

The Challenge of the Yukon -created by Geo. W. Trendle

*Striker*

FUR THIEVES

by Fran Striker

Number: 874

Date: 5-6-51

*Not sent  
to Skinner*

Preston and King

Inspector ..... Mountie officer

Lafe ..... Constable - straight

Butch ..... Heavy #3

Raven ..... Heavy #1

Gage ..... Heavy #2

Jim ..... Elderly trapper.

Mary ..... his daughter.

FILE

PROMO

(Y) (FUR THIEVES)

Anncr; Sergeant Preston listened respectfully in the office of his chief, Inspector Maynard.

Insp; Three experienced trappers have been found dead on the trail. There were no marks of violence, but in each case the dogs and sled had disappeared.

Preston; Inspector, that sounds more like crime than coincidence.

Insp; Prove it, Sergeant. Find proof of crime and bring in the criminals. That is your assignment.

Anncr; Sergeant Preston finds his most dangerous and difficult assignment when he tries to solve the mystery of stolen furs. Thieves clever enough to outwit three of the Yukon's most experienced woodsmen may well be more than a match for the Mountie and his great dog Yukon King.

Be sure to listen -(ETC.)



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(USUAL OPENING)

Annor; It was in the early Spring when the trappers were coming out of the wilderness and heading for the trading posts. Their sleds were loaded with fine furs -- the accumulation of the winter's trapping. One of the largest trading posts was located at Horse River. The Inspector was speaking about the Horse River vicinity to Sergeant Preston.

Insp; (FADING IN) You're familiar with the Horse River country, aren't you, Sergeant Preston?

Preston; Yes I am, Inspector. King and I have been there many times.

Insp; That's what I thought. By the way, how is that dog of yours?

Preston; King? He's fine. He's outside right now, sir.

Insp; Sergeant, I'd like to ask you a few questions. I want your opinion on a serious matter.

Preston; Very well, sir.



Insp; If you found the dead body of a trapper lying in the snow, his sled and dogs gone, and no signs of violence, what would you think?

Preston; I'd assume he had fallen through hunger and exhaustion -- and that his team had gone on with the sled.

Insp; Suppose two men were found in the same condition.

Preston; Together?

Insp; No, they weren't near each other.

Preston; It would be an unusual coincidence.

Insp; Let us go a step further. What if three such cases were found in widely scattered parts -- three men dead -- with no marks of violence -- and their sleds and dogs no where to be seen.

Preston; Three cases?

Insp; Yes. And all three were trappers. <sup>THEY WERE FOUND</sup>  
~~on trails leading~~  
ON TRAILS LEADING TO WHITE HORSE.

Preston; Were these men bringing in furs?

Insp; I'm sure they were, and so are the officers who found the bodies.

Preston; You said the men were found with no sign of dogs or sleds nearby. Could they have been carrying the furs on their back?

Insp; No, Sergeant. Our assumption is based on the reputations of the three dead men. Their names are Charlie Snead, White Horse Perkins and Jim Pound.



Preston; Um. I've heard of them.

Insp; All three men had strong teams and good equipment. For as long as anyone can remember they've brought a valuable load of furs into Horse River every spring. Moreover, there were too experienced to become victims of bad weather or travel conditions.

Preston; The three deaths sound more like crime than coincidence. I'd say the men were victims of fur thieves.

Insp; Right. I thought you'd agree with my opinion.

Preston; Next to Jim Bixby, those men were just about the most successful trappers in the Yukon.

Insp; Jim Bixby?

Preston; Bixby is a friend of mine.

Insp; If he's bringing in a valuable load of pelts, he too may be in danger. I am convinced that all three men were killed in the same way by the same criminal -or criminals. I'm assigning you and King to the case.

Preston; Very well, sir. We'll do our best. You said all three were heading for Horse River?

Insp; They were found on trails leading to the Post.

Preston; We'll start from there.

