

LEE. What kinda' deal?

AUSTIN. Convince him it's a worthwhile story.

LEE. He's not convinced? How come he's comin' over here if he's not convinced? I'll convince him for ya.

AUSTIN. You don't understand the way things work down here.

LEE. How do things work down here?

(Pause)

AUSTIN. Look, if I loan you my car will you have it back here by six?

LEE. On the button. With a full tank a' gas.

AUSTIN. (Digging in his pocket for keys) Forget about the gas.

LEE. Hey, these days gas is gold, old buddy.

(AUSTIN hands the keys to LEE)

You remember that car I used to loan you?

AUSTIN. Yeah.

LEE. Forty Ford. Flathead.

AUSTIN. Yeah.

LEE. Sucker hauled ass didn't it?

AUSTIN. Lee, it's not that I don't want to loan you my car—

LEE. You are loanin' me yer car.

(LEE gives AUSTIN a pat on the shoulder, pause)

AUSTIN. I know. I just wish—

LEE. What? You wish what?

AUSTIN. I don't know. I wish I wasn't—I wish I didn't have to be doing business down here. I'd like to just spend some time with you.

LEE. I thought it was "Art" you were doin'.

(LEE moves across kitchen toward exit, tosses keys in his hand)

AUSTIN. Try to get it back here by six, okay?

LEE. No sweat. Hey, ya' know, if that uh—story of yours doesn't go over with the guy—tell him I got a

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couple a' "projects" he might be interested in. Real commercial. Full a' suspense. True-to-life stuff.

(LEE exits, AUSTIN stares after LEE then turns, goes to papers at table, leafs through pages, lights fade to black)

—END SCENE 2—

SCENE 3: afternoon, alcove, SAUL KIMMER and AUSTIN seated across from each other at table.

SAUL. Well, to tell you the truth Austin, I have never felt so confident about a project in quite a long time.

AUSTIN. Well, that's good to hear Saul.

SAUL. I am absolutely convinced we can get this thing off the ground. I mean we'll have to make a sale to television and that means getting a major star. Somebody bankable. But I think we can do it. I really do.

AUSTIN. Don't you think we need a first draft before we approach a star?

SAUL. No, no, not at all. I don't think it's necessary. Maybe a brief synopsis. I don't want you to touch the typewriter until we have some seed money.

AUSTIN. That's fine with me.

SAUL. I mean it's a great story. Just the story alone. You've really managed to capture something this time.

AUSTIN. I'm glad you like it, Saul.

(LEE enters abruptly into kitchen carrying a stolen television set, short pause)

LEE. Aw shit, I'm sorry about that. I am really sorry Austin.

AUSTIN. (Standing) That's all right.

LEE. (Moving toward them) I mean I thought it was way past six already. You said to have it back here by six.

AUSTIN. We were just finishing up. *(To SAUL.)* This is my uh—brother, Lee.

SAUL. *(Standing)* Oh, I'm very happy to meet you.

*(LEE seizes T.V. on sink counter, shakes hands with SAUL.)*

LEE. I can't tell ya' how happy I am to meet you sir.

SAUL. Saul Kimmer.

LEE. Mr. Kipper.

SAUL. Kimmer.

AUSTIN. Lee's been living out on the desert and he just uh—

SAUL. Oh, that's terrific! *(To LEE)* Palm Springs?

LEE. Yeah. Yeah, right. Right around in that area.

Near uh—Bob Hope Drive there.

SAUL. Oh I love it out there. I just love it. The air is wonderful.

LEE. Yeah. Sure is. Healthy.

SAUL. And the golf. I don't know if you play golf, but the golf is just about the best.

LEE. I play a lotta' golf.

SAUL. Is that right?

LEE. Yeah. In fact I was hoping I'd run into somebody out here who played a little golf. I've been lookin' for a partner.

SAUL. Well, I uh—

AUSTIN. Lee's just down for a visit while our mother's in Alaska.

SAUL. Oh, your mother's in Alaska?

AUSTIN. Yes. She went up there on a little vacation. This is her place.

SAUL. I see. Well isn't that something, Alaska.

LEE. What kinda' handicap do ya' have, Mr. Kimmer?

SAUL. Oh I'm just a Sunday duffer really. You know.

LEE. That's good 'cause I haven't swung a club in months.

SAUL. Well we ought to get together sometime and have a little game. Austin, do you play?

*(SAUL mimes a Johnny Carson golf swing for AUSTIN.)*

AUSTIN. No. I don't uh—I've watched it on T.V.

LEE. *(To SAUL)* How 'bout tomorrow morning? Bright and early. We could get out there and put in eighteen holes before breakfast.

SAUL. Well, I've got uh—I have several appointments—

LEE. No, I mean real early. Crack a'dawn. While the dew's still thick on the fairway.

SAUL. Sounds really great.

LEE. Austin could be our caddie.

SAUL. Now that's an idea. *(Laughs)*

AUSTIN. I don't know the first thing about golf.

LEE. There's nothin' to it. Isn't that right, Saul? He'd pick it up in fifteen minutes.

SAUL. Sure. Doesn't take long. 'Course you have to play for years to find your true form. *(Chuckles)*

LEE. *(To AUSTIN)* We'll give ya' a quick run-down on the club faces. The irons, the woods. Show ya' a couple pointers on the basic swing. Might even let ya' hit the ball a couple times. Whadya' think, Saul?

SAUL. Why not. I think it'd be great. I haven't had any exercise in weeks.

LEE. At's the spirit! We'll have a little orange juice right afterwards.

*(Pause)*

SAUL. Orange juice?

