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THE CALL OF THE WILD by Jack London Chapter I. Into the Primitive "Old longings nomadic leap. Chaffing at outsom's chain, Again from its brumal sleep Wakens the ferine strain." Buck did not read the exespapers, or he would have known that provides a properties of the days they wanted dogs, and the roar unable dogs, and the days they wanted were heavy dogs, with strong muscles by which to boil, and furry muscles by which to boil, and furry muscles by which to boil, and furry muscles by which to boil and the days they wanted were heavy dogs, with strong muscles by which to boil, and furry muscles by which to boil and the days the days and the read of the form the days was a proposition of the days and the read of the form the days which was the form the read of the form the days and the proposition of the days and the read of the form the days and the read of the form the days and the form the d
wed the crate to be lifted into a wagon. Then he, and the crate in which he was imprisoned, began a passage through many hands. Clerks in the express office took charge of him; he was carted a n 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 ha not attended him. They growled and barked like detestable dogs, mewed, and flapped their arms and crowed. It was all very silly, he knew; but therefore the more outrage to his dignity, a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       d met the first advances of the express messengers with growls, and they had retaliated by teasing him. When he flung himself against the bars, quivering and frothing, they laughed at him
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               nd his anger waxed and waxed. He did not mind the hunger so much, but the lack of water caused him severe suffering and fanned his wrath to fever-pitch. For that matter, high-strung pe was off his neck. That had given them an unfair advantage; but now that it was off, he would show them. They would never get another rope around his neck. Upon that he was II foul of him. His eyes turned blood-shot, and he was metamorphosed into a raging fiend. So changed was he that the Judge himself would not have recognized him; and the yard. A stout man, with a red sweater that sagged generously at the neck, came out and signed the book for the driver. That was the man, Buck divined, the next tormentor urre," the man replied, driving the hatchet into the create for a pry. There was an instantaneous scattering and fanned his wrath to determine the resulting man replied to the four problems.
and finely sensitive, the ill treatment had flung him into a fever, which was fed by the inflammation of his parched and swollen throat and tongue. He was glad for one thing: the roresolved. For two days and nights he neither ate nor drank, and during those two days and nights of torment, he accumulated a fund of wrath that boded ill for whoever first fe
express messengers breathed with relief when they bundled him off the train at Seattle. Four men gingerly carried the crate from the wagon into a small, high-walled back 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. "S
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              tchet fell on the outside, he was there on the inside, snarling and growling, as furiously anxious to get out as the man in the red sweater was calmly intended to a shifted the club to his right hand. And Buck was truly a red-eyed devil, as he drew himself together for the spring, hair bristling, mouth foaming, a mad gl ghts. In mid air, just as his jaws were about to close on the man, he received a shock that checked his body and brought his teeth together with an agonizing as part bark and more scream he was again on his feet and launched into the air. And again the shock came and he was brought crushingly to the ground
n top the wall they prepared to watch the performance. Buck rushed at the splintering wood, sinking his teeth into it, surging and wrestling with it. Wherever the ha
ng him out. "Now, you red-eyed devil," he said, when he had made an opening sufficient for the passage of Buck's body. At the same time he dropped the hatch
itter in his blood-shot eyes. Straight at the man he launched his one hundred and forty pounds of fury, surcharged with the pent passion of two days and ni
clip. He whirled over, fetching the ground on his back and side. He had never been struck by a club in his life, and did not understand. With a snarl that w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  smashed him down. After a particularly fierce blow, he crawled to his feet, too dazed to rush. He staggered limply about, the blood flowing from nose in the nose. All the pain he had endured was as nothing compared with the exquisite agony of this. With a roar that was almost lionlike in its ferocitying downward and backward. Buck described a complete circle in the air, and half of another, then crashed to the ground on his head and chest. F
. This time he was aware that it was the club, but his madness knew no caution. A dozen times he charged, and as often the club broke the charge and and mouth and ears, his beautiful coat sprayed and flecked with bloody slaver. Then the man advanced and deliberately dealt him a frightful blow o
he again hurled himself at the man. But the man, shifting the club from right to left, coolly caught him by the under jaw, at the same time wrenchi
or the last time he rushed. The man struck the shrewd blow he had purposely withheld for so long, and Buck crumpled up and went down, kno uses 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 b
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             cked utterly senseless. "He's no slouch at dog-breakin', that's wot I say," one of the men on the wall cried enthusiastically. "Druther break cay
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                ack to him, but not his strength. He lay where he had fallen, and from there he watched the man in the red sweater. "'Answers to the name o
Buck,"' the man soliloquized, quoting from the saloon-keeper's letter which had announced the consignment of the crate and contents. "W ned your place, and I know mine. Be a good dog and all 'll go well and the goose hang high. Be a bad dog, and I'll whale the stuffin' outa ed at touch of the hand, he endured it without protest. When the man brought him water he drank eagerly, and later bolted a generous hat he stood no chance against a man with a club. He had learned the lesson, and in all his after life he never forgot it. That club was
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  ell, Buck, my boy," he went on in a genial voice, "we've had our little ruction, and the best thing we can do is to let it go at that. You've lear you. Understand?" As he spoke he fearlessly patted the head he had so mercilessly pounded, and though Buck's hair involuntarily bristl