(FADE IN BARKING DOG)



Annex;           The great dog King barked in sheer exuberance on the way to Horse River. He was glad that Sergeant Preston was traveling without the sled and dog team. It meant that King was free of the responsibility of leading the other dogs -- free to run ahead or to leave the trail to investigate bird and animal tracks and other things of interest. Far to the left of the trail, partially concealed by rocks on a hilltop, three men saw the man and dog. One watched thru binoculars.

(WIND IN B.G.)

Butch;           What do you see, Raven? Is he a Mountie?

Gage;           Quiet, Butch. Give Raven a chance to look.

Raven;           (MUTTERS) He's a Mountie all right -- and one of the best --

Gage;           Who?

Raven;           Sergeant Preston! And his dog is with him!

Butch;           That's bad. Mighty bad. I don't want to tangle with Sergeant Preston. Any Mountie's dangerous to us -- but Preston and his dog -- --

Raven;           (CUT IN) I'm not scared of a Mountie! Not even Preston!

Gage;           Raven, we've got a nice lot of pelts, to say nothin' of three sleds and dog teams we can trade to the Indians. Let's clear out of the Yukon while we got the chance.



Butch; I'm all for it, Gage.

Raven; Shut up, Butch. As for you, Gage - who's asking your advice?

Gage; Boss, I only - -

Raven; You two tin horns were ready to quit after our first haul!

Gage; I keep thinking of the pitcher that went to the well once too often. We had good luck on the three jobs - but our luck's likely to turn sour -

Raven; Our luck'll hold for one more job! This'll be the richest haul of all!

Gage; You mean - Jim Bixby?

Raven; Yeah. Bixby and his daughter will be comin' to Horse River with a sled fairly bulgin' with sable and ermine.

Butch; But if the Mounties are suspicious - -

Raven; Even if they do suspect the men were <sup>ROBBED AND LEFT</sup> ~~killed-and~~ <sub>TO DIE</sub> ~~robbed~~ - there's nothing to tie the crimes to us!

Butch; Only that we got the furs and sleds and dogs--

Raven; Not with us!

Gage; Preston's arrested a lot of men who figured they were in the clear.

Raven; (SNARLS) I told you I wasn't afraid of Preston! I'll handle him!

Butch; How?



Raven; Well, here's the way I size him up. He's headin' toward Horse River for one of two reasons. If it's a routine patrol, we've nothin' to worry about.

Gage; What if it's not a routine patrol? What if he's lookin' for the reason three men died on the trail?

Raven; That, Gage is where you come in.

Gage; Me?

Raven; Here's the set-up, boys. There's a Way cabin on the far side of Windy Canyon. Jim Bixby stops there overnight on his way out of the trapping country.

Gage; What about it?

Raven; I figured we'd go there to meet him and relieve him of his cargo of pelts. But now that Preston is in the vicinity, only two of us will go to meet Bixby. You, Gage - have another job.

Gage; What is it?

Raven; You're going to make sure Preston doesn't interfere with us.

Gage; No, No! Not me!

Raven; Shut up and listen! There's no way for the mountie to reach that way cabin without goin' thru Windy Canyon.

Gage; I know that. But what--

Raven; You'll wait in the canyon.



Gage; (HOTLY) You mean I'm to stop the Mountie! I'm go keep him from going through the canyon? I -- I'm to meet Sergeant Preston and his dog single handed? Not on your life! I wouldn't tangle with Sergeant Preston and his dog for all the ermine and sable in the Yukon!

Raven; Shut up, Gage, and listen to my plan! You won't have to tangle with the Mountie. You'll just delay him until me and Butch get Bixby and his daughter.

Gage; How long will that be?

Butch; It shouldn't be more than a few days. That Indian we met said Bixby was on his way.

Raven; Gage, I've got a plan all worked out, and the more I think of it, the better I like it! It can't miss! (CHUCKLES) Preston has ~~got~~ a soft heart when it comes to dealin' with old folks who're in trouble.

Gage; What's that got to do with it?

