



TITLE: NO LEFT TURN UNSTONED
LOCALE: New York City, San Francisco, and points in between
WRITER(S): Carol Standish
PERIOD: the present
FORM: feature
GENRE: stoner comedy
BUDGET: moderate
PAGES: 113
COVERAGE DATE: 3/27/24
PREPARED BY: BK

LOGLINE:

Two stoner girls are given five days to deliver an 18-wheeler full of genetically engineered super weed from New York to California by an angry mob boss whose cat they accidentally backed over. What they don't count on is a lovelorn, disturbed ex-boyfriend stealing the truck on day one.

COMMENTS:

Very much in the headspace of movies like Cheech & Chong's UP IN SMOKE and HAROLD AND KUMAR GO TO WHITE CASTLE, NLTU gives us an exciting new pair of smart-ass stoners in the form of JASMINE and KALITA, twenty-something washouts with hearts of crap. The writer creates two memorable (and franchisable) characters that start out dopey, obnoxious, and self-destructive, and... well, unfortunately, both are pretty much still that way at the end. While obviously this model can work ("Beavis and Butt-Head", anyone?) it does create a bit of a tough ask for a feature spec from an unknown writer. We keep waiting for some sign that either of them will arc – but nope. For example, after they escape from sheriff's station in Arkansas, Kalita seems introspective for a moment, and we think, "Ah, OK, she's becoming self-aware. This is the beginning of her arc." But no, she turns right around and kicks Jasmine into the gully, injuring her friend, just so she can eat the half of a Subway sandwich they swiped from hapless Deputy GREEBY.

Compounding this is several long stretches where not much happens – for example, the traveling sequence on pages 37-46 – almost nine pages where they simply drive and assail each other with "Yo Mama" jokes. Two pages of this would probably be great – but nine? And while we like Jasmine's setup – the crazy family dinner sequence is well-done (although that too, goes on a bit too long,) we never really get much of a sense of what either of these characters really wants. Even a freeform, freewheelin' movie like UP IN SMOKE had a tangible, personal goal – win the battle of the bands at the Whisky. But here, the ladies are forced into a strong, high-stakes set-up – but in the end, they simply achieve a goal which was not important to them, beyond not getting killed by JOSE of course. What if, for example, Kalita dropped out of college years ago in California, and now her returning gets her thinking about her stymied future and all she left behind? She can still choose not to return to it of course – that sort of "negative arc" worked in UP IN THE AIR – but at least she would have a personal goal to pursue. Right now, we have almost two hours of some good yuks, and decent physical comedy (the hang-gliding sequence with the police dog was very clever) – but not enough meat on the characters' bones to really invest us in their journey.

We'd also watch out for repeat beats – we don't need Kalita saying what she's going to do on page 16 and 93 because we SEE her do it right after – and be careful of over-explaining in general. The scene description often goes into much more detail than we need, and as mentioned, some scenes overstay their welcome, such as the visit to the Hoover Dam, which really doesn't add much to the story and should be considered for cutting. The physical antics are fun, but ultimately the whole thing could be omitted and the story wouldn't change at all. Ultimately, some sharp-eyed editing could tighten this up from a fairly languid 113 pages to a tight 97 or so without really losing any story. Finally, we'd suggest using a solid structural template, such as the one found in Save the Cat! or our own Spec Format Guide – to make sure every scene falls in the right place. A promising start – we can't wait to see the next draft.

CONCLUSION:

NO LEFT TURN UNSTONED has a lot of potential. The writer has created two fun female leads, and many of the set pieces are laugh-out-loud zany. More focus on depth of character as well as tightening things up overall could make a big difference in the next draft. It's not there yet, but this idea is well worth the elbow grease.

CRITERIA	YOU BET!	YES	KINDA-SORTA	NOT SO MUCH	NOT APPLICABLE
Strong PREMISE?	X				
Is the material ORIGINAL?		X	X		
Is the script COMMERCIAL? (mainstream, indie or TV)		X			
Is the PROTAGONIST dimensional, well-developed, and fascinating?			X	X	
Is there a clear, effective ANTAGONIST or ANTAGONISTIC FORCE?		X			
Are the SECONDARY CHARACTERS well-developed and believable?			X		
Is the STORYLINE believable and effective?		X	X		
Are the STAKES high? If the protagonist fails in his/her quest, are the consequences of failure dire?	X				
Does the story have a strong STRUCTURE, 3-Act or other?			X		
Do the first ten pages set the TONE for the rest of the story?	X				
Is the TONE consistent throughout?		X			
Is the story mythology/world-building well-developed and effective?			X		
Does the script have solid PACING?			X	X	
Does each scene move the story forward?			X		
Does the CONFLICT rise effectively?			X		
Does character DIALOGUE sound natural?		X			
Does the DIALOGUE contain sufficient subtext?			X		
Is the PLOT LOGIC solid?			X		
Is the plot conveyed clearly?		X			
Does the writer's STYLE reflect professional quality and ability?			X		
Is the writing tight and punchy, with a minimum of bloat?				X	
Does the writer have a strong VOICE?		X	X		
Format/Mechanics/Spelling/Grammar?			X		
Length appropriate for genre?			X		
Is there a secondary storyline? Is that "B"-line effective?					X
"It" Factor?		X			
Is the cast size manageable and appropriate?	X				
Is the TITLE a grabber? Does it reflect the material's genre or tone?	X				
Length appropriate for genre?			X		
(TV only) If utilizing an A-B-C structure, are those plotlines effective and well-balanced?					X
(TV only) Does the pilot act as a template for a series?					X
(TV only) Are the act-outs and scene buttons strong?					X
(TV only) Does the pilot seem like a good fit with a specific broadcast, cable, or streaming outlet?					X

Rating for script: **PASS**

Rating for writer: **CONSIDER WITH RESERVATIONS**

GET REPPED NOW ADVANCE? Y/N:

 N

(Ratings scale: Recommend, Strong Consider, Consider, Consider with Reservations, Pass. Most screenplays submitted are a "pass.")

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