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           meal of raw meat, chunk by chunk, from the man's hand. He was beaten (he knew that); but he was not broken. He saw, once for all, t
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           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 fierd by, other dogs came, in crates and at the ends of ropes, some docilely, and some raging and roaring as he had come; and, one and mance, the lesson was driven home to Buck: a man with a club was a lawgiver, a master to be obeyed, though not necessarily cocked his hand. Also he saw one dog, that would neither conciliate nor obey, finally killed in the struggle for mastery. Now and a
er aspect; and while he faced that aspect uncowed, he faced it with all the latent cunning of his nature aroused. As the days went
all, he watched them pass under the dominion of the man in the red sweater. Again and again, as he looked at each brutal perfor
gain men came, strangers, who talked excitedly, wheedlingly, and in all kinds of fashions to the man, and wagged their tails, gain men came, strangers, who talked excitedly, wheedlingly, and in all kinds of fashions to the man in the red sweater. And y went, for they never came back; but the fear of the future was strong upon him, and he was glad each time when he was n clamations which Buck could not understand. "Sacredam!" he cried, when his eyes lit upon Buck. "Dat one dam bully dog
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        es that money passed between them the strangers took one or more of the dogs away with them. Buck wondered where the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   at such ti
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           this time came, in the end, in the form of a little weazened man who spat broken English and many strange and uncouth ex
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               ot selected. Y
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            ! Eh? How moch
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              "Three hundred, and a present at that," was the prompt reply of the man in the red sweater. "And seem' it's government
money, you ain't got no kick coming, eh, Perrault?" Perrault grinned. Considering that the price of dogs had been boome
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      d skyward by the u
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                ronted demand, it was not an unfair sum for so fine an animal. The Canadian Government would be no loser, nor would
its despatches travel the slower. Perrault knew dogs, and when he looked at Buck he knew that he was one in a thous
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               and," he commented mentally. Buck saw money pass between them, and was not surprised when Curly, a good-natured
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  ed at receding Seattle from the deck of the Narwhal, it was the last he saw of the warm Southland. Curly and he were t
Newfoundland, and he were led away by the little weazened man. That was the last he saw of the man in the red swea
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     ter, and as Curly and he look
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   anadian half-breed, and twice as swarthy. They were a new kind of men to Buck (of which he was destined to see ma
aken below by Perrault and turned over to a black-faced giant called Francois. Perrault was a French-Canadian, and
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              swarthy; but Francois was a Fren ch-C
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    r men, calm and impartial in administering justice, and too wise in the way of dogs to be fooled by dogs. In the 'twee
ny more), and while he developed no affection for them, he none the less grew honestly to respect them. He speedil
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        y learned that Perrault and François were fai
n-decks of the Narwhal, Buck and Curly joined two other dogs. One of them was a big, snow-white fellow from Spi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      aptain, and who had later accompanied a Geological Survey into the Barrens. He was friendly, in a treacherous so
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             tzbergen who had been brought away by a whaling c
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        sh him, the lash of Francois's whip sang through the air, reaching the culprit first; and nothing remained to Buck
t of way, smiling into one's face the while he meditated some underhand trick, as, for instance, when he stole fro
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       m Buck's food at the first meal. As Buck sprang to puni
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   ation. The other dog made no advances, nor received an
but to recover the bone. That was fair of Francois, he decided, and the half-breed began his rise in Buck's estim
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         y; also, he did not attempt to steal from the newcomers. He was a gloomy, morose fellow, and he showed Curly
plainly that all he desired was to be left alone, and further, that there would be trouble if he were not left alone.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               "Dave" he was called, and he ate and slept, or yawned betw
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            een times, and took interest in nothing, not even when the Narwhal crossed Queen Charlotte Sound and rolled
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             us glance, yawned, and went to sleep again. Day and night the ship throbbed to the tireless pulse of the prope e Narwhal was pervaded with an atmosphere of excitement. He felt it, as did the other dogs, and knew that a ike mud. He sprang back with a snort. More of this white stuff was falling through the air. He shook himself,
and pitched and bucked like a thing possessed. When Buck and Curly grew excited, half wild with fear, he rais
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         ed his head as though annoyed, favored them with an incurio
ller, and though one day was very like another, it was apparent to Buck that the weather was steadily growing
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        colder. At last, one morning, the propeller was quiet, and the
change was at hand. Francois leashed them and brought them on deck. At the first step upon the cold surfa