Raven; You're goin' to fix up like an old man. (CHUCKLES) Yeah, that's it! A real old man that's in a lot of trouble. That's how Preston's going to find you in Windy Canyon. (FADING) Now listen careful and I'll tell you my plan.

Annecr; It was the following morning when Sergeant Preston reached Horse River. He was at breakfast with the Constable, Lafe Atterbury.

(AD LIB BREAKFAST TABLE B.G.)



Anner; King, lying on the floor nearby, could hear the conversation.

Preston; How did you learn about Jim Bixby?

Lafe; An Indian brought the word a couple of days ago.

Preston; And said Bixby had his daughter with him?

Lafe; Yep. The Indian met 'em on the trail. He said Bixby's sled was loaded heavy with ermine and sable and a few fox.

Preston; Lafe, we're looking for fur thieves.

Lafe; Yeah?

Preston; They've already killed and robbed three men.

Lafe; Do you think Jim's in danger?

Preston; I think he is/

Lafe; And his daughter's with him. Doggone, Sergeant, that's bad.

Preston; Have you noticed any strangers with furs to sell?

Lafe; No.

Preston; The killers will probably stay away from here.

Lafe; I'd hate to see anything happen to Jim Bixby -- and especially his daughter. She's a fine girl.

Preston; You say he's on his way here -

Lafe; Yes.

Preston; I think I'll go out on the trail to meet him.



Lafe; I'd be glad to go with you.

Preston; It will be better if you stay here in town. If any strangers arrive with a lot of furs, find some pretext to detain them until I return. Lafe, you know Bixby's habits. Which trail will he use?

Lafe; He'll come through Windy Canyon. You go straight north through the canyon. About half a mile from the end of the canyon, you'll find a Way cabin. Bixby will probably stop there overnight. If you haven't met him by the time you reach the cabin, continue due north and you're sure to meet him.

Preston; Thanks, Lafe.

Lafe; How soon are you going to start?

Preston; I have some errands to do in town, and I want to pick up a few supplies. I think we'll be able to start in about an hour.

Lafe; We?

Preston; King and I.

Lafe; Oh. Well, Sergeant, you'd better be prepared for snow. It's in the air.

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Anncr; Snow began to fall soon after Sergeant Preston and his great dog King left Horse River. By the time they reached Windy Canyon, darkness had gathered and the snow had increased to blizzard proportions. The wind, sweeping between the canyon's walls, had a mournful wail that was almost like the voice of a human. Suddenly King stopped and uttered a low growl.



(WIND B.G.)

(KING - LOW GROWL)

Preston; What's the matter, King?

Anncr; King knew that somewhere ahead there was a human being in the canyon. He stood tense, with every muscle rigid until his master understood.

Preston; Something ahead, eh King?

(KING - LOW GROWL)

Preston; All right, fellow. We'll be on guard. Lead the way.

Anncr; King went ahead cautiously through the snow, with sensitive nostrils pointed slightly upward. Presently from the darkness at the base of one of the canyon's walls, the Mountie heard a cry.

Gage; (BACK) Help! Help!

Preston; You were right, King.

(SHARP BARK)

Preston; (SHOUTS) Hello there! Where are you?

Gage; (BACK) Help! Over here!

Preston; Lead the way, King. On, King.

(BARKS SUSTAINING)

(STEPS IN SNOW, SUSTAINING)



Anner;           The command was all the great dog needed. Like an arrow from a bow, he leaped ahead, streaking thru the darkness until he reached a man who huddled in the meagre shelter of the cliff. The man was trembling in fear.

Gage;           (AS OLD MAN) No no! Don't hurt me, please, Mister! Call your dog away.

Preston;       Down, King. Steady, boy.

(LOW GROWL)

Gage;           Help. Help me, Mister. Help an old man who's in trouble.

Preston;       All right, just take it easy. Are you hurt?

Gage;           N - no. I - I'm not hurt.

(LOW GROWL)

Preston;       Quiet, King!

Gage;           Are - are you a policeman?

Preston;       Yes. I'm Sergeant Preston.

