

= The Invisible Hand (The Spectacular Spider @-@ Man) =

" The Invisible Hand " is the sixth episode of the animated television series The Spectacular Spider @-@ Man , which is based on the comic book character Spider @-@ Man created by Stan Lee and Steve Ditko . The episode follows Spider @-@ Man as he faces the Rhino , who has an indestructible rhino @-@ like suit and super strength . In his personal life , as his alter ego Peter Parker , Spider @-@ Man tries to ask out Daily Bugle worker Betty Brant to the upcoming fall formal at his high school .

" The Invisible Hand " was written by Matt Wayne and directed by Dave Bullock . Wayne had written one other episode for The Spectacular Spider @-@ Man before , and Bullock had directed the direct @-@ to @-@ video superhero film Justice League : The New Frontier . Clancy Brown voiced Rhino for the episode and was cast because the creators felt he could gracefully transition between the character 's personalities . It originally aired on April 12 , 2008 , on the Kids WB ! block for the CW Network and received generally positive reviews from television critics .

= = Plot summary = =

Dr. Otto Octavius is preparing to attach an exoskeleton onto Alex O 'Hirn 's body , modeled after that of a rhinoceros . Though Octavius is wary about going through with the experiment , Hammerhead forces him to activate it . O 'Hirn 's body is surgically attached to the suit and is given immeasurable strength . Meanwhile , Peter Parker is at the Daily Bugle trying to ask out Betty Brant to his school 's fall formal , despite their four @-@ year age difference ; she finally agrees to consider it and Peter hurries homeward , exhilarated , until he realizes he will need money for the date . He tells his best friend Harry about his plans at school the next day . Peter then receives a text message that his Aunt May is having lunch with Betty at the Bugle . Flash Thompson then gives Peter a noogie just before Peter runs off .

O 'Hirn dubs himself the " Rhino " and storms through the Bugle main office , where Aunt May and Betty are having lunch , and demands that J. Jonah Jameson tells him where Peter is , as he knows Peter photographs Spider @-@ Man . Jameson spots Peter hiding after just arriving and lies to Rhino about not knowing where he is . Peter sneaks off and dons his Spider @-@ Man costume , then engages Rhino in a fight . He wonders what the " Big Man " has been up to with all the supervillains , like Rhino , he has been organizing . Spider @-@ Man has a large scale brawl through the city and soon realizes that Rhino needs to be constantly hydrated in order to fight . He lures him into a steam tunnel and breaks all the pipes , dehydrating Rhino into unconsciousness . As he passes out , Rhino accidentally mentions that " Big Man " is really a man named Mr. Lincoln .

Peter goes back to the Bugle and claims to have been hiding the whole time . Betty pulls him aside and tells him that she is simply too old to date him and is sorry ; Peter , still downtrodden , remembers what the Rhino said and asks a reporter if he knows about anyone by that name . The reporter tells him about L. Thompson Lincoln , a philanthropist who is rumored to be a dangerous crime lord . That night Peter goes to Lincoln 's office as Spider @-@ Man to find out if the rumors are true . Lincoln prefers to be called " Tombstone " and wields incredible strength ; he pins him down and suggests that he work for him , fighting crime like usual but turning his head when it comes to his crimes . Spider @-@ Man refuses to do so and runs off .

When Peter gets home , he is depressed . Aunt May insists that he gets dressed for the formal and explains that she has arranged for him to go with Mary Jane Watson . Peter thinks that she will turn out to be a plain girl due to the descriptions Aunt May has given him , but when she arrives he learns that she is an attractive girl and is flabbergasted .

= = Production = =

" The Invisible Hand " was written by Matt Wayne . Wayne had previously written the episode " Natural Selection " and went on to write " Persona " . Dave Bullock , who directed the animated feature film Justice League : The New Frontier , directed the episode . The title of the episode

follows the " Education of Peter Parker " scheme Greg Weisman , a developer and producer for The Spectacular Spider @-@ Man , created . The naming scheme for the second story arc of season one refers to economics .

There was a scene cut from the episode after it was written , recorded , and storyboarded . The scene featured Rhino looking in a phone book for individuals named " Peter Parker " in the tri @-@ state area . He storms into a " Peter James Parker " (Kevin Michael Richardson) , a blind , elderly African @-@ American bassoon player , accusing him of being the Peter Parker he is looking for . The man is outraged and asks him , " Do I look like I 'm a photographer ? " Rhino himself is furious as there are several Peter Parkers in the tri @-@ state area . Weisman was upset that it was removed and called it " just hilarious " .

Weisman and casting director Jamie Thomason each easily picked out Clancy Brown for the role of Rhino . Weisman explains , " We knew Rhino would require a voice with strength and menace , but Rhino also isn 't the brightest bulb on the marquee , so we knew whoever we cast would also have to have the acting chops and comic timing to take the character beyond the usual dumb goon . " They each had worked with Brown previously and knew he would be able to " nail it " , as he is able to give a " tough , low voice " and " turn on a dime between dangerous and comedic characterizations . "

Brown sought to reflect the Rhino 's simplistic thinking style in his voice . He believes " the quintessential ' thug ' was played by William Bendix in The Glass Key . The simpler the character , the simpler the thought process . That means Rhino 's ' motivation ' is never too complicated [...] he 's very elemental . He 's mad or happy or angry or sad or hungry or whatever . And it never gets beyond his appetites or ego . " Brown considers that Bendix 's performance perfectly portrayed this type of character .

= = Release and reception = =

" The Invisible Hand " was originally broadcast on April 12 , 2008 , on the Kids WB ! block for the CW Network . A two @-@ week hiatus of The Spectacular Spider @-@ Man followed the airing . It is available on the DVDs The Spectacular Spider @-@ Man : Volume I , where it is paired with " Market Forces " and " Competition " , and The Spectacular Spider @-@ Man Animated Series : The Complete First Season .

The episode received generally positive reviews from television critics . Eric Goldman of IGN gave the episode an 8 @. @ 0 / 10 , (" Impressive ") writing , " For an episode that began ho @-@ hum , things certainly got interesting in the last half , with two surprise introductions . " Goldman praised the fight sequences as well as the unveiling of Tombstone and Mary Jane . Goldman concluded his review by writing , " It 's a testament to this show that it has it exactly right that Peter Parker 's everyday , unmasked persona is so integral to the story , and that I actually am very curious how this dance goes . "

Sean Elliot of iF Magazine gave the episode a " B + " and wrote that it was a " well @-@ thought out premise " . Elliot was " pleased " with the portrayal of Rhino as an unintelligent brute ; he also enjoyed the change of the " Big Man 's " identity from that of the comics - where he was a Bugle reporter named Frederic Foswell - and found it humorous to have Foswell be the reporter to tell Peter who the " Big Man " is rumored to be . Ultimate Disney reviewer Luke Bonanno did not include the episode among his top five episodes of The Spectacular Spider @-@ Man 's first season , but " feel [s] obligated to point out that the uniform excellence of the lot [makes] this a challenging task . "