediately, and I can pay any fee.

132 EXT. PASADENA POLICE STATION - DAY

132

The limousine arrives.

133 INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

133

Griffin comes into the station. Walter Stuckel is sitting on a bench, watching.

SUSAN AVERY

Thanks for coming down without a fight.

GRIFFIN

This isn't a party, Miss Avery.

PHIL BROPHY bounds into the lobby. He's in his mid-thirties, energetic, focussed, and Griffin is a little jealous of someone whose life has not brought him to the brink of ruin.

(CONTINUED)

133 CONTINUED:

13

BROPHY

Mr. Mill, get away from that woman, she's the enemy.

GRIFFIN

Mr. Brophy...

BROPHY

Sit down, Mr. Mill, let me do the talking.

Griffin goes to Walter as Brophy talks to Avery.

GRIFFIN

What are you doing here?

WALTER STUCKEL

Looking out for the studio's interests.

GRIFFIN

You mean if I get arrested you handle the press?

WALTER STUCKEL

I handle the press.

Brophy returns and pulls Griffin aside.

BROPHY

She wants you to do a line-up.

GRIFFIN

Get me out of it.

BROPHY

If you say no, they'll arrest you. They're pretty sure.

GRIFFIN

All I did was see the guy before he died.

BROPHY

I never argue with the man who can pay any fee.

GRIFFIN

What if they pick me?

(CONTINUED)

133 CONTINUED: (2)

BROPHY

This is serious stuff. You get arrested, and I get you out on bail.

GRIFFIN

And I'm on the six o'clock news.

BROPHY

(a moment of reassuring humor)

Nah, the eleven, by the time the booking is over, it'll be too late for the six.

Griffin likes Brophy.

GRIFFIN

Let's go.

134 INT. LINE-UP ROOM - DAY

Griffin standing in front of the height graph painted on the wall. There are six MEN in the lineup, three of them vaguely Griffin's size and shape. Number 5 is the COP he'd seen near Avery's desk. They look at their reflections, and Griffin tries to see beyond. Impossible. Griffin is number 3.

SUSAN AVERY (V.O.)

Number one, step forward....
number five... turn sideways....
number three, step forward...

A pause. Griffin is out in front, alone, facing his reflection.

SUSAN AVERY (V.O.)

Thank you number three... number four, step forward.... thank you number four... number two.... step forward... thank you number two.... number three, step forward.... turn to the left number three.... Number five, would you step forward, too. Stay there, number three.

Griffin turns. Off his profile we move through the mirror, and come back around to see him from the WITNESS' POV. We don't see the Witness, who is in the row behind Susan Avery.

SUSAN AVERY

Turn to the right.... face forward
number three....

(CONTINUED)

134 CONTINUED:

Avery turns to the witness.

SUSAN AVERY

Are you ready?

A terrifying pause. Avery, and Griffin, are waiting.

135 INT. LINE-UP ROOM - DAY

Susan Avery, Phil Brophy and Walter Stuckel come into the room.
This is it.

SUSAN AVERY

(joking, to Number 5)

You better have a good alibi,
Dave.

BROPHY

That's it, Mr. Mill.

GRIFFIN

What happened?

SUSAN AVERY

The witness picked a cop.

GRIFFIN

I was thinking, you know, I was
on the street when he was killed.
And a witness to a murder might
have seen me there, and, in the
lineup, would have remembered
my face.

Walter Stuckel listens, quietly.

BROPHY

There you go with my defense.

SUSAN AVERY

I have to ask a few more
questions.

GRIFFIN

With my lawyer in the room.

SUSAN AVERY

With your lawyer in the room.
How long have you known June
Mercator?

GRIFFIN

Since Kahane's funeral.

(CONTINUED)

135 CONTINUED:

135

SUSAN AVERY

Since you spoke to her on the night he was killed.

GRIFFIN

Yes.

SUSAN AVERY

You'd never met her before that. No one ever saw you together. Your phone logs won't show any calls to her.

BROPHY

That's it... no more questions.

GRIFFIN

It's all right. No... there was absolutely no connection before the murder.

SUSAN AVERY

Thank you, Mr. Mill.

BROPHY

Let's go.

Brophy puts an arm around Griffin and leads him away.

136 EXT. POLICE STATION PARKING LOT - DAY

136

Griffin and Brophy by the limousine.

BROPHY

Say hello to Dick Mellen for me.

Griffin puts a finger to his lips.

GRIFFIN

Shhh.

Brophy understands. Griffin gets into the limousine. The window is down.

BROPHY

She thinks you're guilty. She thinks you just got away with murder.