LEE. Yeah! Vitamin C! Nothin' like a shot a' orange juice after a round a' golf. Hot shower. Snappin' towels at each other's privates. Real sense a' fraternity.

SAUL. *(Smiles at AUSTIN)* Well, you make it sound very inviting, I must say. It really does sound great.

LEE. Then it's a date.

SAUL. Well, I'll call the country club, and see if I can arrange something.

LEE. Great! Boy, I sure am sorry that I busted in on ya' all in the middle of yer meeting.

SAUL. Oh that's quite all right. We were just about finished anyway.

LEE. I can wait out in the other room if you want.

SAUL. No really—

LEE. Just got Austin's color T.V. back from the shop. I can watch a little amateur boxing now.

(LEE and AUSTIN exchange looks)

SAUL. Oh—Yes.

LEE. You don't fool around in Television, do you Saul?

SAUL. Uh—I have in the past. Produced some T.V. Specials. Network stuff. But it's mainly features now.

LEE. That's where the big money is huh?

SAUL. Yes. That's right.

AUSTIN. Why don't I call you tomorrow, Saul and we'll get together. We can have lunch or something.

SAUL. That'd be terrific.

LEE. Right after the golf.

(Pause)

SAUL. What?

LEE. You can have lunch right after the golf.

SAUL. Oh, right.

LEE. Austin was tellin' me that yer interested in stories.

SAUL. Well, we develop certain projects that we feel have commercial potential.

LEE. What kinda' stuff do ya' go in for?

SAUL. Oh, the usual. You know. Good love interest.

Lots of action. (*Chuckles at AUSTIN*)

LEE. Westerns?

SAUL. Sometimes.

AUSTIN. I'll give you a ring, Saul.

(AUSTIN tries to move SAUL across the kitchen but LEE blocks their way)

LEE. I got a Western that'd knock yer lights out.

SAUL. Oh really?

LEE. Yeah. Contemporary Western. Based on a true story. 'Course I'm not a writer like my brother here. I'm not a man of the pen.

SAUL. Well—

LEE. I mean I can tell ya' a story off the tongue but I can't put it down on paper. That don't make any difference though does it?

SAUL. No, not really.

LEE. I mean plenty a guys have stories don't they? True-life stories. Musta' been a lotta' movies made from real life.

SAUL. Yes. I suppose so.

LEE. I haven't seen a good Western since 'Lonely Are the Brave'. You remember that movie?

SAUL. No, I'm afraid I—

LEE. Kirk Douglas. Helluva' movie. You remember that movie, Austin?

AUSTIN. Yes.

LEE. (*To SAUL*) The man dies for the love of a horse. SAUL. Is that right.

LEE. Yeah. Ya' hear the horse screamin' at the end of it. Rain's comin' down. Horse is screamin'. Then there's a shot. BLAMI! Just a single shot like that. Then nothin' but the sound of rain. And Kirk Douglas is ridin' in the ambulance. Ridin' away from the scene of the accident. And when he hears that shot he knows that his horse has died. He knows. And you see his eyes. And his eyes die. Right inside his face. And then his eyes close. And you know that he's died too. You know that Kirk Douglas has died from the death of his horse.

SAUL. (*Eyes AUSTIN nervously*) Well, it sounds like a great movie. I'm sorry I missed it.

LEE. Yeah, you shouldn't a' missed that one.

SAUL. I'll have to try to catch it some time. Arrange a screening or something. Well, Austin, I'll have to hit the freeway before rush hour.

AUSTIN. (*Ushers him toward exit*) It's good seeing you, Saul.

(*AUSTIN and SAUL shake hands*)

LEE. So ya' think there's room for a real Western these days? A true-to-life Western?

SAUL. Well, I don't see why not. Why don't you uh—tell the story to Austin and have him write a little outline.

LEE. You'd take a look at it then?

SAUL. Yes. Sure. I'll give it a read-through. Always eager for new material. (*Smiles at AUSTIN*)

LEE. That's great! You'd really read it then huh?

SAUL. It would just be my opinion of course.

LEE. That's all I want. Just an opinion. I happen to think it has a lotta' possibilities.

SAUL. Well, it was great meeting you and I'll—

(*SAUL and LEE shake*)

LEE. I'll call you tomorrow about the golf.

SAUL. Oh. Yes, right.

LEE. Austin's got your number, right?

SAUL. Yes.

LEE. So long Saul. (*Gives SAUL a pat on the back*)

(*SAUL exits, AUSTIN turns to LEE, looks at T.V. then back to LEE*)

AUSTIN. Give me the keys.

(*AUSTIN extends his hand toward LEE, LEE doesn't move, just stares at AUSTIN, smiles, lights to black*)

—END SCENE 3—

SCENE 4: *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 whiskey, 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. Is he ready to leave Texas yet? I didn't know we were that far along. He's not ready to leave Texas.

AUSTIN. He's right at the border.

LEE. (*Sitting up*) No, see, this is one a' the crucial parts. Right here. (*Taps paper with beer can*) We can't rush through this. He's not right at the border. He's a good fifty miles from the border. A lot can happen in fifty miles.

AUSTIN. It's only an outline. We're not writing an entire script now.

LEE. Well ya' can't leave things out even if it is an outline. It's one a' the most important parts. Ya' can't go leavin' it out.

AUSTIN. Okay, okay. Let's just—get it done.

LEE. All right. 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 gooseneck.

AUSTIN. What's a gooseneck?

LEE. Pattle trailer. You know the kind with a gooseneck, goes right down in the bed a' the pick-up.

AUSTIN. Oh. All right. (*Types*)

LEE. It's important.

AUSTIN. Okay. I got it.