

## RABBIT TRAILS

RABBIT TRAILS

FADE IN:

EXT. MEDORA RODEO GROUNDS PARKING LOT - DAY - ESTABLISHING

A Toyota Forerunner SUV bearing numerous stickers for ski resorts and national parks on the rear window, with two mountain bikes mounted on the back, sits isolated in the far corner of an otherwise empty gravel parking lot. The SUV and bikes are glistening with droplets of water, as if recently washed. In the b.g., a sign posted on a large tan metal building reads "Medora Rodeo Grounds."

DOLLY IN: TOWARDS SUV

INT. FRONT SEAT OF SUV

VINCE STEINMAN, 39, the tall, driver's seat occupant with curly, gray-tinged black hair, wearing casual summer attire, downs a huge gulp from a can of Michelob Ultra and hands the can over to MATT LARSEN, 38, the slightly shorter, leaner passenger-seat occupant with a mild paunch and a thinning head of somewhat receded brown hair, similarly clad in shorts and a t-shirt. Matt grabs the can, takes a sustained drink, and passes it back to Vince. Vince chugs the remaining contents, shakes the can lightly back and forth to confirm its emptiness, and belches loudly.

VINCE

(gasping from belch)

I still can't believe you found that.

MATT

It was meant to be. This is like a vision quest.

VINCE

What are we gonna use to poke the holes in it?

MATT

Good question. I didn't think about that.

VINCE

Oh, I got it. Open the glove box.

Matt pops open the glove box with his right hand, keeping his left hand clenched in a fist.

INSERT - INTERIOR OF GLOVE COMPARTMENT

only visible items in compartment are the owner's manual, a black Sharpie marker, and a small black leather case.

BACK TO SCENE

VINCE (CONT'D)

Grab that little black case.

Matt grabs the case from the glove box with his right hand and turns it over, examining it.

MATT

What is it?

VINCE

Inside the case. It's a Leatherman Micra.

Matt sets the case on his lap, opens it with his right hand, and uses that hand to pull out a shiny metal multi-tool.

MATT

Never heard of it. Looks like a fancy little Swiss Army knife.

VINCE

Very fancy. And very expensive.

MATT

Why in the world do you have this?

VINCE

Always be prepared, Matty. It's the boy scout motto.

MATT

I didn't know you were a boy scout.

VINCE

(deadpan)

Never was. Never was. But I like their motto. Those little tweezers should do nicely. Let me see it.

Matt hands the tool to Vince. Vince sizes up the can. Matt opens his previously clenched left palm, revealing a small, yellowish-brown marijuana roach, flattened and charred black at one end. Matt lifts his open left palm to his nose and sniffs deeply, closing his eyes.

MATT

Ah. Sweet manna from heaven.

Vince looks out the driver's-side window and to the rear nervously, before turning his attention back to the empty beer can in his left hand and the tweezers in his right.

VINCE

Alright, Chester Cheeba, help me remember where I need to poke the holes in this thing. It's been a long time.

MATT

Punch a big carburetor hole in the bottom.

(pointing)

Then indent a crater bowl here and make some little sliver-cuts in it.

Vince jams the tweezers through the bottom of the can, spins the tweezers twice, and removes them from the can.

VINCE

How's that look?

MATT

Maybe ream it out a little more.

Vince again looks around nervously, then plunges the tweezers back into the carburetor hole and twists them two more times.

VINCE

I think I'll use the knife for the top holes. This Leatherman's pretty nice, huh?

Matt smells the roach again, while Vince slices several narrow slits into a dented area on the side of the can with the small pocket knife. Vince hands the can to Matt.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Have at it. But let me crack the window over there first.

Matt holds the can sideways in his right hand and carefully lets the marijuana roach drop out of his left palm down into the dented crater bowl, as the passenger-side window next to him slides down at Vince's prompting.

MATT  
Lighter please.

Matt holds out his left hand. Vince reaches down to the center console, picks up a small Bic lighter, and hands it to Matt. Matt lights the roach and tokes hard on the can. He releases his right index finger from the rear carburetor hole and inhales deeply. Matt passes the smoking can and lighter to Vince. Matt snorts loudly to hold the smoke in. Vince looks around nervously, before pressing his lips to the can's opening. Matt exhales a huge cloud of smoke.

MATT (CONT'D)  
When you think about it, all pot does is bring to the surface what's deep inside. When you're young and stupid, young, stupid things come out. Now that we're older and wiser, that's what will come out - pure nuggets of wisdom.

