

WILLIAM CONRAD TRIBUTE

Written and Produced by

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Re-Imagined Radio
Season 10, Episode 05

Final draft

"William Conrad Tribute"

Season 10, Episode 05 of Re-Imagined Radio
Curated by John F. Barber

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EPISODE SYNOPSIS

Re-Imagined Radio pays tribute to William Conrad, one of the best radio voice actors we've ever heard. We sample from "The Abominable Snowman," the September 13, 1953 episode of *Escape*, and "Bloody Hands," the April 2, 1955 episode of *Gunsmoke*. Both showcase Conrad's million dollar voice. Both are great radio stories as well.

COLD OPEN

SFX: SAMPLE FROM "BLOODY HANDS"

TRANSITION TO . . .

SFX: SAMPLE FROM "THE ABOMINABLE
SNOWMAN"

NAHSONG . . . the Yeti are cannibals. That is
why the porters are afraid. . . .

Boy, that thing sure can climb.

PAUL Hold up! (PAUSE) Allen? Hold it!

ALLEN I think the... (BLOOD CURDLING YELL, AS
HE FALLS INTO DEEP CANYON)

PAUL (NARRATING) And he dropped out of sight
over the lip of the crevasse. We weren't
roped together. (PAUSE, STRUGGLING) I
got as close as I dared to the edge. The
loose snow crumbled away from my
outstretched body. And I looked down
into the blue-black darkness below,
falling away into nothingness. (PAUSE)
He was gone...finished.

MUSIC: RIR THEME, FADE IN, UP, AND
THEN OUT UNDER THE FOLLOWING

SFX: ANNOUNCER OPEN

ANNOUNCER Welcome to Re-Imagined Radio, a program
about radio storytelling. I'm Jack
Armstrong. With each episode we combine
dialogue, sound effects, and music to
engage your listening imagination. This

episode is no different, and here to tell you about it is John Barber, producer and host.

MUSIC: RIR THEME, BRIEF REPRISE

HOST OPEN

HOST

Thank you Jack . . . hello everyone . . . and welcome to Re-Imagined Radio. This episode pays tribute to William Conrad, one of the best radio voice actors we've ever heard.

Conrad himself estimated that he voiced more than 7,500 roles in his radio career. Many of these were solid supporting roles, but Conrad literally defined two radio programs with his distinctive voice: *Gunsmoke* and *Escape*.

Escape featured a wide range of stories—from science fiction to horror to murder mysteries—and was radio's leading anthology of adventure drama from 1947 to 1954.

The formula behind each episode of *Escape* was to place its actors in physical, psychological, or emotional situations from which there seemed to be no escape. The conflicts were carefully crafted and made for compelling, visceral drama that could be felt and internalized by listeners. Radio historians estimate that more than two hundred fifty episodes of *Escape* were

produced. Conrad hosted and/or starred in 90 of those episodes.

He began each episode with an invitation to listeners . . .

SFX: ESCAPE OPENING 1

"TIRED OF THE EVERYDAY GRIND? EVER
DREAM OF A LIFE OF ROMANTIC
ADVENTURE? WANT TO GET AWAY FROM IT
ALL? WE OFFER YOU... ESCAPE!"

HOST

And then the episode was underway, with Conrad unfolding its tale of life and death situations and violent twists of fate. As radio historian John Dunning described the results, "Within five minutes, *Escape* listeners were literally up to their earlobes in alligators."

For our William Conrad tribute we'll listen to an episode of *Escape* entitled "The Abominable Snowman," written and directed by Antony Ellis and first broadcast September 13, 1953. In this episode Conrad leads an expedition up the slopes of Mount Everest searching for the legendary Mea-TOE KAM-aye (Metoh-Kangmi), a mysterious half-man, half-ape creature reported by mountain climbing parties. Conrad and his partners find themselves in a situation from which there seems no escape. Conrad's narration is letter perfect. Let's listen to "The Abominable Snowman"
. . .

ACT #1: "THE ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN"

MUSIC: ESCAPE DRAMATIC MUSIC

CROSSFADE TO

SFX: "THE ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN"

OPENING, PART 1, PART 2, AND PART 3

ANNOUNCER

You are high on the frozen slopes of a great mountain. Terrified, and caught in a blizzard. While the thing for which you've been hunting has suddenly become the hunter. And if it finds you... then, for you, and your companions, there can be no escape!

