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THE CALL OF THE WILD by Jack London Chapter I. Into the Primitive "Old longings nomadic leap, Chafing at custom's chain; Again from its brumal sleep Wakens the ferine strain." Buck did not read the newspapers, or he would have known that trouble was brewing, not alone for himself, but for every tide-water dog, strong of muscle and with warm, long hair, from Puge
Sound to San Diego. Because men, groping in the Arctic darkness, had found a yellow metal, and because steamship and transportation companies were booming the find, thousands of men were rushing into the Northland. These men wanted dogs, and the dogs they wanted were heavy dogs, with strong muscles by which to toil, and furry coats to protect them from the
Sound to san Diego. Secause men, grouping in the Activity and the Sound as level were ready of a companies were command to make the sound as level were ready of the sound in the sound of the sound in the sound of 
ost. Buck lived at a big house in the sun-kissed Santa Clara Valley. Judge Miller's place, it was called. It stood back from the road, half hidden among the trees, through which glimpses could be caught of the wide-spreading lawns and under the
enable pain from from the data in the first from the first from the first from the was the was thought of the was the was the was the wast from the first fr
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           ged at them through the bars. They only laughed and poked sticks at him, which he promptly assailed with his teeth till he realized that that was what th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   gan a passage through many hands. Clerks in the express office took charge of him; he was carted about in another wagon; a truck carried him, w
ith an assortment of boxes and parcels, upon a ferry steamer; he was trucked off the steamer into a great railway depot, and finally he was d
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          eposited in an express car. For two days and nights this express car was dragged along at the tail of shrieking locomotives; and for two days
and nights Buck neither ate nor drank. In his anger he had met the first advances of the express messengers with growls, and they had r
wled and barked like detestable dogs, mewed, and flapped their arms and crowed. It was all very silly, he knew; but therefore the mor
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                etaliated by teasing him. When he flung himself against the bars, quivering and frothing, they laughed at him and taunted him. They groe outrage to his dignity, and his anger waxed and waxed. He did not mind the hunger so much, but the lack of water caused him seve
re suffering and fanned his wrath to fever-pitch. For that matter, high-strung and finely sensitive, the ill treatment had flung him in
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          to a fever, which was fed by the inflammation of his parched and swollen throat and tongue. He was glad for one thing: the rope
was off his neck. That had given them an unfair advantage; but now that it was off, he would show them. They would never ge
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               t another rope around his neck. Upon that he was resolved. For two days and nights he neither ate nor drank, and during thos
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  urned blood-shot, and he was metamorphosed into a raging fiend. So changed was he that the Judge himself would not ha
r men gingerly carried the crate from the wagon into a small, high-walled back yard. A stout man, with a red sweater tha
e two days and nights of torment, he accumulated a fund of wrath that boded ill for whoever first fell foul of him. His eyes t
ve recognized him; and the express messengers breathed with relief when they bundled him off the train at Seattle. Fou
t sagged generously at the neck, came out and signed the book for the driver. That was the man, Buck divined, the n
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          ext to mentor, and he hurled himself savagely against the bars. The man smiled grimly, and brought a hatchet and a
club. "You ain't going to take him out now?" the driver asked. "Sure," the man replied, driving the hatchet into the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              crate for a pry. There was an instantaneous scattering of the four men who had carried it in, and from safe perches
on top the wall they prepared to watch the performance. Buck rushed at the splintering wood, sinking his teeth i
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 nto it, surging and wrestling with it. Wherever the hatchet fell on the outside, he was there on the inside, snarling
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    out. "Now, you red-eyed devil," he said, when he had made an opening sufficient for the passage of Buck's be devil, as he drew himself together for the spring, hair bristling, mouth foaming, a mad glitter in his b
g and growling, as furiously anxious to get out as the man in the red sweater was calmly intent on getting him
ody. At the same time he dropped the hatchet and shifted the club to his right hand. And Buck was truly a re
ood-shot eyes. Straight at the man he launched his one hundred and forty pounds of fury, surcharged wit
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          h the pent passion of two days and nights. In mid air, just as his jaws were about to close on the man, he
eceived a shock that checked his body and brought his teeth together with an agonizing clip. He whirle
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             l over, fetching the ground on his back and side. He had never been struck by a club in his life, and did
