

White Run

By

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an original screenplay

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MUSIC over black screen.

Then, a title card:

"The notion that we outlaw foreign pharmaceuticals from entering the market in order to protect American pharmaceutical companies from competition is ridiculous. Our goal is to protect the American consumer from potentially harmful medicine." - Robert Lindstrom, Federal Drug Administration

Another title card:

"When the law no longer serves the common man, he owes it to himself to become an outlaw." - George Washington

FADE IN:

EXT. SNOWMOBILE TRAIL - WINTER - DAY

Winter landscape. The only colors are the white of the snow and sky and the green of the pine trees.

Three captions appear, one under the other.

The Mohawk Nation of Akwesasne

New York State

1 mile from the Canadian border

A black snowmobile appears, making its way down the narrow trail at a brisk pace.

Suddenly, the RIDER, also dressed in black, cuts his speed.

Reveal a BORDER PATROL AGENT blocking the trail with his snowmobile.

Agent motions for him to stop and to take off his helmet.

Rider removes his helmet. He is a white man in his mid to late 30s. The agent is a Hispanic man around the same age.

AGENT

Where are you coming from?

RIDER

Nowhere. Just riding around.

(CONTINUED)

AGENT

This trail crosses the border. Are you coming from Canada?

Rider looks at agent's name tag.

INSERT - NAME TAG - "SULIVERES"

RIDER

No. That would be illegal, Agent Suliveres. I'm out hunting.

He flashes a smile, the agent is unmoved. He checks out the shotgun the rider has strapped behind his seat in a holster.

Agent pulls it out of the holster.

RIDER

I have a permit for that.

SULIVERES

Where did you stash your kill?

RIDER

I'm a lousy shot. Then again, the day is young.

Suliveres holds onto the rifle.

SULIVERES

Empty your saddle bags slowly and put the contents on the seat of your snowmobile. Slowly.

RIDER

On what grounds?

SULIVERES

On the grounds I'm telling you to.

Rider empties out contents of saddle bags and places them on the seat of his snow mobile. Papers, shotgun shells, a cell phone and a vial of prescription medication.

Suliveres's eyes light up at the vial. He holds it up.

INSERT - PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION VIAL - Roger Ackerman, Essex Pharmacy, Quebec.

Suliveres opens the vial and pours the roughly 20 or so pills in his palm.

(CONTINUED)

RIDER

Look, it's not what you think. My wife is sick. A friend of ours is taking the same medication. Do you have any idea what chemo drugs cost in the States?

AGENT

Hand me your driver's license, please.

Rider gives him his license.

INSERT - NY STATE DRIVER'S LICENSE - CANE NOVAK

Suliveres writes something on a pad.

SULIVERES

All right, here's what will happen. You're going to ride in front of me at a five yard distance.

NOVAK

Look, my brother is a trooper in the State Police.

Suliveres gives him a steely glance.

SULIVERES

Five yard distance.

Novak gets on his snowmobile, starts riding. His hand tight on the throttle, he watches Suliveres from his rear view mirror.

Another BORDER AGENT is riding from the opposite direction. Novak looks back at Suliveres, who motions him to stop.

The second agent stops, takes off his helmet. He is in his 40s and has a commanding, aloof presence.

AGENT

What's the trouble?

SULIVERES

Pharmaceuticals, sir.

Agent's name tag says "Kowalski". He looks Novak's snowmobile up and down.

KOWALSKI

Name?

(CONTINUED)

SULIVERES  
Cane Novak.

Kowalski is visibly surprised.

KOWALSKI  
The Cane Novak?

NOVAK  
You've seen me ride?

KOWALSKI  
(breaking into a huge grin)  
Hell, yeah. Lake Placid Powder  
Blast. Must've been '97.

NOVAK  
'98. I won it.

KOWALSKI  
And that's an understatement.  
(to Hugo)  
How many pills?

Suliveres is perturbed by the turn of events.

SULIVERES  
Twenty-two.

KOWALSKI  
Hell, that ain't nearly enough.  
You'll file ten pages and he'll get  
off with a fine.

SULIVERES  
With all due respect, sir...

