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SERGEANT PRESTON OF THE YUKON

MA GREEN'S BONANZA

ONE EVENING JUST
BEFORE CLOSING
TIME, PRESTON AND
YUKON KING WALK
INTO MA GREEN'S,
BACKWOODS CAFE

SERGEANT PRESTON—
AND KING? YOU HAVEN'T
BEEN HERE IN WEEKS!

WE JUST PULLED
IN, MA GREEN—
ON PATROL MY
MOUTH IS WATERING
FOR YOUR APPLE
PIE!



IT WAS BRIEF
ENOUGH BEFORE POOR
OLD CASH BILLINGS DIED!
EVERY LOAFER IN TOWN
WAS TRYING TO GET HIM
TO TELL THE LOCATION
OF HIS GOLD STRIKE!
BUT HE SHUN'T!



THANK HER, KING!
FOR BOTH OF US!

WOUFF
EE-TUFF!



IT'S RIGHT HERE IN MY
CASH DRAWER WITH THE MAP HE
DREW! HE GAVE
ME HIS UNRE-
CORDED CLAIM
IN RETURN FOR
BOARDING
AND NURSING
HIM!



UMMM! I'VE SEEN THIS BEFORE, AND
SO HAVE A HUNDRED OTHERS! IT'S
RIGHT! AND IF YOU HAVE A MAP---

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DELL COMICS ARE GOOD COMICS





RETURNING BEHIND THE COUNTER, MA GREEN HASTILY STUFFS THE WET MAP UNDER A STACK OF L.O.U. SLIPS.



--AND PLACES THE ORE SAMPLE ON TOP BEFORE CLOSING THE DRAWER.



11: BOYBREAK, NEXT MORNING ---

WELL, KING, WE'LL SADDLE UP AND---
HELLO! SOMEBODY'S RUNNING
THIS WAY---MA GREEN!



I CAN'T SAY WHO BUT IT
MIGHT HAVE BEEN THOSE
TWO LATE CUSTOMERS.
LAST NIGHT! I TOOK THE
CASH FROM THE DRAWER
AFTER THEY'D GONE
BUT LEFT THE MAP
UNDER THE 10 U
SLIPS! SOMEBODY
BROKE IN WHILE
I WAS ASLEEP!

AND NOW THEY'RE
PROBABLY-HEADED
FOR OLD DAN'S
STRIKE!



I MEMORIZED YOUR MAP, AND
WE ARE HEADING FOR OLD DAN'S
CLAIM RIGHT NOW---KING AND I!

BLESS YOU,
SERGEANT
PRESTON!



THEY--THEY GOT
IT, SERGEANT?
MY MAP---

"THEY" WHO GOT IT,
MA?



IN A WAY, I STILL HAVE
THE MAP! HERE IS THE
10 U SLIP WHICH LAY
ON TOP OF THE COFFE-
WET MAP! THE IRRELI-
BLE INK MADE A GOOD PRINT
---ON REVERSE!

KEEP IT, MACIT
WILL CONVICT
THOSE CLAIM JUMP-
ERS IF I CATCH
THEM WITH THE
ORIGINAL!



THOSE THIEVES WON'T LOSE ANY TIME, KING---
AND NEITHER WILL WE!



THREE HOURS LATER ---

"THERE'S THE
KETTLE RIVER
--- WHERE IT
JOINS THE PELLY!"



AND, AFTER THREE MORE HOURS OF HARD
PADDLING ---

"OTTER CREEK IS
THE LEFT HAND
BRANCH--- NOT
BAD FOR A
CANOE!"



"BUT WE'LL TAKE THIS RIGHT HAND
ONE--- BLACK CREEK! A CANOE
CAN'T GO FAR UP IT BECAUSE OF
WATERFALLS! SO THE CLAIM
JUMPERS WON'T BE
WATCHING IT!"



"WE'LL HIDE OUR BIRCHBARK HERE.
KING, AND CROSS ON FOOT."



"---TO OTTER
CREEK! IF THERE'S
A WATCHER, YOU
WILL SPOT HIM,
KING!"



AN HOUR LATER, AT KING'S LOG GROWL, PRESTON
HALTS, PEERING AHEAD

"RRRRRRRR!"



THE BREEZE FROM THE WATERWAY HAS BROUGHT TO KING THE SCENT OF AN UNWASHED WATCHER.



-- WHOSE SURPRISE, SOME MOMENTS LATER, IS COMPLETE.





A RIFLE SHOT SPLITS THE SILENCE OF THE BUSH BEHIND PRESTON.





AT PRESTON'S COMMAND, KING GLIDES THROUGH THE THICKEST BUSH, UNSEEN, IN A HALF CIRCLE





A SUDDEN, TERRIFIED SQUAWK FROM THE RIFLE-
MAN IS CUT SHORT AS HIS HEAD BUMPS A ROCK.