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              ed into the air. And again the shock came and he was brought crushingly to the ground. This time he en the club broke the charge and smashed him down. After a particularly fierce blow, he crawled to
not understand. With a snarl that was part bark and more scream he was again on his feet and launch
was aware that it was the club, but his madness knew no caution. A dozen times he charged, and as
his feet, too dazed to rush. He staggered limply about, the blood flowing from nose and mouth and
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    is beautiful coat sprayed and flecked with bloody slaver. Then the man advanced and deliberately
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                ears. h
dealt him a frightful blow on the nose. All the pain he had endured was as nothing compared wit
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          h the exqui
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     site agony of this. With a roar that was almost lichlike in its ferocity, he again hurled himself at t
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       renching downward and backward. Buck described a complete circle in the air, and half of another
e man. But the man, shifting the club from right to left, coolly caught him by the under jaw, at th
her, then crashed to the ground on his head and chest. For the last time he rushed. The man s
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          blow he had purposely withheld for so long, and Buck crumpled up and went down, knocked
utterly senseless. "He's no slouch at dog-breakin', that's wot I say," one of the men on the w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          al I cried enthusiastic
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           ally. "Druther break cayuses any day, and twice on Sundays," was the reply of the driver, as
he climbed on the wagon and started the horses. Buck's senses came back to him, but not
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               had fallen, and from there he watched the man in the red sweater. "'Answers to the name
of Buck,'" the man soliloquized, quoting from the saloon-keeper's letter which had announ
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                contents. "Well, Buck, my boy," he went on in a genial voice, "we've had our little ruction,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 the goose hang high. Be a bad dog, and I'll whale the stuffin' outa you. Understand?" As
and the best thing we can do is to let it go at that. You've learned your place, and I know
he spoke he fearlessly patted the head he had so mercilessly pounded, and though Buc
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               k's hair involuntarily bristled at touch of the h
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  and, he endured it without protest. When the man brought him water he drank eagerly, a
nd later bolted a generous meal of raw meat, chunk by chunk, from the man's hand. He
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            was beaten (he knew that); but he was not brok
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   en. He saw, once for all, that he stood no chance against a man with a club. He had lea
rned the lesson, and in all his after life he never forgot it. That club was a revelation. It
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       was his introduction to the reign of primitive law,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      and he met the introduction halfway. The facts of life took on a fiercer aspect; and w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       in crates and at the ends of ropes, some docilely, and some raging and roaring as h
hile he faced that aspect uncowed, he faced it with all the latent cunning of his natur
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   e aroused. As the days went by, other dogs came,
e had come; and, one and all, he watched them pass under the dominion of the man
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           in the red sweater. Again and again, as he lo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       oked at each brutal performance, the lesson was driven home to Buck: a man with a
club was a lawgiver, a master to be obeyed, though not necessarily conciliated. Of
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               this last Buck was never guilty, though
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        he did see beaten dogs that fawned upon the man, and wagged their tails, and licke
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         gain men came, strangers, who talked excitedly, wheedlingly, and in all kinds of fa f the dogs away with them. Buck wondered where they went, for they never came
d his hand. Also he saw one dog, that would neither conciliate nor obey, finally kil
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            led in the struggle for mastery. Now and a
shions to the man in the red sweater. And at such times that money passed betw
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         een them the strangers took one or more o
back; but the fear of the future was strong upon him, and he was glad each time
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       when he was not selected. Yet his time came
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            , in the end, in the form of a little weazened man who spat broken English and m
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             t one dam bully dog! Eh? How moch?" "Three hundred, and a present at that,"
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              edam!" he cried, when his eyes lit upon Buck. "Da
was the prompt reply of the man in the red sweater. "And seem' it's governmen
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            t money, you ain't got no kick coming, eh, Perrault?"