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          ce, Buck's feet sank into a white mushy something very I
but more of it fell upon him. He sniffed it curiously, then licked some up on his tongue. It bit like fire, and th
y, for it was his first snow. Chapter II. The Law of Club and Fang Buck's first day on the Dyea beach was lik
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   e next instant was gone. This puzzled him. He trie
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  d it again, with the same result. The onlookers laughed uproariously, and he felt ashamed, he knew not wh
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   e a nightmare. Every hour was filled with shock a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  nd surprise. He had been suddenly jerked from the heart of civilization and flung into the heart of things pr
mordial. No lazy, sun-kissed life was this, with nothing to do but loaf and be bored. Here was neither peac
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                e, nor rest, nor a moment's safety. All was confusi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   on and action, and every moment life and limb were in peril. There was imperative need to be constantly a
ert; for these dogs and men were not town dogs and men. They were savages, all of them, who knew no
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              law but the law of club and fang. He had never seen
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      dogs 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.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      er friendly way, made advances to a husky dog the size of a full-grown wolf, though not half so large as
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             They were camped near the log store, where she, in h
she. There was no warning, only a leap in like a flash, a metallic clip of teeth, a leap out equally swift, an
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   d Curly's face was ripped open from eye to jaw. It was the w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       olf manner of fighting, to strike and leap away; but there was more to it than this. Thirty or forty huskies
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        licking their chops. Curly rushed her antagonist, who struck again and leaped aside. He met her next r n her, snarling and yelping, and she was buried, screaming with agony, beneath the bristling mass of ng an axe, spring into the mess of dogs. Three men with clubs were helping him to scatter them. It did
ran to the spot and surrounded the combatants in an intent and silent circle. Buck did not comprehend
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               that silent intentness, nor the eager way with which they were
ush with his chest, in a peculiar fashion that tumbled her off her feet. She never regained them, This w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        as what the onlooking huskies had waited for. They closed in upo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      arlet tongue in a way he had of laughing; and he saw Francois, swingi f. But she lay there limp and lifeless in the bloody, trampled snow, almost lite
bodies. So sudden was it, and so unexpected, that Buck was taken aback. He saw Spitz run out his sc
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          rally torn to pieces, the swart half-breed standing over her and cursing horribly. The scene often cam e and laughed again, and from that moment Buck hated him with a bitter and deathless hatred. Befor
not take long. Two minutes from the time Curly went down, the last of her assailants were clubbed o
e back to Buck to trouble him in his sleep. So that was the way. No fair play. Once down, that was th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         e end of you. Well, he would see to it that he never went down. Spitz ran out his tongu
e he had recovered from the shock caused by the tragic passing of Curly, he received another shock
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                Francois fastened upon him an arrangement of straps and buckles. It was a harness, such a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           s he had seen the grooms put on the horses at home. And as he had seen horses work, so he was se
t to work, hauling Francois on a sled to the forest that fringed the valley, and returning with a load o
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        f firewood. Though his dignity was sorely hurt by thus being made a draught animal, he was too
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             wise to rebel. He buckled down with a will and did his best, though it was all new and strange. Fran
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       ; while Dave, who was an experienced wheeler, nipped Buck's hind quarters whenever he was in erro y he should go. Buck learned easily, and under the combined tuition of his two mates and Francois made r
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             r. Spitz was the leader, likewise experienced, and while he could not always get at Buck, he growle emarkable progress. Ere they returned to camp he knew enough to stop at "ho," to go ahead at "m
cois was stern, demanding instant obedience, and by virtue of his whip receiving instant obedience
d sharp reproof now and again, or cunningly threw his weight in the traces to jerk Buck into the wa
ush," to swing wide on the bends, and to keep clear of the wheeler when the loaded sled shot dow
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    nhill at their heels. "T'ree vair' good dogs," Francois told Perrault. "Dat Buck, heem pool lak hell. I tich heem queek as
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             anyt'ing." By afternoon, Perrault, who was in a hurry to be on the trail with his despatches, returned
d with two more dogs. "Billee" and "Joe" he called them, two brothers, and true huskies both. Son
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           s of the one mother though they were, they were as different as day and night. Billee's one fault was his excessive good nature, while
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               Joe was the very opposite, sour and introspective, with a perpetual snarl and a malignant eye. Bu
                                                                                                                                                                                                                           ne and then the other. Billee wagged his tail appeasingly, turned to run when he saw that appeasement was of no avail, and cried (still appeasing together as fast as he could snap, and eyes diabolically gleaming—the incarnation of belligerent fear. So terrible was his appearance that Spitz was er dog, an old husky, long and lean and gaunt, with a battle-scarred face and a single eye which flashed a warning of prowess that commanded respect.