SERGEANT PRESTON OF THE YUKON

TRAIL TO DANGER

NO, SERGEANT, WE
DON'T KNOW MUCH
ABOUT PROSPECT
ING, BUT WE ARE
HERE TO LEARN!

JUST A MOMENT, MR.
FARRILL... THAT OLD
TIMER IS ON A HUNT!

WHAT HAPPENED
TO YOU?

UHHH! NOTHING
TO--- TO EAT...
THREE DAYS
LOST--- MY TEAM!

WOOF!

I HEARD WHAT HE
SAID-- THE POOR
OLD MAN! HE SHOULD
BE IN THE HOSPITAL!

NO HOSPITALS IN THE
YUKON, MRS. FIFE!
WE'LL TAKE HIM
INTO THE CAFE!

GO HAVE ANOTHER
CUP OF COFFEE,
MR. BURROUGHS!

AHHH! THANK 'EE, MA'AM!
NOT NOW! I'M FEELING
A LOT BETTER! AND I'VE
FOUND THE "LOST
SILVER MINE"! ---
AT LAST!

HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT, WITH A
MEAL UNDER HIS BELT!





SOME HOURS LATER, IN THE OFFICE OF THE LOCAL ATTORNEY ---



THE NEXT DAY ---



ON PRESTON'S RETURN, AFTER THREE
MORE DAYS---



THE WHOLE TOWN IS WORRYING ABOUT THOSE
THREE CHEECHAKOS FROM THE STATES, SERGEANT--
ESPECIALLY ABOUT THE YOUNG WOMAN! THAT'S
BAD COUNTRY WHERE PLACER BURROUGHS IS
TAKING THEM! THE CULTUS
RIVER---



THREE DAYS OUT ON THE TRAIL OF BURROUGHS AND HIS PARTNERS --



ON THE FIFTH DAY, FIENSTON KNOWS HE HAS SIGNED ON THE HEAVILY-LOADED PARTY AHEAD --- BUT A SHARP TURN HAS MADE THE GOING DIFFICULT.









ON TOP OF THE SPLIT AND WEATHERED CLIFFS WHICH FORM THE HEAD OF THE BOX CANYON, OLD PLACER BURROUGHS LIGHTS A MATCH, CHUCKLING TO HIMSELF.



DAZED AND HALF BLINDED BY THE BLOW, PRESTON HAS ONE THOUGHT!

TRAINED TO OBEY JUST SUCH AN ORDER,
KING ACTS!



---PRESTON MAKES A WILD TACKLE AT
BURROUGHS' LESS AS THE OLD MAN TRIES
TO RUN--- AND BRINGS HIM DOWN!



TEN MINUTES LATER---

---AND THERE WAS ENOUGH
DYNAMITE IN THAT CHARGE TO
HAVE TOPPLED THE WHOLE
CLIFF DOWN ON YOUR TENTS---
BURY THE WHOLE END OF THIS
CANYON!

OH-H-H-H IT'S
UNBELIEVABLE!

I BELIEVE
IT! THE
SERGEANT IS
NOT MAKING
ANYTHING UP,
NANCY!





AN AVALANCHE

Jim Mason's expression was thoughtful as he studied the stacks of canned goods in Mr. Ferris' general store. From the list he held in his hand he seemed to have everything, and he now checked it over to make sure. Isolated as he was, in his small cabin miles from the trading post, his ladder was a powerful weapon in the grim battle for survival.

Mason had arrived in the Yukon some eight months before, not to search for gold as the others did, but to try his luck as a trapper. It was his good fortune to take over old Pete Hanson's cabin, one of the few who had struck it rich. And so Mason had settled down to the quiet life, setting his traps, skinning his pelts and in general minding his own business.

"I guess that does it," Mason said. "Just stock it in a box and I'll take it out to my sled."

"Right," Mr. Ferris replied.

Shortly afterward, with Mr. Ferris lending a hand, they both carried the heavy box of supplies out to Mason's sled. In a flash the team of huskies were on their feet, their jaws snapping and their crisp barks filling the air.

"It must be quiet out your way," Ferris remarked.

"I like it that way," Mason said simply. "I mind my business and I expect others to do the same." He said the words with emphasis, with a grimness that left nothing to be guessed at.

"You ever get over to see Ninook and his people?" He was referring to the Eskimo village not far from Jim's cabin.

"Nope," Jim remarked curtly. "What would I have to do with a bunch of savages anyway?"

It was a question Mr. Ferris didn't care to get involved in, so he simply let it pass. He held up his hand and waved as Mason's sled started forward. "See you next month," he shouted. Moments later, Mason and his team were a group of dark specks against the glistening snow.