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               Perrault grinned. Considering that the price of dogs had been boomed skywar
d by the unwonted demand, it was not an unfair sum for so fine an animal. The
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     Canadian Government would be no loser, nor would its d
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             espatches travel the slower. Perrault knew dogs, and when he looked at Buck
e knew that he was one in a thousand--"One in ten t'ousand," he commented
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           mentally. Buck saw money pass between them, and was not sur
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              prised when Curly, a good-natured Newfoundland, and he were led away by th
e little weazened man. That was the last he saw of the man in the red sweater,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                hal, it was the last he saw of the warm Southland. Curly and he were taken bel
ow by Perrault and turned over to a black-faced giant called Francois. Perraul
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      t was a French-Canadian, and swarthy; but Francois was a French-Canadian h
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                alf-breed, and twice as swarthy. They were a new kind of men to Buck (of whi
ch he was destined to see many more), and while he developed no affection
                                                                                                                                                                                                                               for them, he none the less grew honestly to respect them. He speedily learned that
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  Perrault and Francois were fair men, calm and impartial in administering jus
tice, and too wise in the way of dogs to be fooled by dogs. In the 'tween-deck
                                                                                                                                                                                                                       s of the Narwhal, Buck and Curly joined two other dogs. One of them was a big, snow-w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 hite fellow from Spitzbergen who had been brought away by a whaling capta
                                                                                                                                                                              was friendly, in a treacherous sort of way, smiling into one's face the while he meditated some un
h the air, reaching the culprit first; and nothing remained to Buck but to recover the bone. That was fair of Francois
in, and who had later accompanied a Geological Survey into the Barrens. He
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  derhand trick, as, for instance, when he stole from Buck's food at the first m
eal. As Buck sprang to punish him, the lash of Francois's whip sang throug
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  , he decided, and the half-breed began his rise in Buck's estimation. The ot
her dog made no advances, nor received any; also, he did not attempt to st
                                                                                                                                                                     eal from the newcomers. He was a gloomy, morose fellow, and he showed Curly plainly that all he desired was to be left al
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  one, and further, that there would be trouble if he were not left alone. "Dave
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  possessed. When Buck and Curly grew excited, half wild with fear, he raise ery like another, it was apparent to Buck that the weather was steadily grow
" he was called, and he ate and slept, or yawned between times, and took in
                                                                                                                                                                terest in nothing, not even when the Narwhal crossed Queen Charlotte Sound and rolled and pitched and bucked like a thing
d his head as though annoyed, favored them with an incurious glance, yaw
                                                                                                                                                           ned, and went to sleep again. Day and night the ship throbbed to the tireless pulse of the propeller, and though one day was v
                                                                                                                                                 as pervaded with an atmosphere of excitement. He felt it, as did the other dogs, and knew that a change was at hand. Francois I g back with a snort. More of this white stuff was falling through the air. He shook himself, but more of it fell upon him. He sniffed
ing colder. At last, one morning, the propeller was quiet, and the Narwhal w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   eashed them and brought them on deck. At the first step upon the cold surf
ace, Buck's feet sank into a white mushy something very like mud. He spran
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    it curiously, then licked some up on his tongue. It bit like fire, and the next
instant was gone. This puzzled him. He tried it again, with the same result. T
                                                                                                                                                he onlookers laughed uproariously, and he felt ashamed, he knew not why, for it was his first snow. Chapter II. The Law of Club
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    and Fang Buck's first day on the Dyea beach was like a nightmare. Every
our was filled with shock and surprise. He had been suddenly jerked from t
                                                                                                                                                he heart of civilization and flung into the heart of things primordial. No lazy, sun-kissed life was this, with nothing to do but loaf
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   and be bored. Here was neither peace, nor rest, nor a moment's safety. All
was confusion and action, and every moment life and limb were in peril. Th
                                                                                                                                               ere was imperative need to be constantly alert; for these dogs and men were not town dogs and men. They were savages, all o
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    f them, who knew no law but the law of club and fang. He had never seen d
ogs fight as these wolfish creatures fought, and his first experience taught
                                                                                                                                               him an unforgetable lesson. It is true, it was a vicarious experience, else he would not have lived to profit by it. Curly was the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   victim. They were camped near the log store, where she, in her friendly way