KOWALSKI  
Let him go, and continue your  
patrol, Agent Suliveres. This ain't  
the goddamned State Police.

Suliveres and Novak exchange a glance. Novak starts up his engine.

KOWALSKI  
Careful around the turn a mile  
down. Nasty ice patch.

NOVAK  
Thanks.

He takes off. So does Kowalski. Suliveres watches him go with disgust.

EXT. RIVER - DAY

Novak races across the frozen river, toward a house. He guns it at the last second and jumps over a hump that separates the lake from the front yard.

He is airborne for a few seconds, lands and slides into the garage in a very stylish (and practiced) fashion.

INT. NOVAK'S HOUSE

Novak walks down the hallway. He looks in a room, keeps going, then walks into the bedroom without knocking.

ANNABEL is in bed. She puts down the book she is reading, a book about natural healing. The colorful head scarf could be a fashion statement, but the assortment of wigs on a side table, along with her skin-and-bones figure say "cancer".

He kisses her on the cheek.

ANNABEL

Nice jump.

NOVAK

What jump?

(notices her scarf)

Very gypsy of you. Or magician's assistant.

ANNABEL

And for my next trick, I will cheat death.

Novak gives her a hard stare.

ANNABEL

Not funny, I admit.

NOVAK

Where are the kids?

ANNABEL

With Mom.

Silence. Then.

ANNABEL

She brought up Thanksgiving again.

Novak collapses on the bed and covers his ears.

(CONTINUED)

ANNABEL

She wants a big family reunion...

His playful screams drown out whatever she says next. He rolls himself into the blankets trying to escape from her.

INT. BORDER PATROL HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Suliveres is coming off his patrol. He hangs up his jacket, stows his helmet.

Agents are milling around, chatting and joking, but Suliveres does not join in, nor is he invited.

He grabs his mail from a slot and walks back to his desk, one of many in an open bullpen.

He shuffles through the mail, disinterested until one letter catches his eye.

INSERT - LETTER SENDER'S ADDRESS - NEW YORK STATE POLICE, INTERNAL AFFAIRS

He rips the letter open and unfolds it. Reads.

INSERT - LETTER - LAST PARAGRAPH

"The hearing regarding your appeal to overturn suspension of your status as Detective is scheduled for November 20th..."

Suliveres puts the letter down and looks at something on his desk.

It's a framed photograph.

INSERT - PHOTO

Suliveres and a buddy are graduating from the NY State Police Academy. Uniformed and trim, they smile into the camera.

Suliveres looks away from the photo and rubs his eyes.

INT. NOVAK'S HOUSE - BATHROOM

Novak opens the medicine cabinet.

Many vials of prescription medication, they barely fit. He lifts one out, opens it.

Shakes four pills out into his hand, then puts them back and closes the cabinet with a worried look on his face.

## HALLWAY

Novak walks down the hallway from the bathroom to the master bedroom. He open the door slightly.

Watches Annabel sleep.

## EXT. SNOWMOBILE TRAIL - DAY

Novak rides another trail.

Hearing an sound overhead, he slows and parks his snowmobile under a sprawling tree.

ANGLE ON sky. A small, unmanned surveillance border patrol plane passes overhead.

## EXT. TRAIL - DIFFERENT SPOT

Well-fed Border Agent, GROOPER, bites into his sandwich. He eats with gusto, until a BEEPING SOUND makes him put down the sandwich and reach for his electronic monitor.

ANGLE ON monitor. Looks like the screen of an iPhone. Sees a black and white image of a snowmobile, (Novak's) moving through the landscape.

"RESTRICTED ZONE" and coordinates flash underneath the image.

Sighing, he wraps up the sandwich, puts on his helmet and starts the snowmobile.

## TRAIL

Novak rounds a curve. Sees the Agent blocking the trail, much like Suliveres did before.

He slows down, then guns it and performs the seemingly impossible feat of titling his snowmobile at a 45 degree angle to make it thread the needle between the back of the agent's snowmobile and the edge of the trail.

## GROOPER

Holy shit!

He starts his engine and takes off after Novak.

