

Universal to Release Movie About True Story of Bear that Ate 75 lbs of Colombian Cocaine




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 Of all the wild and crazy real-life stories about narcos and drug cartels, there is one infamous tale that remains an inexplicable urban legend to this very day. Back in 1985, a drug trafficker named Andrew Thornton II leaped to his death from a plane that crash-landed in the snowy mountains of Kentucky, about 60 miles outside of North Carolina. Moments before the wreck, the Kentucky native hurled loads of bags full of Colombian cocaine out of the plane in a last-ditch effort to save his life and the cargo. The drugs were reportedly worth upwards of \$15 million.



At the time of his death, Thornton II had \$4,500 cash on him, along with several weapons. He was also decked out in loafers and a bulletproof vest. Law enforcement eventually recovered nine bags of Colombian cocaine, along with Thornton's body. But, the most bizarre discovery from the investigation was that the tenth and final bag had been eaten by a 175-pound black bear that emerged from the forest. According to the legend, the bear consumed more cocaine than any living being should have been able to withstand. The bear reportedly ate as much cocaine as it could until it was eventually found dead after a search that followed the recovery of Thornton's body.

During an interview with *The Independent*, a medical examiner once famously said, "[The bear's] stomach was literally packed to the brim with cocaine. There isn't a mammal on the planet that could survive that...Cerebral hemorrhaging, respiratory failure, hyperthermia, renal failure, heart failure, stroke. You name it, that bear had it."

In the years that followed, the black bear became so famous that locals named it the 'Pablo Eskobear,' after the famed Colombian drug lord [Pablo Escobar](#). The large mammal has become more commonly referred to as the 'Cocaine Bear.' In fact, people became so enamored by the bear's story that they taxidermized its body.

Today, the bear can be found in a commemorative display for tourists to view at the Kentucky Fun Mall in Lexington. Soon, the story of the 'Cocaine Bear' may become a worldwide phenomenon. In February 2023, Universal Pictures will release *Cocaine Bear*, a feature-film thriller about the aforementioned true story starring the late [Ray Liotta](#), Keri Russell, Margo Martindale, Isaiah Whitlock Jr., and Ice Cube's son, [O'Shea Jackson Jr.](#) The film was written by Jimmy Warden and directed by Elizabeth Banks.