GRIFFIN

Thank you, Mr. Brophy.

(CONTINUED)

136 CONTINUED:

136

The limo pulls away, and they pass Walter Stuckel. No words: but he knows what Walter is thinking. He rolls up the smoked glass window. Off his reflection in the glass we

CUT TO:

137 INT. GAS CHAMBER - NIGHT

137

From the PRISONER'S POV: preparations for an execution. A CHAPLAIN is reciting Psalms:

CHAPLAIN

Yea, though I walk through the
valley of Death, I fear no evil...
(etc.)

The WITNESSES are somber, looking at the prisoner inside the chamber. The GUARDS strap the witness in: arms, legs, chest.

OUTSIDE THE GAS CHAMBER: The EXECUTIONER prepares the cyanide pellets. The WARDEN stands by a black phone. It RINGS. Everyone is alert.

WARDEN

Yes, Governor... thank you
Governor.
(He puts the phone down,
and shakes his head.)
Let's go.

The Chaplain makes the sign of the cross in front of the prisoner. The guards and the chaplain leave the chamber. There is an awful sound of the door being screwed shut.

ON THE EXECUTIONER

The pellets are released into the acid bath under the chair.

PRISONER'S POV:

The witnesses watch him die. THE SOUND OF THE PRISONER'S FINAL, RASPING BREATHS. Suddenly the witnesses all look away.

OUTSIDE THE CHAMBER:

We see what they see, coming down the hall, with a shotgun in his hand, looking crazed, is KEVIN COSTNER.

COSTNER

She didn't do it!

He BLASTS the window of the gas chamber and now we see MICHELLE PFEIFFER strapped in the chair... PULL BACK TO REVEAL

38 INT. SCREENING ROOM - NIGHT

138

This is a movie and we are behind Griffin Mill in Levison's seat. We stay with the film for a moment.

WARDEN

Turn on the fans!

Strong fans suck the gas out of the chamber. Pfeiffer is barely conscious, and Costner is at her side, kissing her.

PFEIFFER

What took you so long?

COSTNER

The traffic was a bitch.

MUSIC UP as the lovers hug. It's a rough cut, and the film is killed. The lights come up in the room, and as Griffin stands up, applauding, we see the crew, Oakley, Civella, and Larry Levy, in Griffin's old seat. And this, superimposed:

ONE YEAR LATER

GRIFFIN

Larry... God damn it, Larry, I was sure you'd fuck this up, but God damn it, Larry... Oakley!

OAKLEY

Yo!

GRIFFIN

Tell your agent to call me, I don't want you working anywhere else for your next three pictures.

CIVELLA

What about me?

GRIFFIN

(loves him)

Find some other talent to leach off of, you hack.

CIVELLA

Time for dinner?

GRIFFIN

Yeah, but with grown ups.

LARRY LEVY

It's his first anniversary.

(CONTINUED)

138 CONTINUED:

138

CIVELLA

You know how many first
anniversaries I've had? Three.

GRIFFIN

Okay boys, see you tomorrow.

It's clear that Griffin is in charge, that the battle between
them is over, and that they're working together as a team.

139 EXT. STUDIO - NIGHT

139

Griffin leaves the screening room and steps outside. It's late.
He crosses the New York street. FOOTSTEPS behind him. When he
gets to the Courthouse steps he HEARS the click of a gun. It's
The WRITER. We don't see his face. Griffin stops.

WRITER

He's baaaack.

GRIFFIN

I thought you'd forgotten me.

Griffin starts to turn.

WRITER

Don't turn around.

GRIFFIN

You'll never get off the lot.

WRITER

Sometimes that doesn't matter.

He drops an envelope onto the steps.

WRITER

Pick it up.

Griffin slowly bends down to pick it up.

WRITER

Look inside.

Money.

GRIFFIN

What is this?

WRITER

A thousand dollars.

(CONTINUED)

139 CONTINUED:

139

GRIFFIN

For what?

WRITER

There's a note, you can read it.
But, basically, it's been a weird
year, and... well, read the note.

The Writer and Griffin both hesitate. Each wants to leave, Griffin wants to read the note, but something has to be completed.

GRIFFIN

I...

He starts to turn.

WRITER

Don't look at me.

GRIFFIN

(doesn't want a fight)
Okay, okay. I just... hey, listen,
I'm sorry I called you a loser.
I should have gotten back to you.

WRITER

Are you better about that now?

GRIFFIN

(grins)
I try to be.

WRITER

Well, then it's been a growth
experience for both of us.

GRIFFIN

That's a good way of putting it.