It was almost dusk when Mason and his team neared Horseshoe Slide. There

wasn't much left to go. Another twenty minutes and he'd be home. He recalled Mr. Ferris' remarks. Maybe they did think him a strange bird, living off by himself, not caring to mix. Well they could think what they pleased. That's the way he liked it and that's the way it was going to stay. And the business about Ninook and those Eskimos, that was the funniest of all. Did Mr. Ferris really think he'd have anything in common with a backward, simple-minded tribe? It was much too funny, and his laughter, rich and hearty, poured from his lips. Peel after peel struck the air, and then a new note, ominous and threatening, came echoing back.

The dogs reacted first, swinging their weight to the left. The sudden lurch threw Mason from the sled. He lay on his back, his eyes wide with fright as the wall of white roared down the slope with terrific force.

There was the moment of impact, and then the weight pressing down, pinning his arms to his sides like a huge blanket, soft but unyielding. He struggled, but it was only a feeble gesture. The darkness that followed was swift.

It was the footsteps that awakened him. The room was white, unfamiliar. A face approached, peered close at his own. He heard the voice. "I'm Doctor Tollen. Do you make me out?"

Mason nodded. "H—How did I get here? There was the avalanche, then."

"And you were buried under," Doctor Tollen continued. "But they spotted your sled and dug you out, then they brought you here to the post hospital."

"They," said Mason questioningly. "Who?"

"Ninook and some of his people," the doctor said quietly. "In a way, you owe your life to them."

"And I owe them an apology too," Mason said slowly.

"How's that?" Doctor Tollen asked.

Mason smiled. "You wouldn't understand, Doctor. I guess I had the wrong slant on a lot of things, but I'm going to change all of that, just as soon as I'm well enough to leave."

GRAY WOLF

LEADER OF THE WOLF PACK



AS A GRAY ARMY SWARM GADGERS ON THE HILLSIDE DEN OF GRAY WOLF AND HIS MATE HUNKEE, IT FINDS THE PARENT WOLVES ASLEEP OUTSIDE --- FOR THE DEN ITSELF IS NOW CROWDED BY THEIR GROWING CUBS

HASH OR NO HASH, YOUNG APPETITES DEMAND FOOD --- AND THE LIGHT IS STILL DIM WHEN ALL FIVE CUBS ARE OUT...

--- URGING THEIR ELDERLY TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT BREAKFAST



BEFORE THEY REACH THE PLAINS WHERE WHITE POPLARS MARCH UP TO THE ROCK LEDGES, NEW THUNDER CLOUDS ARE PILING UP.



HERE ARE SPOTS OF YOUNG GROWTH, SPRINGING UP WHERE WINDS HAVE TOPPLED A FOREST GIANT AND LET IN THE SUN BOTH MOOSE AND GROUSE LOVE TO FEED ON THE TENDER BUDS ---



THERE THEY ARE---HUGGLED ON THE GROUND AS IF TRYING TO HIDE FROM SOMETHING? SILENTLY THE WOLF CUBS CREEP UP TO STRIKE! (DISTANCE) ---



BUT THEY HAVE NO TIME TO ENJOY THEIR CATCH! ALL AT ONCE THE STORM IS UPON THEM---AND LIGHTNING RIPS A NEARBY TREE!



BUT THE MOOSE SEEM TO HAVE DESERTED THE BAYNE --- AND THE FAINT SCENT OF GROUSE COMES FROM THE DEEPER SHADOWS NEAR THE ROCK LEDGES



AND LEAP! THREE BIRDS ARE LITERALLY SWATCHED OUT OF THE AIR AS THEY RISE!



KUNCE KNOWS WHAT IS COMING--- FOR ABOVE THE THUNDER SHE HEARS THE ROAR OF DRUMMING WIND! SHE LEAPS TO LEAD HER YOUNG ONES TO THE SHELTER OF THE CLIFFS



BUT SHE STRUGGLES IN VAIN TO RIDGE THEN FEAR OF THE STORM HAS ANCHORED THEM TO THE GROUND--- AS ITS APPROACH DID THE LUCKLESS DOGUSE *



A SMALL TORNADO CUTS A PATH THROUGH THE TALL TIMBER--- LIKE A GIANT SCYTHE *



AND THE WOLVES ARE RIGHT IN ITS WAY!



AN LUCK WILL HAVE IT, NOT THE CURS BUT KUNEE IS CAUGHT--- PINNED-DOWN BY TWO TREES!



AS THE STORM RAGES ON ACROSS THE VALLEY, GRAY WOLF RETURNS TO HIS TRAPPED MATE! KUNEE IS NOT INJURED--- FOR BARKER BRANCHES HAVE TAKEN SOME OF THE TREES' WEIGHT BUT SHE IS HELD DOWN--- UNABLE TO MOVE *



WITH ALL HIS GREAT STRENGTH, GRAY WOLF STRAINS TO
LIFT THE LIMB WHICH PINS KUNEE'S SHOULDERS DOWN --
BUT IN VAIN! SOMETHING ELSE WILL HAVE TO BE TRIED



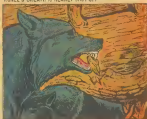
AT LAST HER SHOULDERS ARE FREE --- AND KUNEE
DRAWS A GREAT BREATH



--- AND NOW SHE IS OUT OF THE TRAP --- SMART ---
AND GRATEFUL!