ck received them in comradely fashion, Dave ignored them, while Spitz proceeded to thrash first o
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               ngly) when Spitz's sharp teeth scored his flank. But no matter how Spitz circled, Joe whirled arou
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               forced to forego disciplining him; but to cover his own discomfiture he turned upon the inoffensiv
He was called Sol-leks, which means the Angry One. Like Dave, he asked nothing, gave nothing,
unwittingly guilty, and the first knowledge he had of his indiscretion was when Sol-leks whirled
nd on his heels to face him, mane bristling, ears laid back, lips writhing and snarling, jaws clippin
e and wailing Billee and drove him to the confines of the camp. By evening Perrault secured anoth
expected nothing; and when he marched slowly and deliberately into their midst, even Spitz left hi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                      m alone. He had one peculiarity which Buck was unlucky enough to discover. He did not like to be approached on his blind side. Of this offence Buck was
                                                                                                                                                                                                           avoided his blind side, and to the last of their comradeship had no more trouble. His only apparent ambition, like Dave's, was to be left alone; though, as B the midst of the white plain; and when he, as a matter of course, entered it, both Perrault and François bombarded him with curses and cooking utensils, t down on the snow and attempted to sleep, but the frost soon drove him shivering to his feet. Miserable and disconsolate, he wandered about among the m
upon him and slashed his shoulder to the bone for three inches up and down. Forever after Buck
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               uck was afterward to learn, each of them possessed one other and even more vital ambition. That
night Buck faced the great problem of sleeping. The tent, illumined by a candle, glowed warmly in as blowing that nipped him sharply and bit with especial venom into his wounded shoulder. He lay
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                ill he recovered from his consternation and fled ignominiously into the outer cold. A chill wind w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               any tents, only to find that one place was as cold as another. Here and there savage dogs rushed
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               eared. Again he wandered about through the great camp, looking for them, and again he returned s fore legs and he sank down. Something wriggled under his feet. He sprang back, bristling and s med and wriggled to show his good will and intentions, and even ventured, as a bribe for peace, t
upon him, but he bristled his neck-hair and snarled (for he was learning fast), and they let him go
                                                                                                                                                                                                         his way unmolested. Finally an idea came to him. He would return and see how his own team-mates were making out. To his astonishment, they had disapp
. Were they in the tent? No, that could not be, else he would not have been driven out. Then where
                                                                                                                                                                                                         could they possibly be? With drooping tail and shivering body, very foriorn indeed, he aimlessly circled the tent. Suddenly the snow gave way beneath hi
narling, fearful of the unseen and unknown. But a friendly little yelp reassured him, and he went b
                                                                                                                                                                                                       ack to investigate. A whiff of warm air ascended to his nostrils, and there, curled up under the snow in a snug ball, lay Billee. He whined placatingly, squir
o lick Buck's face with his warm wet tongue. Another 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 for himself. In a trice the heat from his body filled the conf
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                ined space and he was asleep. The day had been long and arduous, and he slept soundly and co
mfortably, though he growled and barked and wrestled with bad dreams. Nor did he open his eyes
                                                                                                                                                                                                       till roused by the noises of the waking camp. At first he did not know where he was. It had snowed during the night and he was completely buried. The
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 snow walls pressed him on every side, and a great surge of fear swept through him--the fear of t
he 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 trap and so could not of himself fear it. The m
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               uscles of his whole body contracted spasmodically and instinctively, the hair on his neck and sho
                                                                                                                                                                                                     now 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 remem
ulders stood on end, and with a ferocious snarl he bounded straight up into the blinding day, the s
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               bered all that had passed from the time he went for a stroll with Manuel to the hole he had dug for
                                                                                                                                                                                                cried to Perrault. "Dat Buck for sure learn queek as anyting." Perrault nodded gravely. As courier for the Canadian Government, bearing importan ine, and before another quarter of an hour had passed they were in harness and swinging up the trail toward the Dyea Canon. Buck was glad to be ore surprising was the change wrought in Dave and Sol-leks. They were new dogs, utterly transformed by the harness. All passiveness and unco emed the supreme expression of their being, and all that they lived for and the only thing in which they took delight. Dave was wheeler or sled d
