

Challenge of the Yukon, Created by Geo. W. Trendle.

Wrong Trail
by Fran Striker

Number 851

Date 2/17/51

Sergeant Preston

King

Sam Blake.....testy old sourdough.

Ace Martin....easy going, straight. 40.

Duke.....straight.

PROMO

"WRONG TRAIL"

Annrcr;

It was early in the morning when Ace Martin, owner of the cafe, rushed in to Sergeant Preston's cabin.

(DOOR OPENS FAST)

Ace;

(EXCITED) Sergeant! Sergeant Preston!

Preston;

What's wrong, Martin?

Ace;

It's my partner! He's been murdered! His furniture is wrecked! Dishes are smashed! Lamps are busted and blood all over his cabin!

Preston;

King, this is a case for us. Let's go!

(BARKS)

Annrcr;

Sergeant Preston doesn't realize that he is to oppose a crook of exceptional cunning — one who lies in wait with a loaded gun to kill anyone who successfully follows his trail!

Be sure to listen —

The Challenge of the Yukon

by Fran Striker

WRONG TRAIL

Number: 851

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(USUAL OPENING)

Annrc;

Sergeant Preston had once lived in the town of Ogilvie. The small cabin which he had built with his own hands was still standing when he returned after a long absence. With a few days at his disposal, he made repairs to the cabin -chinking some of the logs in the side and pointing up stones in the fireplace. He renewed old friendships and acquaintances.

(FIREPLACE CRACKLING)

At noon of Sergeant Preston's second day in Ogilvie he had two visitors for dinner. One was Ace Martin - owner of the cafe. The other was Sam Blake, an old prospector. After the meal the three men talked--

Preston;

(FADING IN) Is it really true, Sam, that you've finally struck it rich?

Sam;

(CHUCKLES) Yes siree. I got a gold claim that's really goin' to pay off.

Ace;

If you're right, Sam, I'll benefit as much as you.
(LAUGHS)

Sam; Ace, I always said you'd never regret carryin' me on credit. I'll pay back every cent I owe you plus a bonus.

Ace; All right, Sam, but I won't spend the cash until I see it. Where is your claim?

Sam; I'm not sayin' where it is!

Ace; Now you're being smart!

Preston; When are you going to start working it, Sam?

Sam; I figured on starting out this afternoon, or tomorrow morning at the latest. But I -(BREAK)

Preston; But what -?

Sam; I changed my plans.

Ace; Why'd you change your plans, Sam?

Sam; I won't tell.

Ace; You won't tell?

Sam; No! I don't like to be laughed at, and you'd laugh if I said why I'm not settin' out right away. So I'm not tellin'.

Preston; We wouldn't laugh at you, Sam.

Sam; Ace Martin would.

Ace; Go ahead, Sam. Tell us. I promise I won't laugh.

Sam; Well, it's because Mukluk told me we were in for heavy snow.

Preston; Mukluk?

Ace; (LAUGHS) Mukluk told him!

Sam; I knew you'd laugh!

Ace; (SOBERING) I'm sorry, Sam.

Preston; Who is Mukluk?

Sam; That's my dog.

Preston; Oh.

Ace; All you old sourdoughs are alike! You spend so much time pushing around the country with no one but a dog for company, that you get to thinking you can savvy dog talk.

Sam; All right, you can laugh if you're a mind to! But I'm tellin' you, Ace Martin, me and Mukluk understand each other. He knows what I say, an' he's got ways of makin' me savvy what he wants to say.

Ace; All right, Sam. All right. I won't argue with you.

Preston; I think you're right, Sam.

Sam; (EAGER) You do?

Preston; King and I understand each other.

Ace; (SOBER) You mean that, Preston?

Preston; indeed I do.

Ace; Um-m. Well, every man has a right to his own opinion. As for me, I don't like dogs. Maybe they're handy to pull a sled. Aside from that, I don't want any part of them.

