

SCENE: TRUE WEST (2M)

Acting Notes

Night. Coyotes in distance, fade, sound of typewriter in dark, crickets, candlelight in alcove, dim light in kitchen, lights reveal Austin at glass table typing, Lee sits across from him, foot on table, drinking beer and whisky, the T.V. is still on sink counter, Austin types for a while, then stops.

Lee: All right, now read it back to me.

Austin: I'm not reading it back to you, Lee. You can read it when we're finished. I can't spend all night on this.

Lee: You got better things to do?

Austin: Let's just go ahead. Now what happens when he leaves Texas?

Lee: *(stands up and begins to pace)* Alright. Now, he's in the truck and he's got his horse trailer and his horse.

Austin: We've already established that.

Lee: And he sees this other guy comin' up behind him in another truck. And that truck is pullin' a cattle trailer.

Austin: Okay. I got it.

Lee: And this other guy's got his horse all saddled up in the back a' the cattle trailer.

Austin: Right.

Lee: So both these guys have got their horse right along with 'em, see.

Austin: I understand.

Lee: Then this first guy suddenly realizes two things.

Austin: The guy in front?

Lee: Right. The guy in front realizes two things almost at the same time. Simultaneous.

Austin: What were the two things?

Lee: Number one, he realizes that the guy behind him is the husband of the woman he's been-

Lee makes gesture of screwing and pumping his arm.

Austin: *(Sees Lee's gesture)* Oh. Yeah.

Blocking Notes

Lee: And number two, he realizes he's in the middle of Tornado Country and number three-

Austin: I thought there was only two.

Lee: There's three. There's a third unforeseen realization.

Austin: And what's that?

Lee: That he's runnin' outa' gas.

Austin: *(stops typing)* Come on, Lee.

Lee: Whadya' mean, "Come on"? That's what it is. Write it down! He's runnin' outa' gas.

Austin: It's too-

Lee: What? It's too what? It's too real? That's what ya' mean isn't it? It's too much like real life?

Austin: It's not like real life! It's not enough like real life. Things don't happen like that.

Lee: What! Men don't screw other men's women?

Austin: Yes. But they don't end up chasing each other across the Panhandle. Through "Tornado Country."

Lee: They do in this movie!

Austin: And they don't have horses conveniently along with them when they run out of gas! And they don't run out of gas either!

Lee: These guys run outa' gas! This is my story and one a' these guys runs outa' gas!

Austin: It's just a dumb excuse to get them into a chase scene. It's contrived.

Lee: It is a chase scene! It's already a chase scene. They been chasin' each other fer days.

Austin: So now they're supposed to abandon their trucks, climb on their horse, and chase each other into the mountains?

Lee: There aren't any mountains in the Panhandle! It's flat!! *(Lee grabs the keys off the table and starts to leave)*

Austin: Where are you going?

Lee: Never mind where I'm goin'! That's got nothin' to do with you. I just gotta' get this done.

Austin: Give me back my keys, Lee.

Lee: Not until you write this thing! You're gonna' write this outline thing for me or that car's gonna wind up in Arizona with a different paint job.

Austin: You think you can force me to write this? I was doing you a favor.

Lee: Git off yer high horse will ya! Favor! Big favor. Handin' down favors from the mountain top.

Austin: Let's just write it, okay? Let's sit down and not get upset and see if we can get through this.

Austin sits at typewriter. Long pause. Lee takes keys out of his pocket slowly and throws them on the table, long pauses. Austin stares at keys.

Lee: There. Now you got yer keys back.

Austin looks up at Lee but doesn't take keys.

Lee: Go ahead. There's yer keys.

Austin slowly takes keys off table and puts them back in his own pocket.

Lee: Now what're you gonna' do? Kick me out?

Austin: Look, I'll write this thing for you, Lee. I don't mind writing it. I just don't want to get all worked up about it. It's not worth it. Now, come on. Let's just get through it, Okay?

Lee: Nah, you got yer own work to do. I don't wanna' interfere with yer life.

Austin: I mean it'd be really fantastic if you could sell this. Turn it into a movie. I mean it.