

Smells Like Yukon

Segment #17 – “Into the Mild”

Script Draft #03

You may recall the film “Into the Wild.”

Sure, it was a book before it was a movie—but we’re too lazy to read.

[CLIP 01: “Into the Wild Trailer” = 21 seconds]

Like Alaska, the Yukon is an ideal place for outdoorsy types. Granted, most Yukoners aren’t as hardcore as that young fella from *Into the Wild*. But we do like to get out of the house. You know, go for a hike. Paddle a river. Camp. Fish. Hunt. That sort of stuff.

It’s hard to believe that anyone who isn’t into the outdoors would choose to live here. All that oppressive wilderness, not too mention the lack of subways, underground parking and climate-controlled malls—it ought to be enough to send an “indoorsy” person screaming from the territory.

Still, Mark and I were curious: Could we find a Yukoner who really, really hates the wilderness—and would actually *admit* it?

We weren’t overly optimistic.

But that all changed one sunny afternoon in Haines Junction. Looking sweaty and beaten, long-time Yukoner James McCullough escaped from a picnic on the Auriol Trail—and collapsed right into our story. One look at James’ full-on bug suit and we thought we’d met our man.

Our hunch was confirmed by James’ partner, Glenda.

[CLIP 02: Glenda explains “forced march” etc = 25 seconds]

Graciously, James did agree to let Mark try to help. Or maybe Glenda forced him.

Either way, we had no shortage of potential therapies. I suggested Mark and James paddle the Snake. Mark wanted to take him to Carcross to mountain bike some new trails. And James—well, he challenged Mark to a Scrabble match at the Chocolate Claim.

In the end, they found a compromise.

[CLIP 03: James and Mark greeting and checklist = 23 seconds]

Option 1 – reveal at end

Not forgetting their Gators, GPS, GORP, and two cans of Beaver Buzz energy drink, the two would-be adventurers headed off.

Option 2 – reveal at start

Not forgetting their Gators, GPS, GORP, and two cans of Beaver Buzz energy drink, the two would-be adventurers... unlocked the brakes on their baby strollers and set off to conquer... *the Millennium Trail*.

[CLIP 04: Montage: "Everything OK.... Trail gets rough... Starving to death on bus...."]

At one point, things got pretty dicey, so Mark and James had to rope themselves together.

[CLIP 04: Montage: "Was that crying?" = 26 seconds]

But, still... they forged on... heading ever deeper... into the wild... [of Robert Service [Campground](#).] And during a much-needed hydration break, James finally explained how he reconciled his tortured relationship to the wilderness with his relationship to the outdoorsy Glenda.

[CLIP 05: James talks about how he does whatever Glenda says]

And then James really opened up.

[CLIP 05: Mark Interviews James]

Naturally, we were curious to know why James continues to live in the outdoorsy Yukon. His explanation was compelling, but one that Mark and I will never understand.

[CLIP 05: "Big fish in a small pond.... Actor / signer / dancer" = 111 seconds MAX]

We can't say that a few tears weren't shed... but James and Mark—and their baby strollers—did eventually make it safely back to Civilization.

[CLIP 06: "Well, that was the Millennium Trail. How do you feel?"]

Did we successfully turn our friend from indoorsy to outdoorsy? No. But we sure gave it our best shot. Mark even made one last-ditch effort—in the guise of a thoughtful gift to aid James' recovery from their "hike".

[CLIP 06: James receives book, says "Into the Wild..." 21 seconds MAX]

Well, James McCullough—actor / singer / dancer / reader—we hope you're enjoying that book on a nice, comfy couch.

But if, by some horrible misfortune, you're stuck on a sandbar without a hot shower, consider the upside: the Midnight Sun makes an awesome reading light. And if a grizzly has just eaten your precious copy of *Into the Wild*, well... now might be a good time to... *dance*.