Preston; Ace, have you ever owned a dog?

Ace; No, and I don't want to. I have troubles enough with Duke Slade.

Preston; Duke Slade? Is he your partner in the cafe?

Ace; Yeah.

Preston; What's the matter with him?

Ace; Aw, I reckon he's all right, but he gets quiet spells - gets sulky and mean. I don't know what it is, but he's got something on his mind.

Sam; Mukluk never gets mean. That's why I'd sooner have a dog for a friend than a man like Duke.

Ace; Speaking of dogs, Sergeant Preston, where is King?

Preston; He's somewhere outside. (LAUGH) You should have seen him when we first arrived.

Ace; How's that?

Sam; Bet'cha I know how he acted. He was just bubblin' over with high spirits - glad to get back ho home. I bet right now he's out there racin' thru the snow, splashin' in the stream an' havin' a gay time. Yes siree.

(FADE IN PLAYFUL BARKS)

Annex;

Old Sam was right. King raced through clean snow, charging into unbroken drifts and splashing thru a shallow, swift-flowing stream.

(SPLASHING)

He had found one of his friends — a doe antelope.

(BARKS)

The graceful creature had often run with King, and now the two enjoyed their game of tag. They raced from hill to hill — from drift to drift — their tracks criss-crossing many times. First one took the lead, and then the other. Presently the antelope was far ahead, leaping along the edge of a woods — And then — — —

(SHOT)

— — — a heavy gun sounded in the woods nearby. King saw the antelope falter, then stumble and roll over. She lay motionless as King reached her side.

(KING COMES IN BARKING, CHANGE TO WHIMPERING
AND WHINING)

King saw a red stain expanding on the snow. He nuzzled his fallen friend gently — and then he knew. The antelope was dead.

(KING SNARLS)

He was angry at such wanton slaughter, and he turned toward the black trees from which death had struck so suddenly. He saw the man approaching.

Duke; (BACK) Get away from there, King! That's my kill!

(LOW GROWL)

Annecr; Duke Slade walked out of the woods. King knew ~~it~~
Duke Slade -- and hated him.

(GROWL)

Duke; (NEARER) I don't want trouble with you, so vamoose!

(ANGRY SNARLS, GROWLS & BARKS)

Annecr; King's angry snarls brought Duke Slade to a halt a
few yards distant.

Duke; (SLIGHTLY BACK) Get away from there! Get away
you vicious cur!

(SNARL)

If you belonged to anyone but Sergeant Preston,
I'd shoot you!

(SUSTAIN LOW GROWLS)

Annecr; Instinctively King wanted to attack the man who had
killed his friend the antelope. His restraint came
from Sergeant Preston's careful training. Head
lowered he stood tense and watching, ready to attack
in self defense if Duke Slade raised his rifle. And
then he heard a clear voice in the distance --

Preston; (BACK) (SHOUTING) You, King! Where are you, boy?
Come here, King!

Annecr; It was Sergeant Preston's voice. It was a command
to the big dog.

Duke; Go on, mutt. Your master's callin'!

Preston; (BACK) Here, King!

Anncr; King hesitated momentarily. He wanted to stay with his dead friend, but the Mountie's commands took precedence over any personal desire.

Preston; (BACK) Where are you, King?

Anncr; There was an edge of impatience in that call. King turned reluctantly, looked back with hatred at Duke Slade, then pointed his nose toward Preston's cabin and trotted home.

Preston; (COMING IN) Well fellow, where have you been?

(LOW WHIMPER)

I saw you running with that antelope. One of your old friends, eh?

(WHIMPER)

What's the matter, fellow? When we arrived you were glad to be home, but now --

Sam; (SLIGHTLY BACK) You found your dog yet, Sergeant Preston?

Preston; (CALLS) Yes, Sam. We'll be right in. Come on, King. Inside.

(STEPS INTO CABIN)

Sam; Hi there, King. Glad to see you!