himself the night before. A shout from Francois hailed his appearance. "Wot I say?" the dog-driver
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               t despatches, he was anxious to secure the best dogs, and he was particularly gladdened by the p
ossession of Buck. Three more huskies were added to the team inside an hour, making a total of n
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               gone, and though the work was hard he found he did not particularly despise it. He was surprised
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             ncern had dropped from them. They were alert and active, anxious that the work should go well, an og, pulling in front of him was Buck, then came Sol-leks; the rest of the team was strung out ahead
at the eagerness which animated the whole team and which was communicated to him; but still m
d fiercely irritable with whatever, by delay or confusion, retarded that work. The toil of the traces se
                                                                                                                                                                                            en Dave and Sol-leks so that he might receive instruction. Apt scholar that he was, they were equally apt teachers, never allowing him to linger I ois's whip backed him up. Buck found it to be cheaper to mend his ways than to retaliate. Once, during a brief halt, when he got tangled in the tr
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             ong in error, and enforcing their teaching with their sharp teeth. Dave was fair and very wise. He ne
, single file, to the leader, which position was filled by Spitz. Buck had been purposely placed betwe
ver nipped Buck without cause, and he never failed to nip him when he stood in need of it. As Franc
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             aces 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; an un, up the Canon, through Sheep Camp, past the Scales and the timber line, across glaciers and sno nct volcanoes, and late that night pulled into the huge camp at the head of Lake Bennett, where thou
                                                                                                                                                                                         d 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 wdrifts hundreds of feet deep, and over the great Chilcoot Divide, which stands between the salt water and the fresh and guards forbiddingly t
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            Perrault even honored Buck by lifting up his feet and carefully examining them. It was a hard day's i
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           he sad and lonely North. They made good time down the chain of lakes which fills the craters of exti
                                                                                                                                                                                      sands 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 to follow, they broke their own trail, worked harder, and made poorer time. As a rule, Perrault travelled a head of the team, packing the snow
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          e exhausted just, but all too early was routed out in the cold darkness and harnessed with his mates
o the sled. That day they made forty miles, the trail being packed; but the next day, and for many days
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          with webbed shoes to make it easier for them. Francois, guiding the sled at the gee-pole, sometimes e
         ged places with him, but not often. Perrault was in a hurry, and he prided him
                                                                                                                                                                                                            n knowledge was indispensable, for the fall ice wa s very thin, and where there was swift water, 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 hitting the trail with fresh miles reeled off behind them. And always
                                                                                                                                                                                 they pitched camp after dark, eating their bit of fish, and crawling t
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         avenous. The pound and a half of sun-dried salmon, which was his ration for each day, seemed to go
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      o sleep into the snow. Buck was r
nowhere. He never had enough, and suffered from perpetual hunger pangs. Yet the other dogs, becaus
er, he found that his mates, finishing first, robbed him of his unfinished ration. There was no defending i
                                                                                                                                                                              e they weighed less and were born to the life, received a pound only
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         of the fish and managed to keep
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        in good condition. He swiftly lost the fastidiousness which had characterized his old life. A dainty ea
                                                                                                                                                                            t. While he was fighting off two or three, it was disappearing down the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         e throats of the others. To reme
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       dy this, he ate as fast as they; and, so greatly did hunger compel him, he was not above taking what di
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      ance the following day, getting away with the whole chunk. A great uproar was raised, but he was unsu
d not belong to him. He watched and learned. When he saw Pike, one of the new dogs, a clever malinger
                                                                                                                                                                         er and thief, slyly steal a slic e of bacon when Perrault's back was tur
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           ned, he duplicated the perform