MUSIC: (LONG BRIDGE INTO..)

PAUL

Our first bit of luck was when we hired our Sherpa guide, Nah-song. That was in Darjeeling. When I told Nahsong what we were after, he hesitated for a moment, and then he said...

NAHSONG

Thee sahibs have not come to climb Shahm-a-loma?

PAUL

No...we're a little late for that. It's already been done. The other two sahibs and myself are here for the reason I told you.

NAHSONG

Metocamee?

PAUL

That's right.

NAHSONG

The Sahibs always hire me to climb the mountain with them. But. . . never this!

PAUL Are you afraid of 'em?

NAHSONG I have seen one.

PAUL You've seen one?

NAHSONG Yes! Many of us have seen them.

~~SFX: CHAIR PULLED BACK. FOOTSTEPS
BEGIN ON HARDWOOD FLOOR.~~

~~PAUL Wait a minute.~~

~~SFX: FOOTSTEPS ACROSS FLOOR, DOOR
OPENS~~

~~PAUL Allen?~~

~~ALLEN Yeah?..what's up?~~

~~PAUL I'm interviewing a Sherpa in here. He
says he's seen one of the things.
Where's Frank?~~

~~ALLEN Went out to get some tobacco.~~

~~PAUL Well, come on in. I think this is our
man.~~

~~ALLEN Alright.~~

~~SFX: FOOTSTEPS.. DOOR CLOSES..
FOOTSTEPS~~

~~PAUL Nahsong!... this is Mr. Ferris.~~

~~ALLEN Hello, Nahsong.~~

~~NAHSONG Hallo.~~

~~PAUL Nahsong was telling me about what he'd seen... Go ahead, Nahsong.~~

NAHSONG It has a face that is evil! And when it saw me, it uttered a strange cry, and bounded away. Sometimes leaping, sometimes running, with great strides. It was dusk...and after a moment I lost sight of it in the snow.

PAUL Where were you?

NAHSONG With the French expedition. It was at nineteen thousand feet. On Sham-a-looma

ALLEN (WHISTLES) How far were you from it?

NAHSONG Uhhhmm . . . thirty feet . . . perhaps thirty five.

PAUL You're sure it wasn't an ape?

NAHSONG I am sure. There is no ape in the Himalaya, to make such a track.

ALLEN What about bears?

NAHSONG This, too, I have been asked. But does a bear walk always upon its hind legs?

~~PAUL Well, that's enough for me. (PAUSE) Allen?~~

~~ALLEN Yeah, he'll do.~~

~~PAUL Well, if you want the job, Nahsong, you're hired.~~

~~NAHSONG You are going to try to capture a Yeti?~~

~~PAUL~~

~~Yes.~~

~~NAHSONG~~

~~It will be a difficult thing. (PAUSE)~~

~~But... I will serve with you.~~

MUSIC: BRIDGE AND UNDER

PAUL

(NARRATING) YETI. . . WILD MAN. . . METOCAHMEE. ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN! That's the names the natives had for the things, and Allen Ferris, Frank Davis and I were going to try to get one. ~~We'd all done some climbing, but climbing was secondary here.~~ Expeditions since the beginning of the twentieth century had heard of the Abominable Snowman, observed their tracks, and one or two white men claimed to have seen them. Great ape? Bear? Monkey? Wild men? We didn't know . . . but we were going to find out!

MUSIC: BRIDGE AND UNDER

PAUL

(CONTINUING NARRATING) Four weeks later, we were in the Rangbok valley for our interview in the Monastery with the Lama. The journey from our base had been uneventful, the weather was good, and our spirits were high. From the Lama's window we could see the great peak of Everest in the distance

LAMA

Why, gentlemen, do you desire to capture Metocahmee?

PAUL

Because, sir, we believe it will be an invaluable aid in our prehistoric

research...that is...if these things are, in any way, human.

LAMA And. .for this reason, then, you have formed the expedition?

PAUL Yes.

LAMA You are all familiar with climbing?

PAUL Yes, we are.

LAMA You would need to be. The Yeti move at high places. Dangerous places, so my people tell me. Also...the monsoons are arriving in a short time.

PAUL I understand that. (PAUSE) Then, do we have your permission to investigate in the valley and beyond?

LAMA You have my permission, now.

ALLEN We appreciate it.

LAMA There is one point, however. I must request that no wild animal, or being, in this valley be shot. Our religion does not allow it.

