The Challenge of the Yukon

FIND THE BODY

by Fran Striker

Number: 556

Date: 10/1/48

27

387 50
250
637 50

Sergeant Preston
King

Ace Broderick ..... Hot-headed gambler
Slick McGill ..... Smooth lawyer
Brooks ..... Lawman - straight
Newton ..... " "
Dolly ..... Ingenue
Barkeep ..... (Small part)
LeFitte.....half french. Small part.
Voice....one line.

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FIND THE BODY

(USUAL OPENING)

Anncr; The town of Tumble Rock was as rough as any community in the entire Yukon Territory. Constable Brooks did his best to maintain law and order, but he was ineffectual against Ace Broderick who ran the Tumble Rock Cafe and the grim ruffians who frequented the place. The Constable was glad to unload his responsibility on Sergeant Newton of the Northwest Mounties who had just arrived at his office.

Brooks; I'm tellin' you, Sergeant Newton, that Broderick outfit is just too strong for me to handle. Broderick does what he pleases in that cafe and gets away with it.

Newton; Have you proof that his friends have broken the law?

Brooks; (LAUGH BITTERLY) Proof! A man don't get proof against the Broderick outfit, Sergeant. There's not a ma n in town would dare to testify against any of those gunslingers. I --

(DOOR OPENS QUICKLY)

Dolly; (BACK) Constable!

Brooks; Dolly! Sakes alive, what's ailin' you, girl?

(DOOR CLOSES - STEPS IN AS:)

Dolly; (COMING IN) (SOBBING) It's Dad - poor Dad. He - he just got home from North Creek.

Brooks; Now calm down, Dolly. This here is Sergeant Newton. Sergeant, meet Dolly Martin. Her folks are among the first to settle in this part of the country.

AD LIB: (HOWDY'S)

Brooks; Now sit down here, honey. Tell me about your Dad. Did he sell his interest in that minin' claim?

Dolly; Yes. He got five thousand dollars in cash, but Ace Broderick stole the money from him.

Newton; Ace Broderick, eh?

Dolly; (SNIFFLES) Broderick not only stole the money, he had Dad beaten up.

Brooks; Where's your Dad now?

Dolly; He's home. You - you see, Constable Brooks, last night when he got into town, it was almost midnight. He hadn't had supper, so he stopped into Broderick's place for a bite before he came home. He started eating, and that's all he can remember, until he wakened this morning.

Brooks; Where'd he wake up?

Dolly; In Broderick's office. He was dizzy and weak, and his money was gone. He accused Broderick of putting a drug into his food and stealing his money.

Brooks; You see, Sergeant Newton? That's just the sort of trick that Broderick would pull. () What'd Broderick say?

Dolly; He - he said Dad had spent the night gambling and drinking and had lost his money.

Brooks; Humph, the lyin' polecat! Your Paw never drinks, and never gambles.

Dolly; When - when Dad argued, Broderick called his men. They beat him and threw him out of the cafe. Oh, Constable, can't something be done?

Brooks; (SIGHS) I don't know, Dolly. It's your father's word against Ace Broderick and a dozen men who'll swear that Broderick is tellin' the truth. Broderick and Slick McGill would laugh at me if I'd talk to them.

Newton; Who is Slick McGill?

Brooks; He was a lawyer back in the States. He's a smooth talkin' critter. He's Broderick's partner.

Newton; Constable, do you think this girl's father is telling the truth?

Brooks; Bill Martin? (FERVENTLY) I' d stake my life on it!

Dolly; Of course he's telling the truth!

Brooks; I've known Bill Martin for over twenty years. And I've yet to hear him say anything that isn't true.

Newton; That's all I wanted to know.

(CHAIR SCRAPES)

Brooks; What're you going to do?

Newton; The Mounted Police are given broad powers to serve Justice on the spot. I'm going to see about getting back Martin's cash.

Brooks; Well I'll go with - -

Newton; You go home with this girl. See what you can do for her father. I think I can handle the situation better if I'm alone.