spected; while Dub, an awkward blunderer who was always getting caught, was punished for Buck's misd
                                                                                                                                                                         eed. This first theft marked Buck as fit to survive in the hostile Nor
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            thland environment. It marke
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    d his adaptability, his capacity to adjust himself to changing conditions, the lack of which would have m
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              well enough in the Southlan
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   d, under the law of love and fellowship, to respect private property and personal feelings; but in the North
eant swift and terrible death. It marked, further, the decay or going to pieces of his moral nature, a vain thi
                                                                                                                                                                       ng and a handicap in the ruth
                                                                                                                                                                                                                       less struggle for existence. It was all
land, under the law of club and fang, whoso took such things into account was a fool, and in so far as he o
                                                                                                                                                                                                                        prosper. Not that Buck reasoned it o
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             ut. He was fit, that was all, an
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  d unconsciously he accommodated himself to the new mode of life. All his days, no matter what the odds,
                                                                                                                                                                  bserved them he would fail to
he had never run from a fight. But the club of the man in the red sweater had beaten into him a more fundam ental and primitive code. Civil
                                                                                                                                                                                                                         ized, he could have died for a mora
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               I consideration, say the def
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 ence of Judge Miller's riding-whip; but the completeness of his decivilization was now evidenced by his abi
lity to flee from 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 s
                                                                                                                                                                                                                         tomach. He did not rob openly, b
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               ut stole secretl y and cunnin
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               gly, out of respect for club and fang. In short, the things he did were done because it was easier to do them t
                                                                                                                                                                                                                         nary pain. He achieved an intern
han not to do them. His development (or retrogression) was rapid. His muscles became hard as iron, and he grew callous to all ordi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              my. He could eat anything, no matter how loathsome or indigestible; and, once eaten, the juices of his stoma
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               al as well as ex ternal econo
ch extracted the last least particle of nutriment; and his blood carried it to the farthest reaches of his body, building it into the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             e remarkably keen, while his hearing developed such acuteness that in his sleep he heard the faintest sound a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                            toughest and stoutest of tissu
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                es. Sight and s cent becam
nd knew whether it heralded peace or peril. He learned to bite the ice out with his teeth when it collected betwe
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           ck scum of ice over the water hole, he would break it by rearing and striking it with stiff fore legs. His most con
                                                                                                                                                                                                                         his toes; and when he was th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 irsty and ther e was a thi
spicuous trait was an ability to scent the wind and forecast it a night in advance. No matter how breathless the ai
cts long dead became alive again. The domesticated generations fell from him. In vague ways he remembered bac
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   or bank, the wind that la
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          ter blew inevitably found him to leeward, sheltered and snug. And not only did he learn by experience, but instin
                                                                                                                                                                                                                       r when he dug his nest by tree
                                                                                                                                                                                                                    k to the youth of the breed, to
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    the time the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         wild doas
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        ranged in packs through the primeval forest and killed their meat as they ran it down. It was no task for him to lea
rn to fight with cut and slash and the quick wolf snap. In this manner had fought forgotten ancestors. They quicken
                                                                                                                                                                                                                  ed the old life within him, an