Gage;           Oh thank goodness - thank goodness, Sergeant. Thank goodness you've come!

(LOW GROWL)



Gage; That dog. He - he wants to attack me.

Preston; He'll not harm you. () King, I told you to be quiet.

(GROWL TRAILS OFF TO LOW WHIMPER)

Anner; King caught the sharp edge in Sergeant Preston's voice. His ominous growl subsided to a whimper. Instinct told him that the man who seemed so helpless was one who could not be trusted. The dog looked at ~~Sergeant Preston~~<sup>HIS MASTER</sup> fumbling in his pack for food.

Preston; I have some chocolate. It will give you strength.

Gage; I - I need help, Sergeant. Help to get to town.  
I - I lost my pack - lost my grub. I even lost my match box, and my rifle - - -

Preston; Where are you from?

Gage; I - I dunno. I been wanderin' for days - for weeks, maybe. I - I lost all track of time. I --

Preston; There'll be some light wood for kindling at the base of this wall. I'll build a fire and fix warm food for you.

Gage; Providence must've sent you here.

Preston; What's your name?

Gage; Gage. Glen Gage. That's m'name. I - I'm an old man.

Preston; Here's wood. I'll break up these twigs.

(BREAKING TWIGS)



Gage;           There - there's not much to tell, Sergeant.

(LOW GROWL)

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

Anncr;         King knew instinctively that the stranger in the canyon was a man of treachery, but there was no way to pass the information to Sergeant Preston.

Preston;       Take it easy, fellow. Calm down. We'll have to stay here for a while.

Anncr;         King turned away and began to sniff around in the snow.

Gage;           Lemme have that knife, an' I'll whittle some shavings to help the fire along.

Preston;       Very well. Here you are.

Gage;           If you'd just help me to find my pack -- when daylight comes - I - - I'd be all right.

Preston;       Where did you lose it?

Gage;           In the ravine somewhere on the backtrail. I - I was walkin' along the rim. I stopped for a minute or so to rest. I set the pack down at the edge o' the drop-off, then I slipped somehow. My foot kicked it - an' it went over.

Preston;       I'll see what can be done.

(GROWL)

Gage;           Hey, that dog!

Preston;       What's the matter?



Gage; (SHARPLY) Get away from there, you mutt!

(HARSH GROWL)

Preston; Stop that! Don't make a pass at King!

Gage; He - uh - er - -

Preston; Is this the pack you said you'd lost?

Gage; I dunno whose pack that is - -

Preston; You mean it's not yours?

Gage; I - I don't know anything about it.

Preston; It's been here only a short time. It was on top of the frozen ground. You must have buried it in the soft snow! Why?

Anncr; King caught the scent of fear as Gage realized that he was trapped. The fur thief still held Sergeant Preston's knife. In panic he acted with surprising suddenness.

Gage; (YELL) (EFFORT) Here's your answer!

(SUDDEN SNARL)

Anncr; King moved faster than Gage. He leaped thru the air and his jaws gripped Gage's wrist.

Gage; (YELL IN PANIC)

Anncr; Then Sergeant Preston acted. He shot a hard fist to Gage's chin - -

(HARD BLOW)

Gage went down. The mountie picked up the knife and then-



Preston; All right, King. Let him go, boy. () Gage, you must have been desperate to try to knife me. Especially with King on hand.

(LOW GROWL)

Preston; Get up, Gage.

Gage; (Moan)

Preston; Get up! You're not hurt and you're not an old man! You straightened up fast when you started for me with that knife. Why did you pose as an old man? Why did you lie about losing your pack? Why did you try to kill me?

Gage; What'll you do if I don't talk? What can you do? You can't do anything to me! I ~~know~~ how far a Mountie can go!

Preston; Gage, unless you talk, I'll leave you here just as I found you, and I'll leave King on guard while I proceed on my way thru the canyon.

Gage; (SHAKEN) Tha -that dog.