Vince exhales a smaller cloud of smoke and coughs.

PAN WITH smoke as it drifts upward toward sunroof.

PAN OUT through sunroof and up into blue summer sky.

"White Rabbit" by Jefferson Airplane plays in its entirety during titles.

BEGIN TITLES

INT. MATT'S POSH ATTORNEY OFFICE

Matt sits behind a large desk in a starched white dress shirt and tie. The office is adorned with the scales of justice on Matt's desk, framed diplomas on the wall, and cherry-wood bookshelves full of law case reporter volumes. Matt grabs a thick contract from the top of a large stack of documents on his desk and hands it to a fifty-something female secretary standing in front of his desk, mouthing instructions to her.

## INT. VINCE'S OPTOMETRY OFFICE/EXAM ROOM

Vince, in a white doctor smock over a hip-looking ensemble of corduroys and casual dress shoes, examines the eyes of a cute brunette girl in her early twenties seated in the exam chair. He playfully flirts with her, and she laughs.

## INT. MATT'S NICE SUBURBAN HOME/DINING ROOM

Matt passes a bowl of salad around a granite dining room table, at which are seated his attractive wife, JULIE LARSEN, 37, and their two grade-school-age children, one boy and one girl. No words are spoken.

## INT. VINCE'S RUSTIC MOUNTAIN-LODGE STYLE HOME - NIGHT

Vince sits on a couch inside his impeccably decorated home, with his girlfriend, GWEN McMICHAEL, 26, sleeping next to him, her head resting on his shoulder. He eases out from her and sets her down on the couch. He slides down the couch, pulls a little black book from an end table drawer and thumbs through it. He picks up the phone from the end table, begins to dial, then hangs the phone up quickly.

## INT. SUNDAY SCHOOL ROOM IN A CHURCH BUILDING

Matt sits with a Bible in his lap in a circle of a dozen children. He points to a cardboard cutout of Jesus on an easel beside him. One of the children in the circle, Matt's daughter, raises her hand to answer a question. Matt calls on her and listens attentively as she mouths her answer.

## EXT. VINCE'S RUSTIC MOUNTAIN-LODGE STYLE HOME/BACK DECK - DAY

Vince and Gwen host a barbecue for several upwardly mobile friends on the expansive back deck surrounded by large trees. Vince tells a joke. Those around him laugh, and he takes a long satisfied drag on a dark cigar.

## INT. MATT'S NICE SUBURBAN HOME/BATHROOM

Matt stands before the bathroom mirror, puts gel in his thinning hair, and attempts to spike it towards the center of his head. He sucks in his paunch and picks up a straight razor from the counter. He begins shaving off his curly brown chest hair in large clumps. A scripture verse about overcoming temptation is taped to the mirror.

INT. TRENDY UPSCALE BICYCLE SHOP - DAY

Vince, nattily attired in business casual slacks and a polo shirt, browses through rows of biking apparel and gadgets and places a number of items in a basket he is carrying, one of which is a Camelback hydration system.

END TITLES

EXT. VINCE'S RUSTIC MOUNTAIN-LODGE STYLE HOME - DAY

Nissan Maxima pulls into large paved driveway of Vince's home next to the already-parked Toyota Forerunner SUV with two mountain bikes mounted on back. Matt steps out of the Maxima carrying a small brown plastic bag. He walks to the front door and rings the doorbell. Gwen, slender with short blonde hair and modern, dark-rimmed glasses, answers the door.

GWEN

Hi Matt.

MATT

Hey Gwen. How are ya?

GWEN

Real good. Come on in. Vince is still in the shower. You can meet my family. They're in town from Montana for the week.

EXT/INT. VINCE'S RUSTIC MOUNTAIN-LODGE-STYLE HOME/LIVING-DINING AREA

Gwen leads Matt into an open dining area with a large rustic wooden table around which are seated: Gwen's Mother, MARCIA, 51; Gwen's Stepdad, BRENT, 53; Gwen's mentally retarded younger brother, CHASE, 22; Gwen's younger sister, TAMMY, 16; and Gwen's cousin/Vince's roommate-border, STEVE, 31.

GWEN

Matt, this is my mom, Marcia, my little brother, Chase, my sister Tammy. And this is Brent, my stepdad. And you know Steve.

MATT

Nice to meet you all. Steve, good to see you.

ALL  
(overlapping)  
Hi. Good morning. Hey Matt.

MARCIA  
So, you boys are off to North  
Dakohhta, huh?