(DOOR CLOSES)

Ace; He don't seem overjoyed at meeting you, Sam.

Sam; What's the matter, King?

Amner; King eyed Sam Blake, glanced at Ace Martin, then lay down on the floor and cushioned his nose on his front paws.

Ace; (CHUCKLES)

Sam; What're you laughin' at, Ace?

Ace; Looks to me like King and my partner have something in common.

Preston; How's that?

Ace; I told you how Duke Slade got quiet spells.
(CHUCKLES) Look at your dog there, Preston. Acts like he wants to be left alone.

Preston; Something happened while he was out in the snow. I'd like to know what it was.

Ace; Now if it were like Sam's dog Mukluk, he'd speak right up and tell us all about it.

Preston; He may at that — when he is ready.

Ace; You men and your dogs! (LAUGHS)

(SUDDEN SHARP GROWL)

Preston; King! What's the matter with you?

Sam; Look at him! He's eyein' the door! Someone's comin'!

(ANGRY SNARLS)

Preston; Seems to be someone he doesn't like.

(RAP ON DOOR)

(GROWLS)

Down, King. Quiet, boy.

(COUPLE OF STEPS) (DOOR OPENS)

Duke; Hi there, Sergeant Preston.

Preston; Duke Slade. Hello! Come in.

(DOG SNARLS)

Quiet, King!

Duke; Hi, Sam.

Sam; Howdy.

Ace; Anything wrong at the cafe, Slade?

Duke; Well I - uh - no. I guess there's nothing really wrong.

Ace; Is Baldy on the job?

Duke; Yeah. I left him in charge while I came here to see you. I'm not feelin' too good. I figured to go home and take a nap until this evening. Baldy can handle things until then.

Ace; Sure thing, Duke. Go ahead. Hope you get to feeling better.

Duke; Oh I'll be all right after a nap. There's one thing more --

Ace; Well?

Duke; Something happened to the lock on our strongbox.

Ace; (SHARPLY) Did someone bust it?

Duke; Oh no, nothing like that. Seems like it 's jammed, that's all. I couldn't lock it. We'll have to get 'er fixed. Meanwhile, I didn't want to leave too much cash around the cafe, with only Baldy on the job.

Ace; We had a lot of cash on hand to trade for gold dust when the prospectors and miners come in for the week end. What'd you do with it?

Duke; I left enough for Baldy to make change and brought the rest along with me. That all right with you?

Ace; Sure thing.

Duke; I thought it'd be. () Sam, what's this I hear about you striking it rich?

Sam; (SHORTLY) I got a claim.

Duke; They tell me you're leavin' here this afternoon to start workin' it.

Sam; Maybe so. Maybe not.

Ace; He won't go unless his dog changes his mind about the weather - will you, Sam?

Sam; (STOUTLY) No I won't!

Duke; Well, I'll shove along. Glad you're in town, Sergeant Preston. It was good to see you again.

Preston; It's good to be here.

Ace; Be careful with that cash, Duke.

Duke; I'll be careful, but we needn't worry, Ace. No one'd have the nerve to steal it while the Mountie is in town. (FADES) See you in the morning.

Ace; Right.

Ad lib; (GOOD BYE'S)

(DOOR CLOSSES)

(LOW GROWL)

Preston; King, what's the matter with you?

Sam; He don't like Duke Slade.

Preston; I wonder why?

Ace; Now if that was Sam's dog Mukluk, he'd just up and tell you why he don't like my partner, wouldn't he Sam? (LAUGHS)

Sam; (SNORTS) Humph. () Sergeant Preston, what d'you think about the weather?

Preston; We may get some snow, but I doubt there'll be enough to interfere with travel.

Sam; I'd sure like to ^{START} ~~show off~~ for my claim. Especially after what Duke Slade said.

Ace; What was that, Sam?

Sam; He said he heard I'd struck it rich. That means people are talking about my good luck.