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      ey had stamped into the heredity of the breed were his tricks. They came to him without effort or discovery, as tho
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   d the old tric
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         ks which th
ugh they had been his always. And when, on the still cold nights, he pointed his nose at a star and howled long and
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    g nose at star and howling down through the centuries and through him. And his cadences were their cadences, the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                wolflike, it was his ancestors
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    , dead and d
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         ust, pointin
cadences which voiced their woe and what to them was the meaning of the stiffness, and the cold, and dark. Thus, as
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   ng life is, the II. The Domi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   g surged through him and he came into his own again; and he came because men had found a yellow metal in the No
                                                                                                                                                                                                                token of what a puppet thi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           ancient son
rth, and because Manuel was a gardener's helper whose wages did not lap over the needs of his wife and divers small c
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  rdial Beast The dominant primordial beast was strong in Buck, and under the fierce conditions of trail life it grew and
                                                                                                                                                                                                               opies of himse If. Chapter
grew. Yet it was a secret growth. His newborn cunning gave him poise and control. He was too busy adjusting himself to
                                                                                                                                                                                                                the new life to feel at ea
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     se, and not o
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              nly did he
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              not pick fights, but he avoided them whenever possible. A certain deliberateness characterized his attitude. He was not
prone to rashness and precipitate action; and in the bitter hatred between him and Spitz he betrayed no impatience, shun
                                                                                                                                                                                                             ned all offen sive acts. O
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             divined in Buck a dangerous rival, Spitz never lost an opportunity of showing his teeth. He even went out of his way to bu
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      n the other h
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              and, possibl
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            y because he
lly Buck, striving constantly to start the fight which could end only in the death of one or the other. Early in the trip this mig
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 for an unwonted accident. At the end of this d
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          ay they made a bleak and miserable camp on the shore of Lake Le Barge. Driving snow, a wind that cut like a white-hot knii
                                                                                                                                                                                                              ht have take n place ha
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      d it not been
e, and darkness had forced them to grope for a camping place. They could hardly have fared worse. At their backs rose a pe
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  rault and Francois were compelled to make their fire and spre
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        ad their sleeping robes on the ice of the lake itself. The tent they had discarded at Dyea in order to travel light. A few sticks of
                                                                                                                                                                                                              rpendicula
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 r wall of r
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       ock, and Per
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         uck made his nest. So snug and warm was it, that he was loath to leave it when Franc
f driftwood furnished them with a fire that thawed down through the ice and left them to eat supper in the dark. Close in under t
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      ois distributed the fish which he had first thawed over the fire. But when Buck finished his ration and returned, he found his n
                                                                                                                                                                                                              he shelter
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    ing rock B
                                                                                                                                                                                                             as too muc h. The bea
est occupied. A warning snarl told him that the trespasser was Spitz. Till now Buck had avoided trouble with his enemy, but this w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         st in him roared. He sprang upon Spitz with a fury which surprised them both, and Spitz particularly, for his whole experience with Buck had gone to teach him that his rival was an unusually timid dog, who managed to ho
                                                                                                                                                                                                             st and he divined the caus
ld his own only because of his great weight and size. Francois was surprised, too, when they shot out in a tangle from the disrupted ne