(STEPS FADING BACK)

(DOOR OPEN AND CLOSE)

Anncr; Broderick's Cafe was practically deserted at that hour of the morning. When the youthful Sergeant entered, he saw four hard-faced men idling at a corner table, and a swamper lanquidly mopping the floor.

(STEPS IN)

The bartender turned from the glass he had been polishing and greeted the Mountie.

Barkeep; Well - a red coat, eh.

Newton; Where's Broderick?

Barkeep; Why you askin'? Why do you want to see him? (SUDDENLY JERKED) Hey!

Newton; Where's Broderick?

Barkeep; Let go my coat!

Newton; I have no time to waste. Answer my question quickly!

Barkeep; All right, all right. The Boss is in his office. It's that door right there.

Newton; Thanks.

(FEW QUICK STEPS AS:)

Barkeep; (FADING BACK, GRUMBLING) You needn't get so rough with a man!

(DOOR OPEN AND CLOSE)

Broderick; Well, look who's here! A Mountie.

Newton; I'm Sergeant Newton. Are you Ace Broderick?

Broderick; That's right. And this is my partner, Slick McGill.

Slick; It's customary to rap on a door - especially when the door is marked "Private."

Newton; Broderick, last night a man named Martin came in here with a lot of money.

Broderick; Yeah, I remember the poor galoot. He should have known better than to mix gamblin' and drinkin'.

Newton; I came to get the cash he lost.

Broderick; (SURPRISED) You what?

Newton; Hand it over.

Broderick; Say, just what kind of talk is that?

Slick; Sergeant, I don't know what you've heard, but I'm sure if you had the true facts, you'd know better than to expect Mr. Broderick to refund any gambling losses.

Newton; Martin didn't lose his money gambling, and you two know it.

Broderick; Now see here, Sergeant, I have witnesses--

Newton; This is not a court trial, and I'm not interested in what your witnesses say. Martin was robbed, and I'm here to get his money. Perhaps if it's returned to him he'll let the matter drop, and overlook the beating you gave him. Now hand it over.

Broderick; Mountie, if you think you can come here and bulldoze me - -

Newton; (SUDDEN EFFORT) No you don't Broderick!

(HARD SLAP)

(GUN FALLS)

Broderick; (SLAPPED) Why you --

Newton; Trying to pull a sneak gun, eh? Did you really think you could get away with shooting a Mountie?

Broderick; (RAGING) I can get away with anything!

Slick; Wait a minute, Broderick. Don't lose your temper.

Broderick; (SNARLING) You keep out of this! (VIOLENT EFFORT) I'll show this Mountie a thing or two!

(SHARP BLOW)

Slick; (AD LIB EXCLAMATION AS:)

(FALLING BODY)

Newton; Sorry, Broderick. I didn't mean to knock you down, but you shouldn't swing on me.

Broderick; You - you —

Newton; Come on, I'll help you to your feet.

(BIZ OF GETTING TO FEET)

Broderick; What's the matter with you, Slick? Can't you give your partner a hand when you see him beaten up like this?

Slick; It's your argument, Broderick. Maybe you'd better do as the Mountie says and hand over the money.

Broderick; All right. I - I'll give it back. I've got some cash here in this drawer.

Newton; Now you're showing sense.

(DRAWER OPENS)

Don't try any more sudden tricks, Broderick, because I - -

(GUN SHOT)

Slick; Broderick!

Newton; (GASPING) You - you -

Broderick; (LAUGHS) Fooled you, didn't I? You never looked for me to shoot from the drawer of my desk!

Newton; (GASPING) You - you won't get away with it. You won't get away —

(FALLING BODY)

Slick; (ANGRILY) Broderick, you quick-tempered jug-head!

Broderick; That Mountie had it coming!

(RAPPING ON DOOR)

Barkeep; (MUFFLED) Mr. Broderick! Mr. Broderick! Is everything all right in there?

Broderick; (CALLS) Get away from that door, Baldy! Go back to your bar!

Slick; Wait a minute, Broderick. You'd better let me handle this from now on.

(COUPLE OF STEPS - DOOR OPENS)

(CUE) Come in here, Baldy.