(GROWLS)

Preston; He doesn't like you, Gage. See how his fur is standing up. He remembers that you made a pass at him and tried to murder me. King is a good policeman, but he does not understand how far a Mountie can go! He's a law unto himself.

Gage; He - he'll attack me as soon as we're alone.



Preston; If he did, you'd be helpless, wouldn't you?

Gage; Don't leave me alone with that dog!

(GROWLS)

Preston; I asked questions, Gage. I want answers. Otherwise I'll get going.

Gage; Preston - listen to me. I - I didn't have a choice. I - I was sent here to delay you - that's all. I - I didn't mean to kill you -- j -just delay you --

Preston; How did you know I'd come thru the canyon?

Gage; The Boss figured you might --

Preston; Why did the Boss think I'd go thru here?

Gage; (WHIMPERING) He'll kill me for squealin'.

Preston; You're answering questions! Remember? Who is the Boss?

Gage; He - he's called Raven. He -he saw you in these parts an' thought you might be after him --

Preston; For what?

(GROWL)

Gage; For - for robbin' some -some men of their furs.

Preston; What men?

Gage; I - I -

Preston; Are you speaking of Jim Pound? (PAUSE) Are you?

Gage; Y -yes.



Preston; And Charlie Snead? And White Horse Perkins?

Gage; Y -yeah.

Preston; They were killed.

Gage; No no, Sergeant -they -they weren't killed.  
They -that is, Raven robbed them. He - he's the one  
who left 'em without food - or -or dogs - or weapons-

Preston; Left them at the mercy of the wilderness - to starve  
and freeze! That's murder!

Gage; I didn't want to do that, Sergeant. I swear I didn't.  
It was Raven's idea - so's they couldn't make trouble.

Preston; Where are the stolen goods?

Gage; The -the furs are hidden near the Indian village at  
Wild Pine.

Preston; The dogs and sleds?

Gage; They're with the Indians.

Preston; Are you lying some more?

Gage; No no, Sergeant. I'm giving it to you straight. I --  
I'll help you all I can. I - I didn't want to go  
along with Raven when he left those men to die. But  
I - I didn't have a choice. Those crooks would've  
killed me if I'd tried to back out.

Preston; Crooks? Who besides Raven?

Gage; Butch Larsen.

Preston; Where are they now?



Gage; I'll tell you all I know, Sergeant. I'll help you all I can, but you've got to protect me from Butch and Raven! They'll kill me when they know I squealed.

Preston; I asked you where Butch and Raven are.

Gage; They're in a shack a few miles north of the canyon. They're waiting to ambush Jim Bixby and his daughter.

Preston; Thanks, Gage. I'll take you with me.

Gage; Yes sir.

Preston; Remember, Gage, you're my prisoner. It will be hard walking thru the snow, so I'll let you travel without handcuffs. But don't try any sudden moves because you'll be unarmed and both King and I will be watching you!

(WIND UP, TRAIL OUT.)

Annor; With his prisoner traveling ahead, Sergeant Preston and the great dog King continued north through Windy canyon. He didn't see the crafty glint in Gage's eyes. He didn't suspect that Gage still had hopes of outwitting the Mountie.

(WIND UP & UNDER:)

The snow had stopped by the time the two men and the dog reached the end of the canyon. There was no moon but stars lighted the tree studded expanse of snow. Soon after leaving the canyon, Sergeant Preston called a halt. Ahead he saw the cabin. It was lighted inside.



(WIND &amp; STEPS SUSTAINING)

Gage;           There, you see, Sergeant? There! They're in the cabin, just like I told you.

Preston;       For your sake, Gage, I hope you've told me the truth.

Gage;           I have, Sergeant Preston. I know when I'm licked. I wouldn't try to fool you.

Preston;       Not unless you thought you could get away with it.

Gage;           I've given you the true facts. Maybe we'd better go careful and keep quiet. If they hear us, they'll open fire.

Preston;       We'll not be heard above this wind.

Gage;           There's two of 'em in that shack, and they're both killers.

Preston;       I know.