Preston; Talk like that spreads quickly.

Sam; That's the point, Sergeant. It spreads like wildfire. The longer I'm around town, the more there'll be to hear I found gold. Sooner or later some ornery claim jumper'll hear it, an' try to figure ways to make me tell where my claim is at.

Preston; Frankly, Sam, I think you're right.

Sam; You figure I should get goin' as soon as possible?

Preston; I would if I were you.

Sam; I'll tell Mukluk what you said. I reckon maybe he'll be willin' to travel, even if the weather is a mite doubtful. I'll go home an' ready my gear so's I can set out tonight.

(CHAIR SCRAPES)

Glad to've seen you, Sergeant, an' I sure enjoyed the grub.

Preston; Glad you did, Sam.

(DOOR OPENS)

Preston; Good luck to you, Sam.

Sam; Thanks;

Ace; I'll get along too, Sergeant Preston.

Sam; So long, Sergeant.

Preston; 'Bye.

Ace; (FADING) 'Bye, Sergeant Preston.

(DOOR CLOSSES) (COUPLE OF STEPS)

Preston; (CUE) Well, King - now we can get back to work on that shelf we were making.

(WHIMPER)

I wish I knew what's ailing you, big fellow. You look as if you'd lost a friend.

(BREAK)

Annrc; There was little sleep for King that night. The big dog stirred restlessly, changing his position frequently. His mind was filled with recurring thoughts of the wanton slaughter of his friend the antelope. Several times he rose and approached the door, then looked at the sleeping form of Sergeant Preston as if debating whether or not to rouse his master and take him to the scene of the shooting. Snow fell during the night. Big heavy flakes that continued for two hours, but dawn came bright and clear with a new carpet of white across the open spaces on both sides of the frozen river. Sergeant Preston slept later than usual that morning. It was after sunrise when King nuzzled him awake.

(KING WHIMPERING)

Preston; (WAKING) Eh? What -oh. What's the trouble, King?

(WHIMPERING)

Preston; (LAUGHS) Slept overtime, eh? () But that's one of the privileges a man enjoys on a day off.

(WHIMPERING)

(LAUGHING) Hey there! Stop tugging. I'll get up!

(HARD RAP ON DOOR)

Ace; (OUTSIDE) Sergeant Preston! Sergeant Preston!

Preston; That's Ace Martin. () You must have known he was coming, eh King?

Ace; (OUTSIDE) Hey, Sergeant! You there?

Preston; (CALLS) Come on in!

(DOOR OPENS, SLAMS, STEPS IN FAST)

You're excited. What's the trouble?

Ace; Trouble a-plenty, Sergeant Preston. And it means the end of your vacation.

Preston; What happened?

Ace; My partner's been murdered.

Preston; Duke Slade?

Ace; Yes. It must have been done with a knife, judging from the looks of his place.

Preston; You saw it?

Ace; Yeah, and you'd better come right away.

Preston; I'll be with you as soon as I pull on my boots and parka.

(AD LIB BIZ OF PULLING ON BOOTS)

- Ace; You remember yesterday when he was here?
- Preston; Yes. He was going home to take a nap.
- Ace; He said he felt sick.
- Preston; That's right.
- Ace; Well, he didn't show up at the cafe last night. So
this morning I went to his house.
- Preston; You waited until this morning?
- Ace; Yeah. I worried about him last night, but we were
busy — mighty busy. I couldn't get away. I went
to his house this morning after I finished work.
His place is a wreck.
- Preston; As if there'd been a struggle?
- Ace; Yes. Furniture was wrecked, dishes were smashed —
and a couple of lamps busted. Looked like there'd
been an awful fight — and blood all over the place.
- Preston; Does anyone live near enough to hear a struggle.
- Ace; No. Duke lived apart from all other houses.
- Preston; I'm ready. Let's go to Duke's place.

(BARK)

(CUE) Yes, King. You come too. Come along, boy.