Barkeep; (BACK A BIT) I - I heard a gun shot. I — (GASP)

Slick; I said come in here!

(COUPLE OF STEPS)

Barkeep; (IN) It - it's the Mountie.

(DOOR CLOSES)

(CUE) Mr. Broderick - he - he's dead. -

Broderick; (SNARLS) Well what about it? You --

Slick; Any strangers out in the big room?

Barkeep; No, Mr. McGill. There's no one out there, except the boys that don't hear nothin' and don't ask questions. But - but gosh —— a Mountie! This is bad.

Broderick; He pulled a gun on me first, that's what he did! He was going to shoot me. I — I - it was self defense.

Slick; Shut up, you fool! You know better than to try a story like that! You'd have been smart to return the cash as that Mountie wanted. When you shot him, you dug a deep hole, and you're at the bottom of it. You're in trouble.

Broderick; All right, McGill. I'm in trouble. I - I admit it. Get a couple of the boys, and bury him somewhere so he'll never be found.

Slick; You can't bury anything when the ice is as thich as it is now. And the ground is frozen underneath it.

Broderick; Well get him out of here! Get him where I can't see him! Get him out - do something!

Slick; I'll do something. You just keep your head. And from now on, listen to me, and do as I say. () And you, Baldy - I'll give you some instructions.

(BREAK)

Anncr; It was several weeks later when Sergeant Preston and his great dog King visited Constable Brooks in the town of Tumble Rock.

Preston; You see, Brooks, Sergeant Newton was supposed to report to headquarters. When there was no word from him, they sent us out.

Brooks; Us?

Preston; King and me.

Brooks; Oh. Oh yes, of course. You and your dog. Well, I've given you the facts. You've put them down in your notebook.

Preston; Let me check them with you. Newton left your office here to call on Broderick.

Brooks; That's right, Sergeant Preston. And that was the last any of us heard of him.

Preston; You don't know whether he got to the cafe or not.

Brooks; I waited around a long time, and when Newton didn't come back, I went to see Broderick. He said he hadn't seen anything of Sergeant Newton.

Preston; What do you think?

Brooks; Well, I don't trust Broderick. I wouldn't believe anything he told me, and the same goes for his partner, Slick McGill. As for the barkeeper and the swamper, and the rest of Broderick's gang, there isn't a one of them would go against anything Broderick says.

Preston; You think that Newton reached the cafe?

Brooks; Here's the way I size it up, Sergeant Preston. I figure something must have happened to him in the cafe.

Preston; And Broderick knows what happened?

Brooks; Broderick knows - sure he does. And so does Slick McGill, his partner, and the bartender. And so do a number of others.

Preston; All right, Brooks. Thanks for your help.

Brooks; Here's something else you should know.

Preston; What's that?

Brooks; I went looking for Newton about an hour after he left here.

Preston; Yes?

Brooks; Broderick' and Slick McGill were there together in Broderick's office. They were wearing their mackinaws and hats.

Preston; Don't they have a stove in that cafe?

Brooks; They have one, and she was a-goin' full blast. But in spite of that, the office was cold. The window was wide open.

Preston; Wide open?

Brooks; Mighty cold day, too. They had that window open because they wanted to air out the office.

Preston; Why?

Brooks; Because a gun had been fired! In spite of the FRESH air, I smelled powder smoke.

Preston; Um.

Brooks; It wasn't very strong, but I've got a good nose, and I know powder smoke when I smell it.

Preston; That's very interesting.

Brooks; There's something else. The floor between Broderick's desk and the office door was fresh scrubbed -- not the whole floor. Just that one part.

Preston; As if someone wanted to wash out blood stains?

Brooks; That's what I'm gettin' at. Broderick saw me eyein' the floor where it was still damp. He said somethin' about the bartender havin' dropped a trayful of food and drinks.

Preston; Thanks, Constable Brooks. We'll see what Broderick has to say.

Brooks; Uh — just a second, Sergeant. One more thing before you go.

Preston; Yes?