Gage;           I wish you hadn't left my rifle back in the canyon with my pack. If I had it now it would be two against two.

Preston;       You're not going to be in on it, Gage.

Gage;           I — I'm not?

Preston;       Stop right here.

Gage;           Wha — what are you going to do?

Preston;       I'm going to leave you here while King and I go on to the cabin.

Gage;           Well — — if that's the way you want it.



Preston; Put your hands behind your back.

Gage; You're not going to handcuff me!

Preston; No. I'll save my handcuffs for the men in that cabin.  
I'll tie your wrists with rawhide.

Gage; B - B - But Sergeant, that's not necessary. I - I  
wouldn't run out.

Preston; I'll make sure of that. (SLIGHT EFFORT) Hold still.

Gage; (WINCE) You're makin' that awful tight!

Preston; Now back up. I'm going to tie you to this tree.

Gage; B - But Sergeant, I - I'm likely to freeze to death!

Preston; You'll be here for only a short time.

Gage; (GRUMBLING) I never expected you'd treat me like this  
after the way I tried to help you. I told you - - -

Preston; I'm not forgetting that you tried to murder me. ( )  
There. That should hold you. ( ) Now, King, we're  
closing in. ( ) Heel.

Anncr; King knew when silence counted. He kept pace with  
Sergeant Preston with his head close to the Mountie's  
left knee during the remaining distance to the cabin.  
At the door, the Sergeant halted - placed his right  
hand near his holster, then threw his weight against  
the flimsy door.

(DOOR OPENS FAST)

Preston; On guard, King!

Jim; (STARTLED GASP)



Mary; (GASP OF SURPRISE) Dad - what - -

Preston; You're both under arrest in the - - (BREAK OFF)

Jim; Hey! What the Sam Hill - -

Mary; Dad! A Mountie!

Preston; You!

Jim; What's the idea?

Preston; Jim Bixby!

Jim; Sergeant Preston!

Mary; Dad, if this is Sergeant Preston - - that must be his dog, Yukon King!

Jim; That's right, Mary. () Sergeant, this is my daughter Mary. I've told her a lot about you and King.

Preston; How do you do, Miss Bixby.

Mary; How do you do, Sergeant. I've often hoped to meet you.

Preston; I'm sorry my entrance was so abrupt.

Jim; You said something about being under arrest - -

Preston; I expected to find a couple of fur thieves here in this cabin.

Mary; (GASPS) Fur thieves!

Preston; Yes. I'm glad to find that you two are alive.

(TWO SHOTS - OUTSIDE)

Mary; (CRY OUT) What's that?



(KING BARKS)

Raven; (BACK) You're trapped, Preston!

Butch; (BACK) Come thru that door and we'll drill you!

(BARKS)

Preston; Quiet, King.

Jim; What's that mean?

Mary; Who's out there?

Gage; (BACK) (SHOUTING) Fooled you, didn't I, Preston!  
(LAUGHS) My pals were hidden in the trees. They untied me an' they had an extra gun for me! Here's proof!

(SHOT BACK)

Jim; That shot didn't even hit the cabin.

Preston; It wasn't meant to, Jim. Those crooks don't leave signs of violence.

Mary; How many are there?

Preston; Probably three. They're here to steal your pelts.  
(CALLS) Gage, is Raven with you?

Gage; (BACK) (SHOUTS) Yes!

Raven; (BACK) (SHOUTS) You're trapped, Preston! You can't leave that cabin without being seen!

Mary; (LOW) I can't see them.



Preston; It wouldn't be hard for them to stay out of sight among the trees, but we can't reach the shelter of the trees without crossing an open space.

Jim; Do you think they'd shoot us if we tried it?

Preston; I'm sure of it. They know they'll hang if they're captured. And they know they'll be captured unless they get me. () Jim, where are your furs?

Jim; I left them packed on my sled outside.

Raven; (BACK) Preston!

Preston; (SHOUTS) What is it?