(BARKS)

(STEPS CROSS FLOOR) (DOOR OPEN & CLOSE)

(SLIGHT WIND IN B.G.) (STEPS IN
FRESH SNOW)

Preston; (CUE) Where had Duke been stabbed?

Ace; I don't know that. The body's gone. And so's the cash.

Preston; The body gone?

Ace; I know where that is. The new snow tells the story. It was dragged down to the river and put thru a hole that had been chopped in the ice. What's more, Sergeant, I know who killed Duke Slade.

Preston; Who?

Ace; Sam Blake.

Preston; I doubt that. Sam Blake is no killer.

Ace; He's the only one who knew Duke had a lot of cash with him.

Preston; You knew it.

Ace; Yes, but I'd have no need to steal my own money!

Preston; I knew Duke had cash.

Ace; Humph!

Preston; Baldy at the cafe knew it.

Ace; Baldy was with me all night. Sam's the only one who could've killed Duke. Besides that, Sam has skipped town. I checked on that.

Preston; You knew he was leaving last night. He said so.
He went to his claim.

Ace; Maybe he did - maybe he didn't. Me, I have doubts.

Preston; We'll not form an opinion about the murder until we
have made an investigation.

Ace; You can do that pronto. There's Duke's cabin.
Do you see that deep groove in the snow?

Preston; Yes.

Ace; It runs in a beeline from the cabin to the river.
I followed it myself.

Preston; After last night's snow, there won't be many tracks
visible.

Ace; I know that. The groove is partly filled in with
new snow. I'd bet every dime I have that my partner's
body made that groove when Blake dragged it to the
river.

Preston; Wait.

(STEPS HALT)

Was that cabin door open when you came here?

Ace; Yes it was. Just as you see it. What's more, the
money Duke had from our cash box is gone. I looked
around for it when I was here.

Preston; Let's go inside.

(STEPS INSIDE CABIN)

Ace; Look at this place.

(KING WHIMPERING)

Preston; Mighty violent struggle, eh King?

(KING WHIMPERING)

Ace; Poor Duke. He must have got the first blow from the knife while he was lying in bed. He got up - tried to fight - he fought hard - getting weaker all the time. I can just see it.

Preston; I didn't notice any tracks around here except yours.

Ace; I made the tracks you saw just a little while ago. Tracks that were made last night were covered by the snowfall. That includes the tracks Blake made when he came here, as well as the tracks from his house when he pulled out of these parts.

Preston; We'll see what Sam has to say.

Ace; How can you? You don't know where he went.

Preston; He said he was going to his claim.

Ace; But we don't know where it is.

Preston; I know.

Ace; Yeah?

Preston; He told me confidentially where it was located.

Ace; Then I'll go with you. Let's get started.

Preston; Very well. But first, we'll examine the hole in the ice. Come on, King.

(COUPLE OF BARKS, FADING OUT)

Annex; The river ice was thick. No one could have fallen thru it accidentally. Moreover, there were marks to show that the three foot hole had been cut thru the ice with an axe.

(DOG ADLIB UNEASINESS, WHIMPERING & SOFT BARKS)

Ace; Y'see, Sergeant Preston, the deep groove in the snow comes right up to the edge of the hole.

Preston; Um-m. I see it does.

Ace; The body was dragged thru the snow, then shoved thru the ice. The killer didn't want it found.

Preston; I wonder why.

Ace; You wonder why? Why because a man can't be judged guilty of first degree murder unless the corpse is found. That's the law.

Preston; Um-m. Perhaps you're right. () King, what's the matter with you? Why are you so uneasy?

Ace; Looks like he wants to get on the trail of the killer.

Preston; Yes.

(KING BARKS TWICE, THEN WHINES)

Ace; Tuggin' on your trouser leg.

Preston; You want to go in that direction, King?

