

WRITING A FILM SCRIPT : An example taken from “True Romance”

TRUE ROMANCE

TITLE written in caps

By
Quentin Tarantino

**By ... : name of script writer
(first name, then surname)**

August 1992 Early Draft
(EXTRACT: Diner scene, pages 12-14)

**Date (month and year)
of script completion**

For Education Purposes Only

**The ACTION (descriptive text
of the screenplay) is always
short, 3-5 lines, in the present
tense, and an active voice.**

**The CHARACTER NAME is
in caps, above the dialogue**

**The SCENE HEADING
(or “slug line”) in caps
1 - INT = Interior
2 - Location
3 - Time of day**

**The DIALOGUE (what each character says) is
written directly beneath the character’s name.
There are no speech marks like this “...” or like
this « ... ».**

INT. DENNY'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Clarence and Alabama are sitting in a booth at an all night Denny's. It's about 12:30 AM. Clarence is having a piece of chocolate cream pie and a Coke. Alabama's nibbling on a piece of heated apple pie and sipping a large Tab.

CLARENCE
Well, enough about the king.
How about you?

ALABAMA
How 'bout me what?

CLARENCE
Tell me about yourself.

ALABAMA
There's nothing to tell.

CLARENCE
C'mon. What're ya tryin' to be?
The phantom lady?

ALABAMA
What do you want to know?

CLARENCE
Well, for starters, what do you do?
Where're ya from? What's your
favorite color? Who's your favorite
movie star? What kinda music do you
like? What are your turn-ons and
turn-offs? Do you have a fella?
What's the story behind you takin'
a cab to the most dangerous part
of town alone? And, in a theatre
full of empty seats, why did you
sit by me?

Alabama takes a bite of pie, puts down her fork, and looks at Clarence.

ALABAMA
Ask me them again. One by one.

CLARENCE
What do you do?

ALABAMA
I don't remember.

CLARENCE
Where are you from?

ALABAMA
I might be from Tallahassee. But
I'm not sure yet.

CLARENCE
What's your favorite color?

ALABAMA
I don't remember. But off the top
of my head, I'd say black.

CLARENCE
Who's your favorite movie star?

ALABAMA
Burt Reynolds.

CLARENCE
Would you like a bite of my pie?

ALABAMA
Yes, I would.

13.

**Page number
top right**

FONT : Screenplays are written in Courier 12 point font. (This is mainly because of timing: one script page in Courier 12 is roughly one minute of screen time.)

14.

Clarence scoops up a piece on his fork and Alabama bites it off.

CLARENCE

Like it?

ALABAMA

Very much. Now, where were we?

CLARENCE

What kinda music do you like?

ALABAMA

Phil Spector. Girl group stuff.
You know, like 'He's a Rebel.'

CLARENCE

What are your turn-ons?

ALABAMA

Mickey Rourke, somebody who can
appreciate the finer things in life,
like Elvis' voice, good Kung Fu,
and a tasty piece of pie.

CLARENCE

Turn-offs?

ALABAMA

I'm sure there must be something,
but I don't really remember. The
only thing that comes to mind are
Persians.

CLARENCE

Do you have a fellah?

She looks at Clarence and smiles.

ALABAMA

I'm not sure yet. Ask me again
later.

CLARENCE

What's the story behind you takin'
a cab to the most dangerous part
of town alone?

ALABAMA

Apparently, I was hit on the head
with something really heavy, giving
me a form of amnesia. When I came
to, I didn't know who I was, where
I was, or where I came from.

(MORE)

15.

ALABAMA (CONT'D)

Luckily, I had my driver's license
or I wouldn't even know my name.
I hoped it would tell me where I
lived, but it had a Tallahassee
address on it, and I stopped someone
on the street and they told me I was
in Detroit. So that was no help.
But I did have some money on me, so
I hopped in a cab until I saw somethin'
that looked familiar. For some reason,
and don't ask me why, that theater
looked familiar. So I told him to
stop and I got out.

CLARENCE

And in a theater full of empty
seats, why did you sit by me?

ALABAMA

Because you looked like a nice
guy, and I was a little scared.
And I sure coulda used a nice
guy about that time, so I spilled
my popcorn on you.

Clarence looks at her closely. He picks up his soda and
sucks on the straw until it makes that slurping sound. He
puts it aside and stares into her soul.

A smile cracks on her face and develops into a big wide grin.

ALABAMA

Aren't you just dazzled by my
imagination, lover boy?
(eats her last piece
of pie)
Where to next?

INT. COMIC BOOK STORE - NIGHT

It's about 1:30 AM. Clarence has taken Alabama to where
he works. It's a comic book store called "Heros For Sale."
Alabama thinks this place is super cool.

ALABAMA

Wow. Whatta swell place to work.

CLARENCE

Yeah, I got the key, so I come
here at night, hang out, read
comic books, play music.

ALABAMA

How long have you worked here?