The trail is narrow and winds through a dense pine forest. Not enough open terrain for Novak to take an alternate route, or to shake his pursuer.

(CONTINUED)

Novak's POV. Sharp turn, then a small bridge over a deep ravine with a bubbling brook.

Novak slams on his brakes and steers his machine down the embankment, seemingly into the brook, then cuts a sharp left, which puts him on a patch of frozen land right underneath the bridge. Out of sight.

#### TRAIL

On the other side of the bridge, a Native American watches this with faint interest. He is in his mid 40s and wears L.L. Bean clothes and a backpack.

Grooper crosses the bridge, rides past the Indian, then stops.

Couple of different trails shoot off from the main trail.

Grooper turns around, rides up to the Indian, flips his helmet visor open.

#### GROOPER

Black snowmobile. Which way did it go?

The Indian gives him a peaceful smile.

#### UNDER THE BRIDGE

Novak has taken off his helmet. He hangs his head, knowing he's done for.

Then, the sound of the agent's snowmobile being gunned. It fades into the silence.

#### INDIAN

(yelling)

You can come out now. He's gone.

Novak puts his lid back on, revs the engine to get enough leverage, then drops it into gear and rides up the embankment.

#### NOVAK

Thanks.

He's about to ride off.

(CONTINUED)

INDIAN

The least you can do is give me a ride.

NOVAK

Hop on.

The Indian gets on Novak's snowmobile.

EXT. MOBILE HOME TRAILER

Novak pulls up to a dilapidated trailer in the middle of nowhere. Impossible to see if one can get to it via a car, it seems surrounded by snow on all sides.

Big satellite dish on top of the trailer is the only thing that hints at civilization.

INT. TRAILER

Polar opposite of its exterior. Neat and tidy. There is a computer with a dual screen in the corner. Books on the shelf are mainly finance, or investment related.

Large, framed, stylized, (some would say kitschy) picture of a palm tree on the wall. A woven, Native American blanket is draped over the back of the sofa.

INDIAN

Can I get you anything to drink?  
Name's Robert Johnston, by the way.

Novak studies the Indian to see if he's being kidded. He shakes Johnston's hand.

NOVAK

Came Novak.

JOHNSTON

Can I get you anything to drink?

NOVAK

I'll take a Diet Coke if you have it.

Johnston opens the fridge, takes out a Diet Coke and pours it over ice.

NOVAK

Thanks. Nice pad. What do you do?

(CONTINUED)

JOHNSTON  
I'm a trader.

Novak notices the blanket.

NOVAK  
What do you trade? Blankets and  
stuff?

Johnston laughs and lights his weed pipe.

JOHNSTON  
You're a little behind the times,  
paleface. I trade stocks and  
futures, mostly.

He points to the computer.

NOVAK  
Sorry. I didn't mean to imply  
that...

JOHNSTON  
S'all right. You can't help it.

He offers him the pipe.

NOVAK  
No, thanks. I'm looking for a job.  
They might test me.

For some reason, this peaks Johnston's interest.

JOHNSTON  
So, what is it?

Novak stares at him, not following.

JOHNSTON  
Weed? Coke? Prozac? What are you  
bringing over? Or is running from  
the Border Patrol a hobby?

NOVAK  
It's a necessity. My wife needs  
drugs for her chemo therapy.

JOHNSTON  
That's one I haven't heard before.

NOVAK  
I don't give a goddamn what you  
heard. Thanks for the drink.

He finishes his drink. He is about to walk out of the trailer.

JOHNSTON

Wait a minute. I meant nothing by it. I have a reason for asking.

Novak stops.

JOHNSTON

I have a business proposition for you. Anytime you run a risk, you'd better be sure the risks are worth it. They'll put you away for 100 pills as fast as they'll put you away for 10,000.

NOVAK

What are you talking about?

JOHNSTON

You have the snowmobile and the riding skills, I have the contacts on both sides of the border. Equal partnership. Nothing heavy, ecstasy, Viagra, that sort of thing. Bring it in from Canada, unload on this side. Collect a nice runner's fee.

NOVAK

No thanks. I'm not a criminal.

Johnston hands him something.

JOHNSTON

My card. In case you change your mind.