

IN THE ROARING HEART OF THE CRUCIBLE, STEEL IS MADE. IN THE RAGING FLAME OF PERSONAL TRAGEDY, MEN ARE SOMETIMES FORGED INTO SOMETHING MORE THAN HUMAN.

SO IT WAS WITH RICHARD HENRY BENSON.

A MILLIONAIRE, AN ADVENTURER, A HUNTER -- HE WAS STILL FLESH AND BLOOD.

BUT AFTER THE DREAD LOSS INFLICTED ON HIM BY AN INHUMAN CRIME RING, HE BECAME A MACHINE OF VENGEANCE. A FIGURE OF ICE AND STEEL, MORE PITILESS THAN EITHER. CONCEALING GENIUS AND POWER BEHIND A FACE AS DEAD AND PLIABLE AS A MASK FROM THE GRAVE.

ONLY BENSON'S EYES, LIKE PALE-GREY FIRE, HINT AT THE DEADLY SCOURGE THE UNDERWORLD INVOKED AGAINST ITSELF --

--WHEN CRIME'S GREED TURNED RICHARD HENRY BENSON INTO THE AVENGER.

PREVIOUSLY: BENSON AND HIS CREW HAVE BEEN ATTACKED BY A CADRE OF NEAR-INVISIBLE MEN WHO LURED THEM TO THE BRONX ZOO AFTER HOURS. NELLIE AND SMITTY ARE, AT THIS MOMENT, SAFE.

LESS SO, BENSON.

# THE INVISIBLE DEATH


## CHAPTER THREE: FORMULA FOR FEAR





THE HEART OF THE  
AVENGER FLOODS  
WITH STRONG  
EMOTIONS: DREAD  
AT HIS IMMEDIATE  
SITUATION, AND  
DISGUST WITH  
HIMSELF FOR WALKING  
CARELESSLY  
INTO DANGER.

HIS LIFELESS  
FACE REFLECTS  
NONE OF IT.



HIS STEELY CABLES OF MUSCLE  
TRANSMIT ENORMOUS POWER FOR  
A MAN OF AVERAGE FRAME; HIS  
QUICKNESS IS OF A DEGREE  
RARELY FOUND IN ONE SO STRONG.

THESE GIFTS MAY BE  
ENOUGH TO SAVE  
RICHARD BENSON FROM  
THE THREE JUNGLE  
CATS BEFORE HIM.

NOR WILL THE  
TWO WEAPONS  
HE CARRIES, THE  
GUN AND THE  
THROWING KNIFE.  
NEITHER WOULD  
BE RELIABLE IN  
SUCH GLOOM  
AGAINST  
TARGETS SO  
DIFFICULT TO SEE  
UNDER ANY  
CONDITIONS,  
UNLESS...



...HE FOUND YET A  
THIRD WEAPON.




HIS  
DISGUISE  
KIT.

THE TRAUMATIC LOSS OF HIS FAMILY TRANSFORMED MORE THAN BENSON'S APPEARANCE. HIS FLESH BECAME MALLEABLE, HIS FACIAL MUSCLES PARALYZED. HIS RESOURCEFULNESS SPUN THIS INJURY INTO POWER: THE POWER TO SCULPT HIS FEATURES; THE POWER TO HIDE IN PLAIN SIGHT, TO IMPERSONATE OTHER MEN.

THE MAKEUP IS MEANT TO CONCEAL HIS MORGUE-LIKE PALLOR -- BUT IN THIS MOMENT, IT MARKS THE HIDES OF THESE FRENZIED BEASTS, REVEALING THEM.

WHICH *STILL* IS  
NOT ENOUGH.






SO HE TURNS TO  
IKE, THE KNIFE  
HE CALLS A TRUE  
FRIEND.



AS IKE FINDS ITS TARGET,  
THE AVENGER'S RELIEF IS  
LEAVENED WITH REGRET.



BENSON HAS HUNTED BIG  
GAME. HE HAS DWELLED  
AMONG, AND LEARNED TO  
RESPECT, THE BEASTS OF  
THE WILD. HE KNOWS THE  
GREAT LION, UNLIKE  
A MAN OF FREE WILL,  
CANNOT BE HELD  
CULPABLE; IT CAN ONLY  
BEHAVE ACCORDING TO  
ITS NATURE. HE  
CAREFULLY STRIKES TO  
STOP THE BRUTE,  
NOT KILL IT.



IF I LIVE THROUGH THIS,  
VOWS BENSON, THE  
BUTCHER WHO WARPED  
THESE ANIMALS INTO  
MONSTERS WILL PAY.





A SINGLE SWIPE OF RAZOR-SHARP CLAW IMPOSSIBLY CRACKS REINFORCED GLASS. LIKE THE TRANSLUCENT MEN WHOM BENSON FOUGHT EARLIER THIS NIGHT, THESE ALTERED LIONS POSSESS TRIPLE THEIR NORMAL STRENGTH. THE SEDAN'S CUSTOM ARMOR PROMISES BUT A MOMENT'S PROTECTION.



BENSON KNOWS HE MUST USE THAT SLIVER OF TIME...

