

MOM. Not really.

LEE. Musta' been colder than this here. I mean we're havin' a real scorcher here.

MOM. Oh? (*She looks at damage*)

LEE. Yeah. Must be in the hundreds.

AUSTIN. You wanna' take your coat off, Mom?

MOM. No. (*Pause, she surveys space*) What happened in here?

AUSTIN. Oh um—Me and Lee were just sort of celebrating and uh—

MOM. Celebrating?

AUSTIN. Yeah. Uh—Lee sold a screenplay. A story, I mean.

MOM. Lee did?

AUSTIN. Yeah.

MOM. Not you?

AUSTIN. No. Him.

MOM. (*To LEE*) You sold a screenplay?

LEE. Yeah. That's right. We're just sorta' finishing it up right now. That's what we're doing here.

AUSTIN. Me and Lee are going out to the desert to live.

MOM. You and Lee?

AUSTIN. Yeah. I'm taking off with Lee.

MOM. (*She looks back and forth at each of them, pause*) You gonna go live with your father?

AUSTIN. No. We're going to a different desert Mom.

MOM. I see. Well, you'll probably wind up on the same desert sooner or later. What're all these toasters doing here?

AUSTIN. Well—we had kind of a contest.

MOM. Contest?

LEE. Yeah.

AUSTIN. Lee won.

MOM. Did you win a lot of money, Lee?

LEE. Well not yet. It's comin' in any day now.

MOM. (*To LEE*) What happened to your shirt?

LEE. Oh. I was sweatin' like a pig and I took it off. (*AUSTIN grabs LEE'S shirt off the table and tosses it to him, LEE sets down suitcases and puts his shirt on*)

MOM. Well it's one hell of a mess in here isn't it?

AUSTIN. Yeah, I'll clean it up for you, Mom. I just didn't know you were coming back so soon.

MOM. I didn't either.

AUSTIN. What happened?

MOM. Nothing. I just started missing all my plants. (*She notices dead plants*)

AUSTIN. Oh.

MOM. Oh, they're all dead aren't they. (*She crosses toward them, examines them closely*) You didn't get a chance to water I guess.

AUSTIN. I was doing it and then Lee came and—

LEE. Yeah I just distracted him a whole lot here, Mom. It's not his fault. (*Pause, as MOM stares at plants*)

MOM. Oh well, one less thing to take care of I guess. (*Turns toward brothers*) Oh, that reminds me—You boys will probably never guess who's in town. Try and guess. (*Long pause, brothers stare at her*)

AUSTIN. Whadya' mean, Mom?

MOM. Take a guess. Somebody very important has come to town. I read it, coming down on the Greyhound.

LEE. Somebody very important?

MOM. See if you can guess. You'll never guess.

AUSTIN. Mom—we're trying to uh—(*Points to writing pad*)

MOM. Picasso. (*Pause*) Picasso's in town. Isn't that incredible? Right now. (*Pause*)

AUSTIN. Picasso's dead, Mom.

MOM. No, he's not dead. He's visiting the museum. I read it on the bus. We have to go down there and see him.

AUSTIN. Mom—

MOM. This is the chance of a lifetime. Can you imagine? We could all go down and meet him. All three of us.

LEE. Uh—I don't think I'm really up fer meetin' anybody right now. I'm uh—What's his name?

MOM. Picasso! Picasso! You've never heard of Picasso? Austin, you've heard of Picasso.

AUSTIN. Mom, we're not going to have time.

MOM. It won't take long. We'll just hop in the car and go down there. An opportunity like this doesn't come along every day.

AUSTIN. We're gonna' be leavin' here, Mom!

(Pause)

MOM. Oh.

LEE. Yeah.

(Pause)

MOM. You're both leaving?

LEE. (Looks at AUSTIN) Well we were thinkin' about that before but now I—

AUSTIN. No, we are! We're both leaving. We've got it all planned.

MOM. (To AUSTIN) Well you can't leave. You have a family.

AUSTIN. I'm leaving. I'm getting out of here.

LEE. (To MOM) I don't really think Austin's cut out for the desert do you?

MOM. No. He's not.

AUSTIN. I'm going with you, Lee!

MOM. He's too thin.

LEE. Yeah, he'd just burn up out there.

AUSTIN. (To LEE) We just gotta' finish this screenplay and then we're gonna' take off. That's the plan.

That's what you said. Come on, let's get back to work, Lee.

LEE. I can't work under these conditions here. It's too hot.

AUSTIN. Then we'll do it on the desert.

LEE. Don't be tellin' me what we're gonna do!

MOM. Don't shout in the house.

LEE. We're just gonna' have to postpone the whole deal.

AUSTIN. I can't postpone it! It's gone past postponing! I'm doing everything you said. I'm writing down exactly what you tell me.

LEE. Yeah, but you were right all along see. It is a dumb story. "Two lamebrains chasin' each other across Texas." That's what you said, right?

AUSTIN. I never said that.

(LEE sneers in AUSTIN's face then turns to MOM)

LEE. I'm gonna' just borrow some a your antiques, Mom. You don't mind do ya'? Just a few plates and things. Silverware.

(LEE starts going through all the cupboards in kitchen pulling out plates and stacking them on counter as MOM and AUSTIN watch)

MOM. You don't have any utensils on the desert?

LEE. Nah, I'm fresh out.

AUSTIN. (To LEE) What're you doing?

MOM. Well some of those are very old. Bone China.

LEE. I'm tired of eatin' outa' my bare hands, ya' know. It's not civilized.

AUSTIN. (To LEE) What're you doing? We made a deal!

MOM. Couldn't you borrow the plastic ones instead? I have plenty of plastic ones.

LEE. (As he stacks plates) It's not the same. Plastic's not the same at all. What I need is somethin' authentic. Somethin' to keep me in touch. It's easy to get outa' touch out there. Don't worry I'll get em' back to ya'.