WITH MIGHTY JAWS AND TEARING TEETH HE ATTACKS THE
LIMB --- BITING OUT BIG CHIPS! HE IS DESPERATE, FOR
KUNEE'S BREATH IS NEARLY SHUT OFF!



NEXT GRAY WOLF Digs A HOLE IN THE GROUND UNDER HER HIPS
--- RELIEVING THE TERRIBLE PRESSURE OF THE TREE
TRUNK



BUT WITH HUNGER, FRIGHTENED CLUB TO FING AND FEED, THE
TWO WOLVES HAVE NO TIME TO WASTE ON SENTIMENT!
PICKING UP THE DEAD BRADS, THEY HURRY OUT OF THE
STORM-WRECKED TANGLE TOGETHER!



SERGEANT PRESTON OF THE YUKON

A CRY IN THE NIGHT

IN A REMOTE YUKON
CAMP, MARTHA CANSY
HAS JUST SPLINTED THE
LEG OF HER MINER-
HUSBAND—AFTER HE
FELL DOWN THE SHAFT



THE LEG WILL BE OKAY, THOUGH! I DID AS GOOD
A JOB AS ANY DOC---HUR? SOMEBODY AT THE
DOOR!



WHO---? WHAT
DO YOU WANT?

NEVER MIND WHO WE ARE!
AND YOU'LL FIND OUT
WHAT WE WANT!
BACK UP!



WHAT'S HIS
TROUBLE?

A BROKEN LEG!---CAN'T
YOU SEE? IF YOU'RE
AFTER MONEY, WE'VE
GOT SIX DOLLARS
IN A COFFEE
CAN---



RIGHT NOW
WE'RE
HUNGRY---

AND YOU'RE FEEDING US FOR A
FEW DAGES IF YOU BEHAVE
YOURSELF. WE'LL GET ALONG
FINE! BUT IF YOU TRY ANY
TRICKS, YOU'LL BE MIGHTY
FOOLISH!





TRAINED TO INVESTIGATE ANY CRY OF DISTRESS, KING HEADS FOR THE PLACE THE SOUND CAME FROM.



HARDLY ABLE TO STAND, SAMMY INDICATES HIS ANGER AND HIS WORRY... IN A MANNER FAR CLEARER THAN HUMAN WORDS.



MILE AFTER MILE, HE MOVES AT A STEADY LOPE THROUGH THE MOONLIT BUSH... TENDERLY HOLDING THE BRUISED PUPPY.



HE FINDS THE SMALL PUPPY STILL DIZZY FROM THE BUMP, WHERE HIS HEAD STRUCK THE CHOPPING BLOCK.



BUT WITH KING, FIRST THINGS COME FIRST: THE PUPPY NEEDS HELP... AND THAT, TO THE GREAT LEAD DOG, MEANS SERGEANT PRESTON!



AND AT MORTON'S TRADING POST, PRESTON WAITS.











THE SOURDOUGH MINER



ONCE A CLAIM HAD BEEN LOCATED THE SOURDOUGH MINER AND HIS PARTNER CUT LOGS FOR A CABIN AND NOTCHED THE ENDS.



THE WALLS WENT UP QUICKLY, NOTCHED ENDS FITTING SNUGLY AND LOCKING TIGHT. ONE MAN COULD BUILD A CABIN, BUT TWO MADE WORK INTO FUN.



THEY WHIPSAWED ROUGH PLANKS FOR DOOR AND WINDOW FRAMES—A WHIPSAW WORKED BEST OVER A PIT—BUT IF IN A HURRY, ONE SOURDOUGH COULD USE IT, WITHOUT DIGGING A HOLE.



WITH RIDGEPOLE AND RAFTERS IN PLACE, A THICK LAYER OF DAMP CLAY WAS LAID SMOOTHLY ON LIGHT CROSS-POLES AND DRY GRASS—A WIND-AND-WATER-PROOF ROOFING, GOOD FOR YEARS.



THE SOURDOUGH'S BED WAS A BUNK BUILT OF POLES AND FILLED WITH WILD HAY, DRY MOSS, OR WHATEVER WOULD SOFTEN ITS HARDNESS. MOSS MIXED WITH CLAY CHINKED THE WALLS.



WHEN THE SHEET-IRON STOVE WAS GLOWING RED—THE CABIN WAS REALLY HOME! A CACHE OF MOOSE MEAT AND A SHELF OF GROCERIES MADE IT ALL COMPLETE!

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