PAUL We'll respect your wishes, sir. Now, may I ask you one more thing?

LAMA Of course, my son.

PAUL Do you believe in the existence of Metocahmee?

LAMA I, myself, have never seen them...but I know that they live here, above the valley, on the Goddess Mother of The World. It is also true that perhaps five, and possibly more, inhabit the upper Rongbok and its glaciers.

PAUL Thank you.

LAMA Do you have porters?

ALLEN Our guide, Nahsong, is hiring them now.

LAMA Ahhh...I trust that he meets with good fortune.

MUSIC: BRIDGE AND UNDER

PAUL (NARRATING) The old man...with great dignity...bowed slightly to us and we were dismissed. But I thought I saw the shadow of a smile on his lips as he turned away. And it wasn't long before I found out why. (PAUSE) Nahsong returned to us in our quarters, and his face warned of bad news.

NAHSONG Sir...I am unable to hire any porters!

PAUL But why not?

NAHSONG They know the purpose of the expedition. They...will not go.

ALLEN Why?

NAHSONG They are afraid.

ALLEN Of the Snowman?

NAHSONG

Yes! (PAUSE) They live in peace with them. They wish no trouble. They are afraid.

PAUL

Well. . . alright! It'll be rough, but we can't waste time talking them into it. The monsoons will be coming in a couple of weeks. It's not the same as climbing Everest. We'll travel light... just the four of us...set up a base and start hunting. Alright with you fellas?

VOICES

Yeah...sure... okay...

PAUL

Nahsong?

NAHSONG

I will go with you. I am not afraid.

PAUL

Good! That's it.

SFX: SCRAPING OF CHAIR, FOOTSTEPS ON FLOOR.

PAUL

Now lets take a look at the map.

SFX: FOOTSTEPS CONTINUE

SFX: MAP UNFOLDING

PAUL

Now, we'll each carry a capacity load.. .and we should be able to make...this point below the glacier in two days. That's sixteen thousand feet. And if our Abominable Snowmen are in the vicinity, we've got two weeks to find them.

FRANK

And when'll we start?

PAUL

Tomorrow!

ALLEN Good.

PAUL Well!... That's it.

SFX: ROLLING UP MAP

FRANK Uh, Paul?

PAUL Yes, Frank?

FRANK One thing...Uh, what do the natives mean when they say they don't want any trouble with the things?

PAUL Oh, superstition, probably.

NAHSONG Oh, no, sir! It is not superstition. It is because the Yeti are cannibals. That is why the porters are afraid.

MUSIC: BRIDGE

PAUL (NARRATING) The weather turned ugly the day we left the village. A cold Tibetan wind blew down from the west, and with our heavy packs, it took us much longer than we'd thought, to arrive at the point just below the Rongbok Glacier.

SFX: LIGHT WIND BEGINS

PAUL (NARRATING) We set up our camp and made ourselves as comfortable as we could. (pause) The next morning wasn't so bad. There was a heavy overcast, a promise of snow... and the peak of Everest looming over us, was shrouded in clouds. The four of us sat in the tent, looking at our charts and drinking hot tea.

SFX: TEA CUPS, SPOON, POURING. . .

FRANK Uh, I figure it'd be easiest if we started at the East Glacier. It's only about three miles from here, and with the weather as stinking as it is, we won't run too much of a risk. (PAUSE) Whad'ya think, Paul?

PAUL Well, that sounds alright. (PAUSE) What do you say we split up? (DRINKING) Uhh, you and Nahsong, Allen and me? We'll work up on either side of the ridge... here. (MAP SOUNDS) And if we spot any tracks, fire two shots, huh?

FRANK Yeah, good enough.

PAUL And the big thing...no matter what!... don't shoot at the thing, if you do see it. (PAUSE) Okay?

FRANK Okay.

PAUL All right. If we lose touch with each other, we'll meet back here at five. (PAUSE) All right...let's get going!

MUSIC: BRIDGE

SFX: LIGHT WIND...WHICH WILL SOON INCREASE...

PAUL (NARRATING) We'd left the base at six that morning, and the going was rough. Allen was pretty well shot by the time we got to the seventeen thousand foot mark. He was having a tough time breathing. (PAUSE) And the wind had come

up again. And with it, a fine, powdery snow that blinded and choked us.