, made advances to a husky dog the size of a full-grown wolf, though not ha
                                                                                                                                               If so large as she. There was no warning, only a leap in like a flash, a metallic clip of teeth, a leap out equally swift, and Curl
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   y's face was ripped open from eye to jaw. It was the wolf manner of fighting
, to strike and leap away; but there was more to it than this. Thirty or forty h
                                                                                                                                              uskies ran to the spot and surrounded the combatants in an intent and silent circle. Buck did not comprehend that silent in
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   tentness, nor the eager way with which they were licking their chops. Curly
rushed her antagonist, who struck again and leaped aside. He met her next
                                                                                                                                              rush with his chest, in a peculiar fashion that tumbled her off her feet. She never regained them, This was what the onloo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  king huskies had waited for. They closed in upon her, snarling and yelping
and she was buried, screaming with agony, beneath the bristling mass of bo
                                                                                                                                             dies. So sudden was it, and so unexpected, that Buck was taken aback. He saw Spitz run out his scarlet tongue in a way
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  he had of laughing; and he saw Francois, swinging an axe, spring into the
mess of dogs. Three men with clubs were helping him to scatter them. It did
                                                                                                                                             not take long. Two minutes from the time Curly went down, the last of her assailants were clubbed off. But she lay the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  re limp and lifeless in the bloody, trampled snow, almost literally forn to pie
ces, the swart half-breed standing over her and cursing horribly. The scene
                                                                                                                                         often came back to Buck to trouble him in his sleep. So that was the way. No fair play. Once down, that was the end of
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 you. Well, he would see to it that he never went down. Spitz ran out his tong
ue and laughed again, and from that moment Buck hated him with a bitter an
                                                                                                                                       d deathless hatred. Before he had recovered from the shock caused by the tragic passing of Curly, he received anothe
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 r shock. Francois fastened upon him an arrangement of straps and buckles.
t was a harness, such as he had seen the grooms put on the horses at home.
                                                                                                                                      And as he had seen horses work, so he was set to work, hauling Francois on a sled to the forest that fringed the valle
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                y, and returning with a load of firewood. Though his dignity was sorely hurt b
y thus being made a draught animal, he was too wise to rebel. He buckled do
                                                                                                                                    wn with a will and did his best, though it was all new and strange. Francois was stern, demanding instant obedience, a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               nd by virtue of his whip receiving instant obedience; while Dave, who was an
                                                                                                                                  pitz was the leader, likewise experienced, and while he could not always get at Buck, he growled sharp reproof now an
es and Francois made remarkable progress. Ere they returned to camp he knew e nough to stop at "ho," to go a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               d again, or cunningly threw his weight in the traces to jerk Buck into the way
experienced wheeler, nipped Buck's hind quarters whenever he was in error. S
e should go. Buck learned easily, and under the combined tuition of his two ma
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               head at "mush," to swing wide on the bends, and to keep clear of the wheeler
                                                                                                                                           Perrault. "Dat Buck, heem pool lak hell. I tich
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             y afternoon, Perrault, who was in a hurry to be on the trail with his despatches
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           heem queek as anyt'ing." B
returned with two more dogs. "Billee" and "Joe" he called them, two brothers, a
                                                                                                                                          skies both. Sons of the one mother though the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            ey were, they were as diffe
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              rent as day and night. Billee's one fault was his excessive good nature, while J
oe was the very opposite, sour and introspective, with a perpetual snarl and a m
                                                                                                                           alignant eye. Buck received them in comradely fashion,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             Spitz proceeded to thrash first one and then the other. Billee wagged his tail ap
                                                                                                                      d (still appeasingly) when Spitz's sharp teeth scored his p, and eyes diabolically gleaming--the incarnation of be
peasingly, turned to run when he saw that appeasement was of no avail, and crie
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                flank. But no matter how
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             Spitz circled, Joe whirled around on his heels to face him, mane bristling, ears
aid back, lips writhing and snarling, jaws clipping together as fast as he could sna
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                Iligerent fear. So terrible