(ADLIB WHINES & WHIMPERS)

Ahncr; King knew much more about the killing than did Sergeant Preston. He did his level best to tell the Mountie that the answer to the mystery would be found on the far side of the river — but without success. The Sergeant seemed unduly stubborn.

Preston; No, King. We're not crossing the river. We're going the other way.

Ace; Which way is Blake's gold claim?

Preston; East.

Ace; The dog wants to go West.

Preston; No, King. Quiet, boy.

Ace; If it wasn't for the new snow, there'd be easy tracks to follow.

Preston; There will be tracks.

Ace; Huh —? There will be?

Preston; Tracks Blake made after the snow stopped falling. Come on, Ace. We'll pick up equipment and food at my cabin, then start looking for those tracks.

Ace; Right.

Preston; Come along, King.

(SHARP BARKS) (FADING BACK THRU:)

(STEPS)

Ace; (CUE) He's just standing there looking at you.

(STEPS HALT)

Preston; (THROAWAY) (CALLS) Come, King.

Ace; Now he's coming.

(STEPS FADING OUT)

Annecr; King obeyed, but not eagerly. He trotted at the Mountie's side with frequent backward glances toward the hole in the ice. When Sergeant Preston reached his cabin, King waited silently while a knapsack was packed, then tagged along stolidly as his master and Ace moved at a fast pace due east from the bank of the river.

(FADE IN WIND) (STEPS ON ICY SNOW,
SUSTAINING)

A stiff breeze came from the north, but the air was crisp and clear. After two hours of walking most of which was on ice that had been swept clear of snow, the two men saw a small fire on the sheltered side of a big drift. Sam Blake crouched by the fire preparing food. His pleasure when he greeted his friends seemed genuine.

(STEPS IN SNOW STOP - COUPLE OF BARKS)

Sam; Sakes alive, I'm glad to see you, Sergeant. You too, Ace. Did you come here by chance?

Ace; Not on your life, you ornery old —

Preston; Wait a minute, Ace —

Sam; Huh? Say, what's ailin' you, Ace?

Ace; You —

Preston; Sam, we came to ask you about Duke Slade.

Sam; What about him?

Ace; You know what about him and there's no use trying to lie out of it.

Sam; Back up, Ace. Let the Sergeant do the talking.

Preston; Sam, when was the last time you saw Duke Slade?

Sam; Yesterday when he stopped at your cabin. Remember? He was taking the money home from the cafe.

Preston; You haven't seen him since?

Sam; No. Why're you asking about him?

Ace; Someone went to his cabin last night, knifed him, put his body thru the ice and made off with the cash.

Sam; No! You don't say.

Ace; You and I are the only ones who knew he had that cash at home.

Sam; Now see here, Ace! Don't you accuse me of killin' your partner!

Ace; Well, I —

Preston; Ace, are you sure Baldy had no chance to commit the crime?

Ace; Dead sure. He wasn't out of my sight all night long. Besides he's not strong enough to drag a heavy man thru the snow.

Sam; Well I didn't do it.

Ace; Strikes me as mighty odd you got no further from home than this. What time'd you start out?

Sam; During the night. I got caught on the trail by the snowfall, and for a time I had mighty slow going. Mukluk told me it'd snow. I should've heeded what he said.

Ace; Humph. Mukluk. That dumb dog!

Sam; He's not dumb! Not by a jugful! Bu thunder, he knows more'n you do, Ace! He knows better'n to accuse me of a crime. If he was lookin' for the killer, he wouldn't come traipsin' after me! He'd pick up the scent and go get the right man. () Sergeant Preston, you got a dog that's as smart as Mukluk. Fact is, anyone but me might say King is even smarter! Why in tarnation don't you put King on the trail?

Preston; Sam, the trail's covered by snow.

Sam; (SNORTS) Covered by snow! Humph. A little snow wouldn't stop a dog like Mukluk. Or King either.

(COUPLE OF BARKS)

Preston; Um-m. Sam, perhaps you're right.