SFX: HEAVY WIND NOW, THE MEN BREATHE & GASP HARD. FOOTSTEPS ON CRUNCHY SNOW

ALLEN Hey! I gotta take five.

PAUL All right. (PAUSE) Here, move over here. It might cut some of the wind.

SFX: HEAVY WIND, AND OHHH...OHHH, UH...STRUGGLES WITH; FOOTSTEPS ON SNOW

ALLEN Whew... that's better..

PAUL Well, we might as well start back for the base. We couldn't see anything in this anyhow..

ALLEN Right now, I don't care whether we do, or not.

PAUL Ehh, this is good weather! Wait until the monsoons start.

ALLEN Nah! Nah! Not me! (NOISES) Cold! I never been so cold in all my life!

MUSIC: BRIDGE

SFX: LIGHTER WIND

PAUL (NARRATING) We stayed in the half-shelter of an overhang for ten minutes, and the wind was quieter and the snow

had let up. I noticed that the tracks we had made coming into the shelter were gone now, but we didn't have any worry finding our way back. I figured that Frank and Nahsong had met pretty much the same thing on their side of the ridge, and we'd meet them at the base. So, Allen and I picked ourselves up and started off.

SFX:(WIND UP, SNOW CRUNCHING...)

ALLEN (REALLY STRUGGLING...) Boy...I...I thought I was in pretty good shape but...up here...boy, I'm not! Ohh... Paul, I'm tired again.

PAUL Well, we'll just take it easy going down.

ALLEN Alright.

PAUL You haven't got frostbite, have you?

ALLEN No... .no, not yet, but ... I..uhh...

PAUL What?

ALLEN To the left, there...

PAUL Yea...

ALLEN They're ... they're not our tracks, are they?

PAUL Not unless you took your boots off on the way up.

ALLEN Musta ... just passed by. (PAUSE) Musta
seen us.

PAUL Yeah. (PAUSE) Come on!

MUSIC: BRIDGE

PAUL (NARRATING) We were looking at a set of
tracks, newly made in the fresh snow.
And they'd passed so close to our
shelter that the thing must have known
we were there. (PAUSE) They weren't the
tracks of a bear. Or an ape. But more
like a splay-footed, naked foot. (PAUSE)
The tracks of The Abominable Snowman!

MUSIC: BRIDGE

HOST This is Re-Imagined Radio with our
tribute to William Conrad. By his own
estimates, Conrad's unmistakable voice
appeared in over 7,500 radio programs.
We are listening to "The Abominable
Snowman," an episode of *Escape*. We will
hear the conclusion of this story in
just a moment.

MUSIC: RIR BREAK UNDER

BREAK #1--FUSEBOX

HOST This is John Barber, producer and host
of Re-Imagined Radio. We partner with
other radio programs, producers, and
actors to bring you a variety of radio
storytelling. One example is The Fusebox
Show. Freeform, but focused, appropriate
for all age groups and audiences,
Fusebox shares observations and

reactions to events that both stir our imagination and boil our blood. Here's a sample . . .

SFX: THE FUSEBOX SHOW TEASER

HOST Learn more at *The Fusebox Show* website, [www dot thefuseboxshow dot com](http://www.dot.thefuseboxshow.com).

MUSIC: RIR THEME, FADE OUT UNDER THE FOLLOWING

HOST This is Re-Imagined Radio with our tribute to William Conrad whose deep, resonant voice was heard in numerous supporting roles and in two series his voice literally defined: *Gunsmoke* and *Escape*.

We are listening to Conrad narrate "The Abominable Snowman," an episode of *Escape*, first broadcast in 1953. Fresh footprints have just been found in the snow. They must have been made by Mea-TOE KAM-aye, the mysterious half-man half-ape creature reported to live on the slopes of Mount Everest. Let's continue listening to "The Abominable Snowman" . . .

SFX: "THE ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN" PART 4

MUSIC: BRIDGE

PAUL (NARRATING) We began to follow the tracks. And for awhile, perhaps a hundred and fifty yards, it was easy. And then the thing made a leftward

traverse down a deep slope. We could see the prints clearly, angling with a sidestep, as sure-footed as a mountain goat. Except...that it was walking on two legs.

SFX: WIND, FOOTSTEPS IN SNOW

ALLEN (OFF MIKE) This way, Paul.

PAUL Take it easy, Allen!

ALLEN (OFF MIKE) Getting steeper. Boy, that thing sure can climb.

