

A Christmas Corral

Based on A Life by Kathryn

EXT. ROAD - DAY

A long, empty snowy road. Early morning -- about 7:30. Wide, empty, white fields. Endless blue sky.

A LITTLE BOY, 10, is standing with a huge backpack next to a bus stop sign. He's bundled up -- bulky coat, big limp mittens, fat snowpants, a giant hat that swallows everything down to his eyebrows. Breath mists from his mouth set by red cheeks.

His stomach GRUMBLES. He tries to reach into his backpack, but can't.

When he turns around, across the field, is SOMETHING. Small. Black. Getting bigger fast.

A LOW THUNDERING.

The breath starts misting out from his mouth fast. He looks both ways down the road. No bus.

He looks up.

A HUGE HORSE, the color of RUST, is staring down at him. It snorts.

On top of it is a RIDER in a thick black coat. A riding helmet. Goggles. Face mask. Black pants. Mean-looking black boots. Like some supernatural mounted police officer.

The Rider dismounts with a THUD. It walks up to the kid. Not much taller than him, but still enough where he has to crane a little to look up.

The Rider puts up its goggles and pulls down its face mask.

It, SHE, is a WOMAN, mid-50s. A lock of black hair, accented by strands as white as the snow, falls down. She has a kind, handsome face.

She reaches into her pockets and pulls out two granola bars.

RIDER

I have one regular, and one peanut butter.

The kid looks at her. The bars. At her.

She lifts them up again, slightly.

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He looks back at the bars. He takes the peanut butter one. She puts the other back in her pocket.

RIDER

I think your bus is almost here. Warm enough?

He nods.

RIDER

You sure?

He nods again. A little smile comes on her face, and she nods back.

She gets back on her horse. Pulls her mask up, goggles down. Waves a little. Turns the horse around, and goes back the way she came.

Down the road, the bus HONKS! The kid turns his head. It's coming his way.

He turns back. She's gone.

The bus pulls up.

FX: "Send Me On My Way" by Rusted Root begins to PLAY.