Sam; 'Course I'm right.

Preston; King tried to take us across the river. He tried to take us west.

Sam; You wouldn't go.

Preston; After what Ace told me, I thought we'd better talk to you. Ace, we might have done better if we'd followed King.

Ace; How could King or any other dog follow a scent when he don't know who he's lookin' for?

Sam; Who says he don't know who he's lookin' for?

Preston; Ace, we're going back.

Ace; Back where?

Preston; To the hole in the ice.

Ace; For what?

Preston; We're going to do what we should have done a few hours ago. We're going to let King take the lead!

Ace; What about Sam Blake? You're going to let him go?

Preston; For the present.

Ace; But he'll get away! He'll —

Preston; I doubt if Sam had anything to do with the scene in Duke's cabin. Come on, Ace. We're going back!

(KING BARKS)

Sam; Look at King. He knows you're readyin' to start back.

preston; Come on, King. Take the lead, old boy.

(BARKS & STEPS FADING OUT)

Anncr; King knew exactly where he was going. On the return trip to the river he ran ahead, halted then turned and waited while the Mountie and Ace Martin caught up. Then with a bark of assurance he ran on again. It was well past noon when the hole in the ice was reached for the second time that day.

(KING BARKING)

Preston; Now, King. It's up to you. Where do you want to go?

Anncr; King pointed his nose westward, toward the opposite bank, then paused and looked back at his master.

Preston; All right, King.

Anncr; A nod was all the great dog needed.

(KING BARKS)

His sensitive nostrils quivered. He resumed his journey as fast as the two men could follow.

(STEPS SUSTAINING)

The first hour of travel was across unmarked snow that had filled in the footprints of the man King trailed. The dog followed that trail by a barely perceptible scent that would have escaped nearly every other dog. Then Sergeant Preston made a discovery.

Preston; Look there, Ace. See those marks in the snow?

- Ace; Yeah. I can just about see 'em, and that's all. Just little depressions.
- Preston; But footprints nevertheless.
- Ace; You mean that dog has really found a man's tracks?
- Preston; Yes. The snowstorm was nearly over when the man we're trailing reached this point. The tracks are only partly filled in.
- Ace; Um-m —
- Preston; They'll be clearer in a few minutes.
- Ace; Sergeant. Maybe we're really getting someplace!
- Preston; I think we are.
- Ace; But how'd that dog know a man came this way?
- Preston; You've been underestimating dogs.

(KING BARKS, BACK)

(CALLS) Keep going, King. We're with you!

(STEPS SUSTAINING)

- Annrcr; After another thirty minutes of travel, the tracks of a man were sharply defined. King followed the tracks thru a valley and over a small hill, then into a canyon. He followed the canyon for half an hour then rounded a turn and halted abruptly. Less than a hundred yards ahead he saw a shack — and smoke came from the chimney. He barked a signal.

(KING BARKS)

Preston; I see it, King.

Ace; Sergeant, look at the tracks! They go straight to the door of that shack! Do you suppose —
(BREAK AS:)

(SHARP BARKS & SNARLS FADE FAST)

Look at that dog travel.

Preston; (CALL) King! What's the matter with you?

Ace; He's streakin' toward that shack as if he'd been shot from a gun.

Preston; (RUNNING) Come on, Martin.

(RUNNING STEPS)

~~AS:~~

Annex; As he raced toward the cabin, King knew that a killer was inside. He saw the enemy's face, wide-eyed with surprise at a small window, and the sight of that face added fuel to the big dog's anger. The face dropped out of sight, then reappeared behind a revolver.

Annrcr;

Duke Slade, the man whom Preston and Ace Martin thought dead saw King charging - and beyond the dog the two men who had found the hideout. Duke knew he had to kill. He fired two shots at King.

(~~TWO~~ SHOTS)

KING BACK, SNARLING, FADING IN SLOWLY AS:

Both shots went wide. Duke rested his gun on the window ledge and aimed more carefully, at the oncoming dog. He fired again.