Raven; (BACK) We figured to keep Bixby and his daughter there until they starved to death, but now that you're with them, things are different.

Preston; (SHOUTS) How's that?

Raven; (BACK) We don't want to kill a Mountie. We'll give you and the others a chance!

Preston; (CALLS) What kind of a chance?

Raven; (BACK) We can trust your word of honor. You let one of us come and get that sled, and give us your word you'll stay in that cabin and keep Bixby and the girl with you for twenty four hours, and we'll shove on.

Preston; (CALLS) You expect me to let you get away with robbery and murder?

Raven; (BACK) You'll save the lives of Bixby and his daughter - to say nothing of your own life!



Preston; (CALL) Three men are dead because of you! I'll take you in or die trying!

Raven; (BACK) In that case, you'll have to choose between dying in the cabin or getting shot while you try to escape!

Preston; (CUE) The answer to your proposition, Raven is -  
No.

Raven; (BACK) That's the final word?

Preston; (CALL) Yes! And you'll have a long wait if you expect to starve us out. This cabin is well stocked with food!

Raven; (BACK) All right, Preston. Thanks for tellin' us. Maybe we won't wait for you to starve. There's other ways to get you!

(DOOR CLOSSES) (CUT WIND)

Preston; I'll close the door. Nothing to be gained by talk.

Jim; If we could only see the crooks so's we could shoot!

Preston; I've located them by the sound of their voices. They've moved from the trees where I left Gage. They're just beyond the snow ridge about twenty yards from the door.

Jim; Maybe if we were to open the door fast, I could make a charge - rush right at that ridge - and take a chance on gunning the crooks - -

Preston; It wouldn't work, Bixby. They'll be watching and ready. If I thought there were a chance of success, I'd send King to make the attack.



Jim; Oh.

Preston; We'll have to think of some way to outwit them.

Mary; Why don't they simply shoot us and be done with it?

Preston; They hoped to get away with furs without letting anyone suspect that crime had been committed. They left three men to die of hunger and exposure.

Jim; It will take a long time to starve us out.

Preston; You're right. For that reason they may try an attack. One of us had better stand watch at that air hole near the door.

Jim; There's a window at the rear.

Mary; It's covered with waxed paper. We can't see thru that.

Preston; We'll see them if they leave the ridge to try to circle to the rear of the cabin.

Jim; If you'd only let me try to attack --

Preston; No, Jim. They'll be looking for something like that. They'd shoot you before you'd gone ten paces.

Jim; We can't just wait for starvation - or for the next move on their part!

Preston; Just a minute. (THINKING) We might make them think we're going to attack -- (PAUSE) I wonder if my plan would work.

Mary; You have a plan?



Preston; Yes. Mary, will you stand right here at the air hole and watch that ridge?

Mary; Of course.

(STEPS CROSS ROOM AS:)

Preston; I'll take the waxed paper off the rear window. ( )  
 Him, will you blow out the candle?

Him; Right. (BLOW)

CRINKLE WAXED PAPER AS:)

Jim; Anything else you want me to do?

Preston; Yes. I want you to open the door - but slowly. Very slowly. I want it to move no more than an inch at a time. Take ten or fifteen minutes to open it fully.

(WIND UP, THEN UNDER & SUSTAIN)

Anncr; Beyond the ridge Raven and his henchmen waited and watched the cabin. Presently Butch spoke.

Butch; Raven, I wonder why they blew out the light.

Raven; How do I know, Butch?

Gage; Boss, we can't wait here for them to starve. We'll be out of grub long before they are.

Raven; I'm thinking things over. I — ( ) Butch - have you been watching that door?

Butch; Yeah.



Raven; It's hard to see in the dark, but it looks to me as if the door is open a couple of inches. Don't it look that way to you?

Butch; Come to think of it - it does.

(WIND UP & UNDER:)

Annecr; Several minutes passed while the outlaws kept their eyes glued on the front of the cabin. Despite the darkness the narrow slit of a partially open door could be seen.

Raven; Butch, it's opened wider than it was a minute ago.