Brooks; Be careful. Broderick's awful hot-tempered.

Preston; Hot-tempered enough to shoot a man — even a Northwest Mountie. Come on, King. Let's call on Broderick.

(KING BARKS, FADES OUT)

(DOOR OPEN AND CLOSE, BACK)

(WIND UP AND UNDER:) (FOOTSTEPS)

Anncr; During the walk from the Constable's office, the great dog King, trotting at his master's side, noticed that Sergeant Preston was thinking deeply. In front of the cafe, the Mountie paused.

(FOOTSTEPS STOP)

King looked up inquiringly.

(WOFT WHIMPER)

Preston; King, this looks like murder, but it's going to be mighty hard to prove. We're going to try something, boy. We'll go around to the rear of the building — to the window of Broderick's office. Come on, King.

(SHORT BARK)

(FOOTSTEPS STARTING, AND FADE OUT AS:)

Anncr; There was one window in the rear of Broderick's cafe. It was low - quite close to the ground. Seggeant Preston looked into a well furnished office and saw the broad back of Ace Broderick who was seated at his desk. The door on the opposite side of the room was closed.

Preston; King, I'm going to leave you here, and I'll see that the window stays open. You'll have to keep watch, boy, and if Broderick pulls a gun, you know what to do.

(WHIMPER)

Now I'll get his attention.

(TAPPING ON WINDOW)

Anncr; Preston's tap on the window startled Ace Broderick. He turned quickly - then went wide-eyed when he saw a Mountie.

Preston; (CALLS) Open the window, Broderick. I want to talk to you.

(OPENING OF WINDOW)

(CUE) Thanks.

Broderick; Wha- what's the idea of scaring a man like that?

Preston; I didn't want to go thru the front of your place. (EFFORT) Mind if I step in?

(STEP INTO ROOM) (WIND FAINTER)

Broderick; If I did mind, it wouldn't matter. You <u>are</u> in.

Preston; I'm Sergeant Preston.

Broderick; You know who I am.

Preston; That's right. () Oh - leave the window open. I like lots of fresh air.

Broderick; But it's cold!

Preston; If it gets too cold, you can put on a coat - and a hat.

Broderick; Your dog out there?

Preston; Yes. () You do sometimes sit here with the window open, don't you?

Broderick; Why do you ask that?

Preston; (IGNORES QUESTION) Especially when you want to clear out the odor of powder smoke?

Broderick; See here, Mister. Just what do you want?

Preston; A few weeks ago Sergeant Newton came here, but he didn't leave.

Broderick; (MORE HEATED) That's not so! Newton wasn't inside my place!

Preston; I meant that Newton came here - to Tumblerock.

(A COUPLE OF STEPS)

(PAUSE) Floor been scrubbed recently?

Broderick; (HOTTER) Stop beating around the bush! What do you want?

Preston; Did you kill Sergeant Newton?

Broderick; What - what?

Preston; Constable Brooks thinks you did.

Broderick; Why that -

Preston; Did Slick McGill witness the shooting?

Broderick; (GETTING HOTTER) There wasn't any shooting! I know better than to shoot a Mountie! Do you think I'm crazy enough to figure I could get away with shooting a Mountie? Do you think I - -

Preston; A hot-tempered man does foolish things. You <u>are</u> hot-tempered, aren't you Broderick? I'll bet that temper of yours has gotten you into a lot of trouble.

(COUPLE OF STEPS)

Um-m - what's this in the door?

Broderick; I - I - uh -

Preston; A bullet hole!

Broderick; That's an old one!

Preston; Um-m. Doesn't look so very old.

Broderick; I tell you -

Preston; Quiet. Let me examine this hole. Now let me see-

Anncr; (CLOSE, CONFIDENTIAL) Sergeant Preston turned his back on the man behind the desk, and examined the bullet hole very closely.

Preston; (MUTTERING) If you fired from where you are sitting, a bullet would enter the door at just about this point -- after going thru a man who stands where I am standing --

Anncr; Unseen by Preston, Broderick drew a sneak gun from beneath his coat and took aim at the Mountie's back—

Broderick; (CRY OUT) I've had enough of this!