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         e of the trouble. "A-a-ah!" he cried to Buck. "Gif it to heem, by Gar! Gif it to heem, the dirty t'eef!" Spitz was equally willing. He was crying with sheer rage and eagerness as he circled back and forth for a chance to spring
n. Buck was no less eager, and no less cautious, as he likewise circled back and forth for the advantage. But it was then that the unexpected happened, the thing which projected their struggle for supremacy far into the future, past many a weary mile of trail and toil. An air into the future, past many a weary mile of trail and toil. An air into the future, past many a weary mile of trail and toil. An air into the future, past many a weary mile of trail and toil. An air into the future, past many a weary mile of trail and toil. An air into the future, past many a weary mile of trail and toil. An air into the future, past many a weary mile of trail and toil. An air into the future, past many a weary mile of the form of trail and toil. An air into the future, past many a weary mile of the form of trail and toil. An air into the future, past many a weary mile of trail and toil. An air into the future, past many a weary mile of trail and toil. An air into the future, past many a weary mile of trail and toil. An air into the future, past many a weary mile of trail and toil. An air into the future, past many a weary mile of trail and toil. An air into the future, past many a weary mile of trail and toil. An air into the future, past many a weary mile of trail and toil. An air into the future, past many a weary mile of trail and toil. An air into the future, past many a weary mile of trail and toil. An air into the future, past many a weary mile of trail and toil. An air into the future, past many a weary mile of trail and toil. An air into the future, past many a weary mile of trail and toil. An air into the future, past many a weary mile of trail and toil. An air into the future, past many a weary mile of trail and toil. An air into the future, past many a weary mile of trail and toil. An air into the future was then the future was then that mile of trail and toil. An air into the future was then that mile of trail and toil. An air into the future was then the future was then that mile of trail and toil. An air into
y side by side. Joe was snapping like a demon. Once, his teeth closed on the fore leg of a husky, and he crunched down through the bone. Pike, the malingerer, leaped upon the crippled animal, breaking its neck with a quick flash of teeth and a jerk, Buck got a frothing adversary by the throat, and was sprayed with blood when his teeth sank through the jugular. The warm taste of it in his mouth goaded him to greater fierceness. He flung himself upon another, and
at the same time felt teeth sink into his own throat. It was Spitz, treacherously attack on the team. Billee, terrified into bravery, streacherously attack on the grub, upon which the huskies returned to save their sled-dogs. The wild wave of famished beasts rolled back before them, and Buck shook himself free. But it was only for a moment. The two men were compelled to run back to save the grub, upon which the huskies returned to the attack on the team. Billee, terrified into bravery, save the grub attack on the team.
at the salter table to the salter table. He can be place to the salter t
t, nosing the way broke through the ice bridges, being saved by the long pole he carried, which he so held that it fell each time across the hole made by his body. But a cold snap was on, the thermometer registering fifty below zero, and each time across the hole made by his body. But a cold snap was on, the thermometer registering fifty below zero, and daunted him that he broke through he was compelled for very life to build a fire and dry his garments. Nothing daunted him that it fell each time across the hole made by his body. But a cold snap was on, the thermometer registering fifty below zero, and the two ments on the sled broke through him was necessary to save them. They were coated solidly with ice, and they were half-frozen and the two men kept them on the run around the sled was francois, pulling till his tendons cracked. Again, the rim ice broke away before and behind, and behind the sled was Francois, pulling till his tendons cracked. Again, the rim ice broke away before and behind, and
there was no escape except up the cliff. Perrault scaled it by a miracle, while Francois prayed for just that miracle; and with every thong and sled lashing and the last bit of harness rove into a long rope, the dogs were hoisted, one by one, to the cliff crest. Francois came up last, after the sled and load. Then came the search for a place to descend, which descent was ultimately made by the aid of the rope, and night found them back on the last bit of harness rove into a long rope, the dogs were hoisted, one by one, to the dogs were in like condition; but Perrault, to make up lost time, pushed them late and early. The first day they covered thirty-five more to the Little Salmon; the third day forty miles, which brought them well up toward the Five Fingers. Buck's feet were not so compact and hard as the feet of the huskies. His hard as the feet of the huskies. His hard as the feet of the huskies.
ad softened during the many generations since the day his last wild ancestor was tamed by a cave-dweller or river man. All day long he limped in agony, and camp once made, lay down like a dead dog. Hungry as he was, he would not move to receive his ration of fish, which Francois had to bring to him. Also, the dog-driver rubbed Buck's feet for half an hour each night after supper, and sacrificed the tops of his own moccasins to make four moccasins for Buck.
his was a great relief, and Buck caused even the weazened face of Perrault to twist itself into a grin one morning, as they were harnessing up, Dolly, who had never been conspicuous for anything, went suddenly mad. She announced her condition by a long, heartbreaking wolf howl that sent every dog bristling with fear, then sprang straight for Buck. He had never seen a dog go mad, nor did he have any reason to fear madness; yet he knew that here was horror, and fled away from it in a panic. Straight away he raced, with Dolly, panting and frothing, one leap behind; nor could she gain on him, so great was his terror, nor could he leave her, so great was her madness; yet he knew that here was horror, and fled away from it in a panic. Straight away he raced, with Dolly, panting and frothing, one leap behind francois called to him a quarter of a mile away and he doubled back, still one leap ahead, gasping painfully for air and putting all his faith in that Francois
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