Butch; I thought so, but I figured my eyes might be playin' tricks.

Raven; They're opening that door, but they're doing it mighty slow.

Gage; What do you reckon they'll do?

Raven; They probably figure to get the door wide open without us knowing it. Then wait for a chance to get a shot at us.

Gage; Do you think they can see us?

Raven; Not if we keep our heads down.

Butch; Looks like we'll have to change our style and use guns on those critters.

Raven; If they ask for gunplay, they'll get it.

(WIND UP & UNDER:)



Anner; Five minutes more dragged slowly. The door was half open.

Raven; No doubt of it now. That door's being moved, but mighty slowly. (CHUCKLES) Preston figures we can't see it in the darkness.

Butch; It's bad to kill a Mountie.

Raven; We'll be out of the Yukon before he's found.

Gage; This waiting for something to happen is getting on my nerves! Why don't one of us sneak around to the far side of the cabin?

Raven; I've been considering that, Gage. If one of us could get around there without being seen, we might set fire to the place. That would drive those three out where we could shoot 'em.

Butch; If you're going to do that, Boss, we'd better do it before daylight.

Raven; We'll wait a few minutes longer and see what happens when the door is wide open.

Gage; It's 'most wide open now.

Raven; Hold your guns ready, boys. It's my bet Preston will send his dog to attack us.

Butch; That dog travels fast. He might be hard to hit.

Raven; We'll all fire. One of us should get him.



Annecr; All three men were tense - with their guns in readiness and their eyes riveted on the black square in the cabin's wall that marked the open door. Then suddenly they heard a cry.

Preston; (SLIGHTLY BACK) Take 'em, King!

(BARKING & SNARLING)

Gage; That's Preston!

Butch; (YELL) Behind us!

Adlib; (WILD CONFUSION)

(BARKS AND SNARLS)

Annecr; The attack came from an unexpected quarter. King charged from behind the outlaws and was on them before they could turn and bring their guns to bear.

Gage; (ADLIB FRANTIC YELLS)

Annecr; King struck Gage and sent him sprawling. Butch and Raven raised their guns but Sergeant Preston fired first from close range.

(TWO SHOTS)

AD LIB; (YELLS OF PAIN)

Gage; (SUSTAIN ADLIB FRENZIED SHOUTS) Get away from me! Get away! Call off this dog! Get away!

Preston; (COMING IN) Do you want more gunplay?

Raven; My arm is busted - - my arm is - -

Butch; (CUT IN) Don't shoot! Don't shoot, Preston!



Jim; (COMING IN) I'm coming, Sergeant! Lemme at those thievin' critters!

Gage; (AD LIBBING) Call off the dog! Help me! Help me!

Preston; All right, King. That does it, boy. Get back fellow.

(DOG SUBSIDE)

Gage; Don't shoot!

Jim; Figure to kill us, eh!

Preston; Hold your fire, Jim. They're disarmed.

Jim; Looks like you took care of things before I got here.

Preston; It didn't take long.

Raven; What about my arm?

Preston; Walk ahead of us to the cabin. We'll bandage it before we take you in. You too, Butch. () On your feet, Gage.

Gage; Tha - that - dog -

Preston; You've lost your chance for clemency, Gage.

Raven; I - I suppose you went out the cabin window and circled around behind us?

Preston; I'm surprised you didn't anticipate that.

Butch; We might have if Raven hadn't kept us watching that front door.



Jim; (LAUGHS) That's why the door was being opened.  
Sergeant Preston just out guessed you killers,  
that's all.

Preston; To the cabin. Get going - all three of you are  
wanted for robbery and murder!

Raven; You might find it hard to make a case against us.

Preston; I doubt that, Raven. When Gage was uncertain  
which side he'd be on, he told where <sup>I</sup> ~~he~~ might find  
the furs - the sleds and the dogs you stole. We've  
already found the men you killed. When all the  
evidence ~~has~~ been collected, we'll be able to say  
this case is closed!

theme.