MUSIC SHARP BURST.

Anncr; We will continue the story in just a moment.

(COMMERCIAL)

Anncr; It was not a foolhardy gesture when Sergeant Preston deliberately turned his back on the man he suspected of murdering Sergeant Newton. Preston had calculated his risk carefully. He had infuriated Ace Broderick then turned to examine a bullet hole in the door, knowing that his great dog King was watching from beyond the open window. Broderick went for his gun, and cried out —

Broderick; (CRY OUT) I've had enough of this!

(KING COMING IN FAST, SNARLING WILDLY)

Anncr; With the appearance of the gun, King went into action, leaping to the window sill, and then at Broderick.

Broderick; (CRY OUT)

Preston; That's it, King!

(SCUFFLING) (DOG SNARLING)

Broderick; (AD LIBBING) Take him away! Take him away! Let go of me! Make him let go! He'll break my arm!

Preston; (EFFORT) First I'll take this gun. All right, King. That'll do, boy.

(KING SUBSIDING)

Broderick; That - that dog!

Preston; So you were going to gun me, eh Broderick? Shoot me in the back? Is that how you shot Newton?

Broderick; (TERROR-STRICKEN) No no!

Preston; Or did you shoot him when he was facing you?

Broderick; I -- I -- listen, Preston - listen to me.

Preston; If King hadn't been watching, you'd have tried to kill me. Now let's have the truth! What happened to Newton?

Broderick; I -- I -

Preston; Come on! Out with it! He did come here, didn't he? He came and got you angry, and you shot him. Isn't that it?

(DOOR OPENS)

Slick; (BACK) What's going on in here? What's -- (BREAK OFF)

(KING SNARLING)

Broderick; Slick! This - this Mountie -

Preston; Quiet, King. Keep out of it, boy, for the time being.

(DOOR CLOSES)

Slick; How did you get in here? What's that window doing open?

Preston; You must be Slick McGill.

Slick; You called it.

Preston; Your partner just tried to shoot me in the back.

Slick; Broderick, you fool -

Preston; -- Just the way he shot Sergeant Newton.

Broderick; No no, I didn't! Slick - I didn't say a thing! He's trying to pin the Newton murder on me!

Preston; (SHARPLY) So Newton was murdered.

Broderick; I -- I - he - that is. -

Slick; Broderick, you'd better keep your mouth shut. The first thing you know you'll give the Mountie suspicions that you had something to do with Newton's disappearance.

Preston; Then you admit knowing he disappeared?

Slick; (LAUGHS) Everyone in town knows that. The Constable's been asking questions for the past several weeks.

Preston; Um.

Slick; (GOING ON SMOOTHLY) It is quite possible that he met with foul play. There are a number of rather rough characters in Tumblerock, but of course, it would be practically impossible to prove he was murdered unless you could find his dead body.

Preston; McGill, you've given me an idea.

Slick; Indeed?

Preston; I should have done that in the first place.

Broderick; Should have done what?

Preston; I should have found the body. I think it won't be hard to find with King's help.

(SHARP BARK)

Preston; Yes, King, we'll start out right away. () Broderick, for the time being, I'm going to overlook the fact that you drew a gun on me.

Slick; My partner has a way of drawing his gun quite often. It's just a nervous gesture, Sergeant. He wouldn't shoot anyone.

Preston; At least not while King is on the watch! Come on, King. We'll go out the front way.

(COUPLE OF BARKS) (WHIMPER)

(DOOR OPENS AS, STEPS GO BACK)

(CUE) By the way, Broderick, you might as well close the window now. Thanks to King, there's no need to air out ~~the~~ powder smoke.

(DOOR CLOSES)

Slick; Broderick, how many times have I got to tell you to control that temper!

Broderick; But - But Slick - he - he knows a lot more than he's telling.

Slick; Wait a minute. Let me make sure he's not listening outside the door.

(DOOR OPENS)

(KING BARKS - WAY BACK)

(DOOR CLOSES)

(CUE) It's all right. He's gone out the front door.