PAUL Hold up! (PAUSE) Allen? Hold it!

ALLEN I think the... (BLOOD CURDLING YELL, AS HE FALLS INTO DEEP CANYON)

PAUL (NARRATING) And he dropped out of sight over the lip of the crevasse. We weren't roped together. (PAUSE, STRUGGLING) I got as close as I dared to the edge. The loose snow crumbled away from my outstretched body. And I looked down into the blue-black darkness below, falling away into nothingness. (PAUSE) He was gone...finished. (PAUSE) All I could think of was the noise he had made when he went over: surprised... angry... then silence. The crevasse might have been five hundred feet, or five thousand. (PAUSE) Snow started to fall again. Big flakes this time, and wet. I stood up. Across the gap, twenty feet away, I saw the tracks of the thing, continuing on and away, until they

became lost in blank whiteness of the glacier. It had jumped and landed, still upright on the opposite side. (PAUSE) I went back to the base, and an hour later Frank and Nahsong returned. I told them. And we were quiet for a long time. Then...

FRANK Paul...we going out again tomorrow?

PAUL Why not?

FRANK I just wondered.

NAHSONG We should go back! It is an omen!

PAUL (SOMEWHAT FORCEFULLY) I tell you he was going too fast. He didn't have a chance to see the crevasse. That's not an 'omen', it's bad sense.

NAHSONG Metocahmee cannot be caught.

PAUL We'll catch him!

FRANK Yeah, but there are only three of us. If we had a few more men...

PAUL (STILL SOMEWHAT FORCEFULLY) I tell you, the thing was so close, if we'd looked up at the time, we'd have seen it! Do you think I'm gonna give up now. Next time we'll get it!

FRANK (QUIETLY) There was...no chance to get Allen out?

PAUL No.

FRANK Do you think if we went back, we...

PAUL (MORE FORCEFULLY) Listen! Do you think I don't want to? He's gone! I tried...but he's gone!

FRANK Okay! Paul...okay.. (PAUSE) Wish that wind would let up...

PAUL Maybe by morning. (PAUSE) We'll try again tomorrow.

SFX: WIND, UP, THEN DUCKS UNDER

PAUL (NARRATING) It was cold that night. And somehow colder, because Allen was gone. I heard Frank tossing around and I knew he was thinking about... a body... broken and lonely, lost somewhere in a deep, and dark place. (PAUSE) In the morning, the three of us packed our gear, camera, food -- it was a light pack -- and we started up again. This time to a crest above the ridge. (STRUGGLING SOME) It was tougher than it looked, and we weren't even halfway up before we had to rest.

SFX: WIND INCREASES SOME

PAUL As I looked to the west, I saw clouds boiling up. Not white, but somber, threatening. And below, the valley looked grim...ugly gray. And then the sun was gone. (PAUSE) And we kept on going up... (PAUSE) And then I had a strange feeling. It was nothing I could see. Nothing I could hear. Only a

sensation of being...watched!...and followed!

SFX: SNOW CRUNCHING

PAUL (OUT OF BREATH) Wait a minute!

FRANK See something?

PAUL No.

NAHSONG I...have felt it, too, Sahib.

PAUL Something following us?

NAHSONG Yes! It is...Metocahmee!

PAUL How do you know?

NAHSONG It cannot be something else, this high.
(PAUSE) There is nothing else that lives here.

PAUL Maybe it's curious. (SHARPLY NOW) No -- don't turn around, Frank! Listen... when we get up to the crest, you two flop down, stay in sight of the slope here.

FRANK What are you gonna do?

PAUL Move around the hump and watch. If it thinks we're all together, it may come close enough to give us a chance to get it.

FRANK You'd better watch your step. It looks nasty.

PAUL I will. Now, come on...

PAUL (NARRATING) It took us another fifteen minutes to get up to the crest and then Frank and Nahsong hunched down to rest. They were in clear view of the slope we just ascended. I moved back out of sight and made my way toward the hump, which backed a long shelf on the north side of the crest. In a couple of minutes, I lost sight of them. And of the slope. (PAUSE) The wind had increased and the clouds had spread now, to become an iron-gray canopy over the mountain. It was getting colder again. I don't think it took over five minutes to reach my lookout point. And when I did, I had a perfect view of the ground we'd covered. (PAUSE) There was...nothing there. The men were out of sight. I waited. (PAUSE) a minute...two...there was nothing. Until . . .