(SHOT)

The bullet brushed King's bristling fur, but the great dog didn't even break his stride. Then Sergeant Preston fired from the distance —

(DISTANT SHOT)

Duke;

(CRY OUT)

Annrcr;

The Mountie's bullet struck the cabin inches from Duke's face. Duke leaped back out of view. Then King left the ground in a mighty leap that took him through the window.

(SNARLS CLOSE)

Duke tried to turn to bring his gun to bear on King, but the infuriated dog was too quick. He leaped and grabbed Duke's wrist in his powerful jaws. The gun exploded harmlessly toward the ceiling.

Duke;

(AD LIB SHOUTS & CRIES OF FEAR)

KING ADLIB SNARLING, SCUFFLE

Annex; King knew Duke Slade as the killer of his friend the antelope. For a moment he forgot his master and his training. He was bent on just one thing — punishment for the slayer. Duke dropped his gun and tried to struggle. He had the strength of desperation, but he was no match for King. Then Sergeant Preston and Ace Martin came thru the door.

(DOOR OPENS FAST)

Preston; King! Down, King!

Duke; (WILDLY) Call him off! Take him off me! Get him away! Help me! Help me, I tell you!

Ace; It's Duke Slade!

Preston; Down, King! That's enough! Down, boy!

(KING SUBSIDES)

Duke; Tha - that dog -- he -he would've killed m -me --

Preston; Steady, King. On guard, boy.

Ace; Slade, what're you doing here? I thought -we thought - that is -- it looked like you were dead!

Duke; Now wait, Ace. Listen --

Preston; Where is the money from the cafe?

Duke; I -- I got it -- It's here.

Ace; Here, eh? Um-m.

- Preston; What's the story, Slade? Want to talk now -or later?
- Duke; I - I - uh -
- Ace; Aiming to steal that cash, eh? Tried to make me think you'd been killed and put through the ice!
- Preston; What about that, Slade? Who was killed and put thru the ice?
- Duke; No one. Honest, there's no one killed. I - I shot an antelope, that's all. I - I used the antelope to -to make it look like there'd been a murder in my place --
- Preston; Then dragged the carcass to the river and put it thru the ice?
- Duke; Yes. You -you can't hold me for murder. There's no one dead.
- Ace; Maybe not, but by thunder you tried to get away with my cash! Figured there'd be no search for you, didn't you? You dirty double crosser!
- Duke; I - I made a mistake, Ace. I don't know what I was thinking of. I'm sorry. I'll never do it again. I --
- Ace; You're right about that, Duke. You'll never get a chance to steal from me again --or from anyone else until you get out of jail.
- Duke; You wouldn't send me to jail, Ace! You wouldn't do that, would you? We been friends a long time. We --

Duke; That's right. We've been friends a long time. When I trust a man I trust him all the way. I trusted you and I trusted Sam Blake. But you turned on me. Not only that, you framed things so's it'd look like someone murdered you. I suspected Sam Blake.

Duke; Ace - Ace wait. Listen. Give me another chance. I --

Ace; I'm an all-out man, Duke. I trust a friend all the way - and when he turns on me I go all out to see that he gets punished.

Preston; Hold out your hands, Duke.

(JUNGLE HANDCUFFS)

Duke; Handcuffs!

Preston; The usual thing when we take a prisoner into custody.

(SNAP CUFFS CLOSED)

Ace; Sergeant I'd like to take back some of the things I said about dogs. That King dog sure is smart. I reckon I never will savvy how he knew Duke Slade was the man we wanted.

Preston; Sam will be glad to know you've changed your opinion.

Ace; Sam's dog may be smart, but he's no match for King.

(KING BARKS)

Preston; King, you were right the first time. We would have saved a lot of time if I had listened to you instead of looking up Sam Blake. In any event, the case is closed!