(COUPLE OF STEPS AS:)

Slick; (CUE) I'll close the window.

(CLOSING WINDOW AS:)

Broderick; Do you think he'll find the body?

Slick; No.

Broderick; But that dog of his! That dog's plenty smart! I've heard of King!

Slick; Broderick, if the dog had a scent to follow, it would be different. But he has nothing. Stop worrying, and let me handle things.

(BREAK)

Anncr: Sergeant Preston and King hurried back to the office of Constable Brooks. When the Mountie told about his call on Broderick, the grizzled old lawman nodded knowingly.

Brooks; You see what I mean, Sergeant Preston? Broderick's got a hair-trigger temper. You took a big chance, gettin' him riled like that, then turnin' your back on him.

Preston; It wasn't such a big chance, Brooks. King was right at the window, and it was a law window - he watched every move that Broderick made.

Brooks; But even so - () Why'd you take such risk?

Preston; THREE reasons. First, I wanted to let Broderick know that he was suspected. Second, I wanted tonsee if he'd go all the way -

Brooks; All the way?

Preston; He drew a gun on me, so it's reasonable to assume that he w ould draw on Sergeant Newton.

Brooks; Um. I reckon that's right. You said there were three reasons. What's the third?

Preston; I wanted Broderick to see King in action.

Brooks; (CHUCKLES) Accordin' to what you just told me, he saw plenty of action. But why?

Preston; Because Broderick must be made to think that King can do something that's beyond the capabilities of other dogs.

Brooks; Humph. I reckon everyone that's heard of your dog knows that.

Preston; In this case, we're called on to accomplish more than even King can do.

Brooks; Meanin' what?

Preston; Before we can file a charge of murder, we've got to find the body.

Brooks; Newton's?

Preston; Yes. And that wont be easy. You see, there is no trail for King to follow. Weeks have elapsed since Newton disappeared. The trail is cold - literally and figuratively. There has been a lot of snow since then. And even if there had be en no snow, King has no scent to follow.

Brooks; That's so. The ground's too hard-frozen for buryin' but there's a thousand places nearby where a body could be hid. What's yer next move?

Preston; Broderick's men have got to show us the hiding place.

Brooks; How?

Preston; Brooks, you told me that there were several of Broderick's friends in the cafe when you went there a couple of hours after Newton left your office.

Brooks; That's right.

Preston; Who were they?

Brooks; Um-m. Well-l- there was the swamper and the barkeep - and there were four men playin' cards at one table- -

Preston; The swamper!

Brooks; Huh?

Preston; You said that Broderick's office floor had been washed.

Brooks; ~~Partly washed~~, PART OF IT

Preston; The swamper would have to be in on the deal. He must know about the murder.

Brooks; He probably does. But you could never make him talk. He an' everyone else who works for Broderick know what'd happen to anyone who crosses that crook!

Preston; What's the swamper's name?

Brooks; LaFitte. He's part foreign.

Preston; I'd like to get him in here - casually.

Brooks; Casually?

Preston; I don't want to make a point of bringing him in.

Brooks; No arrest?

Preston; No, no! By no means.

Brooks; Well, he passes my office on his way to and from work. He generally goes by in the morning, around nine o'clock and - -

Preston; (CUT IN) That'll do it! (RISING) Come on, King.

BARK

Brooks; Where are you going now?

Preston; We're leaving town, but we'll be back early in the morning. Meet me here about eight thirty.

Brooks; Good enough, Sergeant. I don't know what you've got in mind - and I don't like to discourage you - but if you're thinking of getting LaFitte to squeal on Broderick -

Preston; No, Constable. I'm counting on Lafitte to squeal, but Not on Broderick. (FADING) See you in the morning.

BREAK

WIND BACKGROUND.

LaFitte; (FADE IN WHISTLING OLD FRENCH CANADIAN TUNE, OR WHISTLING TUNELESSLY)

Anncr; LaFitte, who mopped the floors and washed the dishes in Broderick's cafe was on his way to work at the usual time. As he came abreast the constable's office, the door opened and Brooks called out - -

Brooks; (SLIGHTLY BACK) Hey you, LaFitte.