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           was his appearance that Spitz was forced to forego disciplining him; but to cover
his own discomfiture he turned upon the inoffensive and wailing Billee and drove h
                                                                                                                                                             camp. By evening Perrault se
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                cured another dog, an o
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          ld husky, long and lean and gaunt, with a battle-scarred face and a single eye whic
h flashed a warning of prowess that commanded respect. He was called Sol-leks, which means the Angry O
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        cted nothing; and when he marched slowly and deliberately into their midst, even S
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  ing, gave nothing, expe
pitz left him alone. He had one peculiarity which Buck was unlucky enough to discover. He did not like to b
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  side. Of this offence Bu
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       ck was unwittingly guilty, and the first knowledge he had of his indiscretion was wh
                                                                                                                                                             e approached on his blind
en Sol-leks whirled upon him and slashed his shoulder to the bone for three inches up and down. For
                                                                                                                                                             ever after Buck avoided hi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     e last of their comradeship had no more trouble. His only apparent ambition, like Dav
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  s blind side, and to th
e's, was to be left alone; though, as Buck was afterward to learn, each of them possessed
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   re vital amb ition. Th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    at night Buck faced the great problem of sleeping. The tent, illumined by a candle, glo
wed warmly in the midst of the white plain; and when he, as a matter of course, en
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     vith curses and cooking utensils, till he recovered from his consternation and fled ign
ominiously into the outer cold. A chill wind was blowing that nipped him sharply and bit
                                                                                                                                                         with especial venom int
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    o his woun ded shou
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 Ider. He lay down on the snow and attempted to sleep, but the frost soon drove him shiv
ering to his feet. Miserable and disconsolate, he wandered about among the many tents, o
                                                                                                                                                       nly to find that one plac
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               other. Here and there savage dogs rushed upon him, but he bristled his neck-hair and sn
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     e was as c old as an
arled (for he was learning fast), and they let him go his way unmolested. Finally an idea cam
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              own team-mates were making out. To his astonishment, they had disappeared. Again he w
                                                                                                                                                     e to him. He would retu
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      rn and see
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       how his
andered about through the great camp, looking for them, and again he returned. Were they in
                                                                                                                                                      the tent? N o, that co
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      uld not be
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        , else he
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             would not have been driven out. Then where could they possibly be? With drooping tail an
d shivering body, very forlorn indeed, he aimlessly circled the tent. Suddenly the snow gave w
                                                                                                                                                    ay beneath his fore le
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         n. Something wriggled under his feet. He sprang back, bristling and snarling, fearful of the ur
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      gs and he
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         sank dow
seen and unknown. But a friendly little yelp reassured him, and he went back to investigate. A w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       p under the snow in a snug ball, lay Billee. He whined placatingly, squirmed and wriggled to sh
                                                                                                                                                     hiff of war mair asc
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      ended to h
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          is nostrils, a nd there, curled u
ow his good will and intentions, and even ventured, as a bribe for peace, to lick Buck's face with
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            r lesson. So that was the way they did it, eh
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       ? Buck confidently selected a spot, and with much fuss and waste effort proceeded to dig a hole
                                                                                                                                                    his warm
                                                                                                                                                                    wet tong
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        ue. Anothe
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     led and barked and wrestled with bad dreams. Nor did he open his eyes till roused by the noises
for himself. In a trice the heat from his body filled the confined space and he was asleep. The day
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             and he slept soundly and comfortably, though he grow
                                                                                                                                                   had been
                                                                                                                                                                     long an
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         d arduous.