Griffin smiles to himself, but under a shadow, the Writer can't possibly know what he set in motion.

WRITER

You have it all now, don't you?

There's something odd about the question, an uninvited intimacy.

GRIFFIN

I worked hard for it.

(CONTINUED)

.39 CONTINUED: (2)

139

WRITER

You became a better man for having
killed, didn't you?

(a slight hesitation)

You needed it, you needed to think
you'd drawn blood to really
handle the world of men.

Interesting, isn't it... if he
hadn't died.

GRIFFIN

(heart racing)

I don't know what you're talking
about.

WRITER

(singing)

Gold.... fingeerrrr. He's the
man...

ON GRIFFIN:

The growing horror.

WRITER

If you're not the man you thought
you were, who are you?

GRIFFIN

I killed him.

WRITER

I killed him.

(pause, letting it sink
in, then with a deep
voice)

You thought you had a big dick..

(Mickey Mouse voice)

But it's really only this big.

Griffin is stunned. He's been living a lie. Everything he has
now he owes to a murder. And if he didn't commit it? He's free
of guilt, but then without the murder he wouldn't be running
the studio. He wouldn't be on top.

WRITER

He was alive when you left him.
I finished the job. I thought about
going to the police, but then I
thought... no, this is better.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (3)

139

WRITER (Cont'd)

And then I sent you postcards and then I called the police and then I saw you in the lineup and then I let you go. It's all in the note.

GRIFFIN

No.

WRITER

If you hadn't washed the blood off your hands, do you think you'd be running the studio? I did you a favor. You should thank me.

GRIFFIN

I couldn't sleep.

WRITER

Time to read more scripts.

GRIFFIN

I couldn't eat.

WRITER

You lost weight.

GRIFFIN

I was scared I was going to go to the gas chamber, all the time, every minute. I was scared all the time.

WRITER

So you finally had a real emotion.

Griffin turns and without warning kicks the Writer in the balls. The Writer drops his gun. The Writer is a haunted looking man, mid-thirties, not unlike David Kahane, perhaps more intelligent looking but not quite so much a part of the world. Griffin is on him, and the fight is like the fight with Kahane. The same choreography. They roll over the envelope, tearing it, money surrounds them on the steps, there's a card in the envelope that's pulled out, too, we can't really read it. This time, as Griffin chokes a writer, he doesn't let go. And this time, the writer he's choking is going to die. This time the Writer pleads for his life.

WRITER

Wait.

GRIFFIN

Kahane told me to fuck myself.

(CONTINUED)

.39 CONTINUED: (4)

139

WRITER

Please.

GRIFFIN

No.

The Writer is dead. There's a flurry of twenty-dollar bills on the steps. A few flap in the light wind.

Griffin looks up. The black Saab comes down the New York street.

June is driving.

She gets out. She's dressed to go out. She looks rich. She's in a panic, her husband is sitting beside a body on the steps.

JUNE

Griffin, my God, Griffin:...

GRIFFIN

June.

JUNE

What happened, oh my God, what happened?

No answer.

JUNE

You were mugged? Here, on the lot?
You were mugged?

GRIFFIN

No.

JUNE

Is this real money?

GRIFFIN

Yes.

She looks down and sees the greeting card. It's a still from The Bicycle Thief.

JUNE

(an echo from the grave)
The Bicycle Thief.

GRIFFIN

What does it say?

(CONTINUED)

139 CONTINUED: (5)

139

JUNE

Griffin, you're in shock. We have to call the police. We have to call an ambulance.

GRIFFIN

(force, anger)

He doesn't need one. He's dead. What does the note say?

She reads the message.

JUNE

(reading)

I'm going to let you go. This is for the windshields.

(to Griffin)

What windshields?

(Griffin says nothing, she continues)

You were brilliant in the lineup.

(to Griffin)

What lineup? Griffin, what lineup?

GRIFFIN

What else does he say?

JUNE

(reading)

It's been a weird year. I finally decided that maybe I wasn't such a good writer after all. Or maybe I just have to leave LA, so I'm going to Seattle. I'm sorry I tortured you. I'm sorry for ...

(to Griffin)

There was something there, but he crossed it out.

GRIFFIN

I know what it was. What else?

JUNE

Then he says: Anyway, it's time to move on with our lives.

She puts the note down. She looks up at her husband.

JUNE

Who is he?

GRIFFIN

A... a writer.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (6)

139

JUNE

(and because the card,
the money, Griffin's
entrance into her life,
all of it resonates with
something she may have
always suspected...)

And who are you?

GRIFFIN

I used to be a big shot.

Hold on them, sitting on the steps. People are coming.

THE END