SFX: WILD ANIMAL IN DISTANCE -
GUNSHOTS - MORE ANIMAL CRIES

MUSIC: BRIDGE

PAUL (NARRATING) It came!...carried on the wind...a cry...and then shots! I scrambled back to where I'd left them, and when I got there...WHEN I GOT THERE!... Frank was lying on his back.. .and I couldn't look at what was left of his face! There were terrible, deep rips in his clothing, and...he was dead.

SFX: MOANING FROM NAHSONG

PAUL Nahsong lay huddled, a few feet beyond... a gun in his hand.

NAHSONG (WEAK, IN GREAT PAIN) Maa...Sahib?

PAUL Nahsong...what is it? What?

NAHSONG Metocahmee! (PAUSE, STRUGGLING) ... came from behind us.. be...before I could get hold of the gun. It killed him...then sprang at me. It . . . it is...strong, Sahib...with the strength of ten men!

PAUL Alright...Alright...can you sit Up?

NAHSONG Uhhhhh...my leg...it struck at me . . .
.my leg ... it broken. I shot at it, but I missed. It jumped away and was gone.

PAUL Okay. We'll have to figure a way to get you down.

SFX: WIND UP

PAUL (NARRATING) We were four hours from camp, and with Nahsong practically helpless, it could well be four days, or ... never! (PAUSE) I buried Frank where he was lying, then began to work down the slope. Nahsong was in great pain. He half-slid and crawled as best he could. That part of it wasn't too bad. Then we were at the bottom and there was a ledge to climb. (PAUSE) It took well over two hours to do that. And we still had three miles of difficult terrain to cover. The stops became more frequent...

NAHSONG (AT THE END OF HIS ENDURANCE) Sahib...
leave me here. Go back!

PAUL No.

NAHSONG My leg is frozen. There is no feeling
anymore. I shall not live much longer.

PAUL (DEMANDING) Don't be a fool! After a
rest, you'll be able to go on!

NAHSONG Soon, the night comes. If we are both
caught here, we both die! (PAUSE) There
will be snow, much snow! Leave me!!

PAUL No! We're going back together!

NAHSONG Please! Let...me sleep. Let me sleep
here. I cannot go on.

PAUL You've got to, Nahsong!

NAHSONG No!...no more..

PAUL But the ridge is only about a half mile.
From there it won't be too bad!

NAHSONG No! No, let me stay.

PAUL Nahsong!

NAHSONG Let me sleep.

PAUL (SLAPPING HIS FACE REPEATEDLY) No! Come
on, Nahsong, come on! You're not going
to sleep! You'll be alright!

NAHSONG Sahib!...look there!...

PAUL What?

(NARRATING) I turned. And for an instant, I saw it, outlined against the snow...crouching. Of medium height. It was covered with thick hair. The face was reddish and bare. A semi-human face... and it was not an ape.

SFX: SEVERAL LOUD GUNSHOTS

PAUL The thing made a tremendous leap and was gone, but I'd hit it! I knew I hit it!

NAHSONG Metocahmee.. .that was he! Did you kill it?

PAUL No!..I don't think so!

NAHSONG Then it will be back. It has.. tasted blood. You must leave me!

PAUL No, get up! Get up! Come on! Let's go!

NAHSONG (IN GREAT AGONY) Ahhhh....

PAUL Nahsong!...

NAHSONG I...very...sorry, Sahib. Will you ask... the Lama...to make a prayer for me?

PAUL Sure...sure I will, Nahsong. But--

NAHSONG Give my prayer to my wife in Darjeeling.
(PAUSE) I'm sorry, Sahib. (PAUSE) I die.. .ahhh...

PAUL (PAUSE) ...Nahsong? (PAUSE...ONLY THE WIND IS HEARD) NAHSONG?!!

PAUL (NARRATING) And the darkness came. And with it, shadows in the snow. Every hillock, mound...became The Thing... motionless, waiting...In my mind I kept seeing its powerful long arms, and the dreadful claws it must have possessed. (PAUSE) I carried my gun in my gloved hand, but I knew that I couldn't fire it unless I was barehanded. And that meant my hand would freeze to the gun. And then suddenly, I felt myself slipping!

SFX: FALLING DOWN SNOWY SLOPE,
GRUNTS AND GROANS

PAUL It was a short incline, but when I reached the bottom, the gun was gone! I'd lost it!