of the waking camp. At first he did not know where he was. It had snowed during the night and hé was
                                                                                                                                                     complet
                                                                                                                                                                  ely burie
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          d. The snow walls pressed him on every side, and a great surge of fear swept through him--the fear of the wild thing for the trap. It was a token that he was harking back through
his own life to the lives of his forebears; for he was a civilized dog, an unduly civilized dog, and of his own
                                                                                                                                                  experience knew no tra
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         p and so could not of himself fear it. The muscles of his whole body contracted spasmodically and instinctively, the hair on his neck and shoulders stood on end, and with a fero
cious snarl he bounded straight up into the blinding day, the snow flying about him in a flashing cloud. Ere he landed on his feet, he saw the white camp spread out before him and knew where he was and remembered all that had passed from the time he went for a stroll with Manuel to the hole he had dug for himself the night before. A shout from Francois hailed his appea
rance. "Wot I say?" the dog-driver cried to Perrault. "Dat Buck for sure learn queek as anyting." Perrault nodded gravely. As courier for the Canadian Government, bearing important despatches, he was anxious to secure the best dogs, and he was particularly gladdened by the possession of Buck. Three more huskies were added to the team inside an hour, making a total courier for the Canadian Government, bearing important despatches, he was anxious to secure the best dogs.
f nine, and before another quarter of an hour had passed they were in harness and swinging up the trail toward the eagerness which animated the whole team and which was communicated to him; but still more surprising was the change wrought in Dave and Sol-leks. They were new dogs, utterly transformed by the harness. All passiveness and unconcern had dropped from them. They were alert and active, anxious that the work should go well, and fiercely irritable with whatever, by delay or confusion, retarded that work. The toil of the traces seemed the supreme expression of their being, and all that the y lived for and the only thing in which they took delight. Dave was wheeler or sled dog, pulling in front of him was Buck, then came Sol-leks; the rest of the team was strung out ahead, single file, to the leader, which position was filled by Spitz. Buck had been purposely placed between Dave and Sol-leks so that he might receive instruction. Apt scholar that he was, they were
e equally apt teachers, never allowing him to linger long in error, and enforcing their teaching with their sharp teeth. Dave was fair and very wise. He never nipped Buck without cause, and he never failed to nip him when he stood in need of it. As Francois's whip backed him up, Buck found it to be cheaper to mend his ways than to retaliate. Once, during a brief halt, when
e got tangled in the traces and delayed the start, both Dave and Solleks flew at him and administered a sound trouncing. The resulting tangle was even worse, but Buck took good care to keep the traces clear thereafter; and ere the day was done, so well had he mastered his work, his mates about ceased nagging him. Francois's whip snapped less frequently, and Perrault over honored Buck by lifting up his feet and carefully examining them. It was a hard day's run, up the Canon, through Sheep Camp, past the Scales and the timber line, across glaciers and guards forbiddingly the sad and lonely North. They made good time down the chain of lakes which fills the craters of extinct volcances, and late that night pulled into the huge camp at the head of Lake Bennett, where thousands of goldseekers were building boats against the break-up of the ice in the spring. Buck made his hole in the snow and slept the sleep of the exhausted just, but all too early was routed out in the cold darkness
and harnessed with his mates to the sled. That day they made forty miles, the trail being packed; but the next day, and for many days to follow, they broke their own trail, worked harder, and made poorer time. As a rule, Perrault travelled ahead of the team, packing the snow with webbed shoes to make it easier for them. Francois, guiding the sled at the gee-pole, sometime exchanged places with him, but not often. Perrault was in a hurry, and he prided himself on his knowledge was indispensable, for the fall ice was very thin, and where there was no ice at all. Day after day, for days unending, Buck toiled in the traces. Always, they broke camp in the dark, and the first gray of dawn found them l
