Todd Badley’s Production Shoot

So, I just recently finished shooting a scene from my first ever screenplay. For my first shoot, I feel as though everything went smoothly for the most part. I really enjoyed the whole process and everything that came with it. I work for Choice Hotels and my boss was kind enough to allow my crew to use a private room at the hotel for the production shoot. My mentor also assisted in helping me set everything up for the production. Honestly, I don’t think I could’ve done it without her help. She’s been an amazing support system and has really guided me through this whole process. It was also fun choosing a scene to film from my screenplay. I chose a scene that I feel reflects the tone of the whole story. The scene involves Conner, a known criminal using an alias name in order to kidnap his little brother Sam who was taken into police custody after Conner and oldest sibling Gabriel, escaped leaving Sam behind at one of their many crime scenes. Shortly after, Sam was placed into Foster Care and was soon adopted by David and Abby Palmer, a kind young couple who were unable to conceive a child of their own. Soon after David and Abby adopt Sam, Conner helps Gabriel escape from prison and two of them set off in pursuit of Sam, getting rid of anyone who stands in their way. The scene we filmed involves Conner walking into the Foster Care Facility where Sam was being held. He uses a false name and tries to gain access to Sam by attempting to manipulate a social worker named Debra. Conner is one probably the most three-dimensional character in the script and so I felt shooting a scene with him in it would be very beneficial for me as a filmmaker. I also chose to act out Conner’s character in the scene as well. I’ve always been passionate about acting and so this was a way for me to be in front of the camera as well as behind it. It was a lot of fun getting everything together for this production. As I said earlier, my mentor was a big help to me. She helped me round up a camera guy, our editing guy, and help me select my co-star as well. I had a vision for how I wanted to scene to go and so that was easy to communicate with her. There were many good things about this production. We all worked well together. Our camera guy was very young but very knowledgeable. More so than I was at his age. His was very professional and understood the vision that we were going for. He was also able to think on his feet and managed to keep everything running smoothly. We had issues with the mics and he fixed the problem right away. Our editing guy was also very good as well. He’s been in the business longer than most of us and so he was able to recognize the vision of the scene before we even discussed it with him. I’m going to be working closely with him on editing the scene down in the upcoming weeks. My mentor brought along some props to use on set in order to help with the lighting issues that arose. There were only a few negatives about the overall production. First was some of the audio issues that we experienced. The office that we were shooting in was close to a highway and so we could hear the passing traffic. Luckily, we were able to shoot around the passing traffic and make it work as a whole. The other thing I would’ve changed I would’ve changed would be my communication with my co-star. This was her first on screen role and she was very nervous and as a result forgot many of her lines. I sent her the script four days before shooting and we communicated via email and text. Since I wrote the script, I knew the dialogue backwards and forwards. However, I failed to realize that it might be harder for someone who’s just now seeing these words for the first time. I should’ve set aside some time for the two of us to rehearse together. I think that would’ve helped her relax more and get into character better. Moving forward, I will be more conscious of the importance of rehearsal. Overall, I’m happy with how the production went. I learned a lot while being involved with this production. I’m looking forward to my next big project in the future.