LaFitte; Eh? Oh, bon jour Monsieur- Mon Jour.

Brooks; Step into my office for a minute, will you?

LaFitte; Um. Well I - uh - Monsieur- I -

Brooks; Sergeant Preston would like a couple of words with you.

LaFitte; Oh. (SHRUG) Tres bien.

STEPS IN.

Brooks; You know Sergeant Preston, don't you? () Sergeant, this is Jean LaFitte -

Preston; I saw you yesterday, when I left the cafe.

DOOR CLOSES. CUT WIND

LaFitte; Oui Monsieur.

Preston; Sit down, LaFitte. Just a minute, I'll take that stuff off the chair. I just brought it in this morning.

LaFitte; (STARTLED)(EXCLAMATION

Brooks; Maybe I'd better lock those things up in the safe.

Preston; No hurry, Constable. I'll just put them on your desk.

(PUT THINGS ON DESK)

Brooks; That's important evidence. You don't want to lose it.

Preston; I'll keep an eye on it. () LaFitte, you know that I'm working on the murder of Sergeant Newton, don't you?

LaFitte; (NERVOUS) I - I do not know anything, Monsieur. I -

Preston; But you did know that Newton had been shot?

LaFitte; Non, non! I - I hear that he is being looked for - I do not know that he is dead -

Preston; No doubt of that. Now LaFitte, I'm going to give you a chance to tell me all you know about the shooting. I'd advise you to tell the truth.

LaFitte; I - I know nothing! I tell you I know nothing. You cannot accuse me of anything. I do nothing but wash the floor.

Preston; You washed the floor of Broderick's office on the day of the murder.

LaFitte; I wash it when he tells me to do so. That is all I know. (WILDER) I know nothing, Monsieur- I know nothing at all. Name of a Pig, you think I am a killer? Non, non!

Preston; Take it easy.

Brooks; No use questioning him, Sergeant. [redacted]

Preston; I just saw him passing and thought he might be able to tell us a few things. But never mind, LaFitte.

LaFitte; I - I am free to go?

Preston: Yes.

LaFitte; (GET UP) Merci.

CHAIR SCRAPES. STEPS GOING BACK AS-

(FADING) I must hurry or I am late for work.

Preston: (CALLS) By the way, LaFitte...

LaFitte; (BACK) Oui?

Preston: (CALLS) Don't tell anyone I called you in here. Just forget about it.

LaFitte; (BACK) Oh, Oui, oui, Monsieur. I do as you say. I forget you call me in.

DOOR OPENS, CLOSES.

-----BREAK -----

SOFT MOOM NOISES. STEPS COMING IN..as-

Anncr; When LaFitte reached the cafe, Broderick and McGill stood near the bar and a couple of their friends were at a nearby table. They, as well as Baldy, knew by the swamper's manner that something unusual had taken place.

STEPS HALT

Broder; What's thematter with you, LaFitte?

LaFitte; Monsier, Monsieur- I - I am stopped at the office of the constable.

Slick; (SHARPLY) Brooks office? Why?

LaFitte; The Mountie is there- the Sergant Preston.

Baldy; I thought he left town last evenin'.

McGill; He did.

Brod; He's back, eh? Why did they stop you?

LaFittel I am inside. I am to sit by the desk and answer questions....

Brod; About what?

LaFitte; Oh, Monsieur Broderick- it is about the murder of the Sergeant Newton.

McGill; (SHARPLY) Who said he was murdered?

LaFitte; It is known, Monsieur! The Sergeant knows it. He ha s found the body!

ADLIB: (STIR)

Brod; Who says so?

McGill; Did he tell you that?

LaFitte; Non. He does not say so, but he has things. The gunbelt, the leather pouch, the braid, and also, I see some letters that are addressed to the Sergeant Newton!

ADLIB: (LOW STIR)

Brod; McGill! You hear that? Confound it! You, Baldy - I told you to hide that body! I -

Baldy; Now Boss, I did! Me an' Pete took it-

McGill; Wait a minute! () How do we know the body has been found?