ting the trail with fresh miles reeled off behind them. And always they pitched camp after dark, eating their distribution for each day, seemed to go nowhere. He never had enough, and safe of sun-dried salmon, which was his ration for each day, seemed to go nowhere. He never had enough, and safe of sun-dried salmon, which was his ration for each day, seemed to go nowhere. He never had enough, and safe of sun-dried salmon, which was his ration for each day, seemed to go nowhere. He never had enough, and safe of sun-dried salmon, which was his ration for each day, seemed to go nowhere. He never had enough, and safe of sun-dried salmon, which was his ration for each day, seemed to go nowhere. He never had enough, and safe of sun-dried salmon, which was his ration for each day, seemed to go nowhere. He never had enough, and safe of sun-dried salmon, which was his ration for each day, seemed to go nowhere. He never had enough, and safe of sun-dried salmon, which was his ration for each day, seemed to go nowhere. He never had enough, seemed to go nowhere. He never had enough in the first place of sun-dried salmon, which was his ration for each day, seemed to go nowhere. He never had enough in the lack of the first place of sun-dried salmon, which was his ration for each day, seemed to go nowhere. He never had enough in the lack of the first place was the following to define he never had enough. He had enough in the lack of the first place was the following to define he had enough in the lack of the first place was the first place. He had enough in the lack of the first place was the first place and the lack of the first place was the lack of the first place. He had enough in the lack of the first place was the lack of the first place was the lack of the lack of
swift and terrible death. It marked, further, the decay or going to pieces of his moral nature, a vain thing and a handicap in the ruthless struggle for existence. It was all well enough in the Southland, under the law of club and fang, whoso took such things into accout twas a fool, and in so far as he observed them he would fail to prosper. Not that Buck reasoned it out. He was fit, that was all, and unconsciously he accommodated himself to the new mode of life. All his days, no matter what the odds, he had never run from a fight. But the club of the man in the red sweater had beaten into him a more fundamental and primitive code. Civil
zed, he could have died for a moral consideration, say the defence of a moral consideration and so save his hide. He did not steal for joy of it, but because of the clamor of his stomach. He did not rob openly, but stole secretly and cunningly, out
of respect for club and fang. In short, the things he did were done because it was easier to do them than not to all ordinary pain. He achieved an internal as well as external economy. He could eat anything, no matter how loathsome or indigestible; and, once eaternal economy. He could eat anything no matter how loathsome or indigestible; and, once eaternal economy.
en, the juices of his stomach extracted the last least particle of nutriment; and his blood carried it to the farthest reaches of his body, building it into the toughest and stoutest of tissues. Sight and scent became remarkably keen, while his hearing developed such acuteness that in his sleep he heard the faintest sound and knew whether it heralded peace or peril. He learned to bit to bit the ice out with his teeth when it collected between his toes; and when he was thirsty and there was a thick scum of ice over the water hole, he would break it by rearing and striking it with stiff fore legs. His most conspicuous trait was an ability to scent the wind and forecast it a night in advance. No matter how breathless the air when he dug his nest by tree or bank
the wind that later blew inevitably found him to leeward, sheltered and snug. And not only did he learn by experience, but instincts long dead became alive again. The domesticated generations fell from him. In vague ways he remembered back to the youth of the breed, to the time the wild dogs ranged in packs through the primeval forest and killed their meat as they ran it down. It was no task for him to learn to fight with cut and slash and the quick wolf snap. In this manner had fought forgotten ancestors. They quickened the old life within him, and the old tricks which they had been his always. And when, on the still cold
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