SFX: STRUGGLING IN SNOW,
SEARCHING...

PAUL (IN A PANIC) Got to find it! I've got to find it!!

(NARRATING) And I saw a glint of metal in the snow, ten feet away. And at the same time. . . above me, at the top of the bank... The Thing! It stood swaying a little, looking down at me.

SFX: MOVEMENT, WIND

PAUL I moved...slowly... slowly. . . inched my way toward the gun. And as I drew closer, I kept my eyes looking up. But it didn't move.. .only stared down at me. And I thought I saw its little eyes glittering. And I thought...if the gun's

frozen now...if it's frozen and doesn't fire... (STRUGGLING) And I was nearer to it. Near enough to take off my glove. But that moment in which I'd have to bend to pick it up... that's when it would leap down at me.. .tear my throat out! Tear, and ...

SFX: MOVEMENT IN SNOW

PAUL ... I HAD THE GUN, AND I... PULLED THE TRIGGER!

SFX: CLICK, CLICK, CLICK - BANG!!!
FOLLOWED BY A LOUD, BLOOD-CURDLING
SCREAM THEN...WIND AND BREATHING...
FOR TWO OR THREE BEATS...

PAUL (NARRATING) And it...lay there.... strange...and terrifying. It's blood staining the snow.

SFX: DEEP, GUTTERAL ANIMAL SOUND:
GEEGGGEEGGEEEE CONTINUES UNDER NEXT
SPEECH

PAUL (NARRATING) And it looked at me...

SFX:LOUD, GUTTERAL SOUND CONTINUES

PAUL Looked at me. Looked at me. Until the sound died away...

SFX: SOUND FADES OUT...WIND ONLY
HEARD FOR A FEW BEATS..

PAUL It was dead. (PAUSE) But the eyes kept on staring.

SFX: BEGINNING OF AVALANCHE

PAUL It ... must have been the shots that loosened the snow and ice on the ridge above. I heard the sound! And I RAN! RAN!!!

SFX: AVALANCHE, CROSS FADE TO

MUSIC: BRIDGE

PAUL It passed me... and swept on down toward the valley, the thunder of it dying in the distance.

MUSIC: BEHIND

PAUL And...when I went back, there was nothing there. (PAUSE) It was buried... somewhere under tons of snow. (PAUSE) I made my way back to the Rongbok village... I don't remember how... I didn't remember anything...for two weeks after. (PAUSE) But I'm alive! (PAUSE) And I'm NOT going back there again! (PAUSE)

(QUIETLY) That's all I know. (PAUSE) Or WANT to know... (PAUSE) about the Abominable Snowman!

MUSIC: RIR THEME, ESTABLISH, THEN FADE UNDER THE FOLLOWING . . .

HOST You have just listened to "The Abominable Snowman," an episode of *Escape* narrated by William Conrad. Listening to his distinctive radio voice build and sustain the storytelling we

can imagine being there on the mountain, pursued by the legendary and dangerous creature.

Conrad and his voice also defined the Western radio drama *Gunsmoke*. Heard on the Columbia Broadcasting System, 1952 to 1961, *Gunsmoke* was one of the longest running radio dramas, and arguably, radio's greatest dramatic series.

Gunsmoke began as a collaboration between producer Norman McDonnell and writer John Meston. They worked together on *Escape* and wanted to create a Western that would deal realistically with the hard realities of life in and around Dodge City, Kansas Territory, in the late 1800s.

It was a violent place and someone had to stand in the way of the violence and killing . . .

**SFX: "I'M THAT MAN, MARSHALL MATT
DILLON . . ."**

~~Episodes featured mature themes that overturned stereotypical Western fiction. The bad guys did not always get caught. Episodes ended unhappily. People were treated badly. *Gunsmoke* explored these ideas well ahead of other media.~~

~~The writing and acting are superb. The sound effects and background soundscapes are realistic and immersive. The music~~

~~theme, "Old Trails," composed and conducted by Rex Koury, is iconic.~~

~~In Dodge City, a person can make two choices regarding life: be an outlaw, or be a Marshal. Matt Dillon has made his choice: to stand in the way of violence and protect those who seek to build new lives, to rid the territory of the mad-dog characters spreading misery and death in their wakes.~~

HOST

Marshall Matt Dillon is hard as worn saddle leather but violence must be met with violence and this is destroying his soul. He is scared that everyday could be his last. In "Bloody Hands," first broadcast April 2, 1955, Conrad, as Marshall Dillon, speaks of his angst. He has had enough, quits his job as Marshall, and tries to lead a normal life. Let's listen to "Bloody Hands."