LaFitte; But I saw those things -

McGill; Maybe Preston just laid them out there so you would see them and tell us about them.

Brod; That's right! He might have expected LaFitte to break down and tell what he knew! (SUDDEN EFFORT) Did you say anything?

LaFitte; Non, Non, Monsieur! I said nothing at all!

McGill; If Preston IS playing a trick, we've got to know it. Unless he finds the body, he'll have no case at all - if we stick to our story! () Baldy,

Baldy; Huh?

McGill; You go and find out.

Baldy; Find out?

McGill; Go and see if things are as you left them - the gunbelt pouch and everything else in place. We'll soon know if Preston is trying to trick us.

BREAK

Bancr; Baldy left the cafe and traveled by a devious route over icy ground that showed no footprints to a cave about a quarter of a mile beyond the edge of town. Inside, he moved some heavy rocks that had been mounded to form a cairn.

MOVING ROCKS.

FADE IN CAFE ROOM NOISES.

Anncr; It was an hour later. Broderick and McGill were waiting in the cafe for Baldy's return. LaFitte had taken the place of the bartender in the meantime.

Broder; Maybe someday, LaFitte, you can have a permanent job as barkeep. I -

DOOR OPENS, BACK.

McGill; Broderick - look! That Mountie!

STEPS COMING IN.

Prest; (COMING IN) Good morning, gentlemen.

Brod; You back again?

Prest; It's official business this time. Take off the apron, LaFitte. You're going with us.

LaFitte; What you mean?

Preston; You're under arrest as an accessory.

Brod; (HEATEDLY) What's that?

Preston; Y'know, Broderick, when you see a man beside a dead body, it's pretty good evidence of murder.

McGill; Steady, Broderick. Let me do the talking. (TO) Now see here, Sergeant, if you -

Preston; Baldy is in jail.

ADLIB: (STIR)

Pres; When he realized that we could hang him for the murder of Sergant Newton, he told all he knew.

Brod; (HOWLS) It's a trick! If you think -

Pres; Not this time, Broderick! It WAS a trick, to make you send someone to find out if the body had been discovered. King followed Baldy's trail. You are under arrest for murder!

Brod; (GASP*

Pres; McGill, LaFitte, and Pete Savoy are under arrest as accessories!

Brod; (SCREAMS) I wont be taken alive!

LaFitte; (HOWLS) Get him!

McGill; (EFFORT) Now we've got to fight!

Preston; (CRY OUT) Guns, eh?

SEVERAL SHOTS. CRIES, SCUFFLE ETC.

(CALLS) Come on, King! .

WILD BARKS, SNARLS ETC. COMING IN.

Brooks; (COMING IN) Come on, King. Let's get into it! You too, Martin!

ADLIB FIGHT.

Anncr; The great dog King came charging from the street where he had been waiting with Constable Brooks and Bill Martin. When the three joined in the fight, the end was quick in coming.

ADLIB: (CRIES OF I QUIT. I GIVE UP. CALL OFF THIS DOG. ETC.

Preston; All right, King! That'll do, boy!

KING SUBSIDES WO GROWLS

As I said before, you're all under arrest! If any one wants to renew the fight, we may save the hangman some work!

LaFitte; (WHINING) I could not help it - my part - he- he made me clean the floor- he would kill me if I had talked-

Prest Shut up, LaFitte. You'll have your day in court, the same as Baldy and the others. () And you -

Brooks; Sergeant, this is Bill Martin. You never met him, but I thought I'd ask him to join me for the finish. Y'see, he's the one that Broderick robbed of five thousand dollars.

Pres; Glad to know you, Martin. I don't know whether or not we can get your money back, but we shall try.

Voice; It's all right with me if you don't get 'er back, Sergeant. It's worth a lot more'n that to get these pole cats out of business.

Brod; (SNARLS) That dog!

(DOG SNARLS)

Yes YOU! If you hadn't jumped me, I'd have finished Preston yesterday!

(BARKS)