MATT  
That's right. Biking some trail  
Vince read about in one of his  
men's magazines. The Mah Dah Hey,  
I think it's called.

BRENT  
That's up around Medora. Which way  
you taking, interstate?

Brent takes a swig of beer from a bottle of Stella Artois.

MATT  
You know, I'm not sure. Vince is  
driving. And providing the bikes.  
And the helmets. My only  
contribution is the power bars he  
wanted me to bring.  
(lifting brown bag)  
I picked up a nice selection on  
clearance at Wal-Mart. But don't  
tell Vince that. He told me to buy  
them at GNC.

BRENT  
Marcia, grab my atlas back there,  
would you?

Brent takes another sip from the bottle of beer. Marcia  
stands from table and turns around to countertop behind her  
in search of Brent's atlas. Chase, wearing an oversized  
Portland Trailblazers jersey, with chocolate smeared on his  
face, stands from the table and walks up to Matt.

CHASE  
(to Matt)  
(excessively loud)  
Vince cheats at PlayStation!

MATT  
No kidding?

CHASE  
Yeah, he's a cheater.

MARCIA  
(scolding)  
Chase!

Gwen walks over to a small staircase leading upstairs.

GWEN  
(yelling)  
Vince, Matt's here.

Marcia hands the atlas to Brent, as she sits back down at the table, turning to address Matt.

MARCIA  
(to Matt)  
Would you care for a donut?

CHASE  
(laughing)  
They're all gone.

MARCIA  
(sternly)  
Chase, you did not eat all of those  
already.

Chase laughs loudly.

BRENT  
Yeah he did, because I didn't get  
one either.

CHASE  
Donuts don't go with beer.

BRENT  
Watch yourself, Chase.

MARCIA  
(scolding)  
Brent.

MATT  
That's okay, really, I'm fine.  
I've been trying to drop a few  
pounds anyway.

Matt pats his stomach and glances over toward the staircase during a pregnant pause in the conversation.

MATT (CONT'D)  
 (to Marcia)  
 So, is this your first visit to  
 Lincoln?

In the b.g., Chase awkwardly shoots imaginary fade-away jumpers at a large wooden cross beam near the ceiling.

MARCIA  
 Oh no, I've been many times. My  
 twin sister, Steve's mom, has lived  
 here for years. That's how Gwen  
 ended up here. You're from here  
 then, I take it?

GWEN  
 Vince and Matt both grew up here.  
 They were high school buddies.

MARCIA  
 Really? Oh, that's nice.

MATT  
 Well, we went to the same high  
 school anyway. Vince was a year  
 ahead of me, and we kinda ran in  
 different circles back then, so we  
 didn't hang out a ton.

BRENT  
 (pointing at map)  
 Right here. You're gonna wanna go  
 state highways as the crow flies to  
 Rapid, then take highway 85  
 straight up to Medora. That'll  
 save you at least an hour.

Vince bounds down the small flight of stairs leading from the upstairs into the living/dining area. As he passes Chase, he blocks an imaginary jumper and pumps his fist.

VINCE  
 Matty! You ready to hit the  
 highway?

MATT  
 Absolutely.

VINCE  
 Eleven hours of windshield time  
 ahead of us.

BRENT

You can shave a good hour off if  
you take Highway 85 to Medora.

VINCE

(with feigned interest)  
Highway 85. Okay. Okay.  
(turning to Chase)  
Hey Chase, did you just use the  
guest bathroom?

CHASE

(smiling)  
Maybe.

VINCE

Well, maybe try to remember to  
flush next time, okay buddy?

CHASE

Cheater!

VINCE

Hey now, I beat you fair and  
square.

Vince turns to the rest of Gwen's family seated at the table.

VINCE (CONT'D)

You guys make yourselves at home.  
Help yourself to whatever you want.  
Steve knows where things are.  
Plenty of food in the cupboards.  
Brent, I see you found the imports  
in the basement. Good. Good.

Brent lifts the beer bottle, tips it toward Vince, then takes  
another drink. Vince leans down and hugs Marcia lightly as  
she remains seated at the table.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Enjoy your stay. And I'll see you  
in a few days - late Monday night.

Vince steps toward Gwen for a half-hearted goodbye kiss.

GWEN

Be good.

VINCE

Always.

Copyright 2009 John Horan -- All Rights Reserved

For the complete script (for production or representation consideration only)  
please contact Jennifer Brooks at: [info@filmmakers.com](mailto:info@filmmakers.com)