ACT #2: "BLOODY HANDS"

SFX: "BLOODY HANDS," PART 1

SFX: RIR MUSIC UNDER

HOST

You are listening to Re-Imagined Radio and our tribute to William Conrad. We will continue with "Bloody Hands," an episode from *Gunsmoke*, in just a moment.

BREAK #2: RIR BREAK

MUSIC: TRANSITION?

HOST (Speaking for Break, Upcoming Episodes)

Excellent radio stories like "The Abominable Snowman" and "Bloody Hands," showcase skilled use of sounds, music, imagination, and spoken voice, like that of William Conrad.

Upcoming episodes of Re-Imagined Radio will follow this lead. For example, "Lone-Green-Challenge" is a tribute to three uniquely connected radio drama series. These connections are just as interesting as the episodes we will highlight.

We also plan a Columbia Workshop Tribute, a look at four radio stories that may have inspired "The War of the Worlds," and more. Please join us as we share these interesting stories.

HOST (Support Community Radio)

I'm John Barber, producer and host of Re-Imagined Radio. While I have your attention, let me remind you that Re-Imagined Radio is heard on local, regional, and international community radio stations. If you would like to support programs like Re-Imagined Radio please contact your community radio station and learn how to donate. Every donation helps your station provide interesting and thought provoking programs like Re-Imagined Radio. If you already support community radio through your generosity, thank you. If not, please consider supporting this and

other community radio stations. Your support is valuable and much appreciated.

SFX: RIR MUSIC, ESTABLISH, THEN
DUCK UNDER

HOST

(Returning from break)

You are listening to "Bloody Hands," an episode of *Gunsmoke* and part of this Re-Imagined Radio tribute to William Conrad.

The story is set in the 1870s, in Dodge City, Kansas Territory, with its reputation as a lawless town where the "fastest gun" ruled during the settlement of the American West.

~~Conrad, as Marshal Matt Dillon, works tirelessly to keep Dodge City under control until civilization can take hold. Interestingly, Conrad was initially rejected by the producers of Gunsmoke who argued his familiar voice was heard on too many other radio programs. But Conrad's audition was too strong to be dismissed and over the nine-year run of Gunsmoke he defined the role of Marshal Dillon as well as the gritty and uncompromising storytelling of what is now called the greatest drama series in radio history.~~

HOST

Conrad, as Marshal Matt Dillon, has just returned from capturing a wanted outlaw. Bone tired he wants nothing more than to

sleep through the night. But trouble never sleeps in Dodge City. Let's continue the story . . .

SFX: "BLOODY HANDS," PART 2

SFX: RIR MUSIC, UNDER

HOST CONCLUSION

HOST You just listened to "Bloody Hands," an episode of *Gunsmoke* starring William Conrad. This is Re-Imagined Radio with a tribute to Conrad and his great radio voice.

(Concluding Remarks)

In addition to "Bloody Hands" we also listened to "The Abominable Snowman" an episode from *Escape*. Both provide solid, high-quality storytelling. Both illustrate the power of spoken voice to carry and maintain compelling stories. In this case it was the million dollar voice of William Conrad who not only defined these two radio drama series but is noted for many other fine character roles throughout his career in radio.

HOST CREDITS

HOST Curation and script adaptations for this episode by John Barber.

Music composition, sound design, and post production by Marc Rose of Fuse.

Our presence on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram is provided by Regina Carol Social Media Management.

Graphic design by Holly Slocum Design.

Our announcer is Jack Armstrong.

This is John Barber, producer and host.
Thank you for listening

**MUSIC: UP, THE DUCK UNDER THE
FOLLOWING**

ANNOUNCER

This is a production of Re-Imagined Radio. Our radio broadcasts are heard on local, regional, and international community radio stations.

For on demand streaming, point your browsers to our website, reimagedradio (all one word, no punctuation) DOT net. While there, subscribe to our snappy email Program Guide.

Thank you so much for listening, and please, join us again for another episode of Re-Imagined Radio where we will continue our exploration of radio storytelling.

MUSIC: UP, AND TO END.