

# **THE CALL OF THE WILD von JACK LONDON**

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## **About the Author:**

Born in 1876 in the slums of San Francisco, Jack London was forced to leave school after 8th grade by poverty. He spent the rest of his teenage years as an oyster gatherer, fisherman and explorer of the great North. He also was a pirate, a seaman, a Yukon prospector, and a tramp. After his marriage and one year of education at the University of California, he devoted himself completely to writing. Steadily he wrote articles for magazines and also some novels. The subject matter depended on his conflicting of ideas: his growing knowledge of the plight of the masses burdened one side of his heart, his passion of individualism burdened the other one. Although London had an enormous sized fortune, he spent his last few years in sadness and full of despair. In 1916 at the age of forty he committed suicide.

Jack London had written fifty books in only fifteen years. Some of his best known titles include: „The Call of the Wild“ and „The Sea Wolf“. Both are considered very important in American Literature, and are read all over the world.

## **General approach:**

The Call of the Wild is a short novel by Jack London that was published in 1903. Together with other short novels about life in Alaska (such as „The Son of the Wolf „ (1900) and White Fang“ (1906)) These stories formed in certain respects the dialectic counterpart to earlier narration forms. „The Call of the Wild“ is based on London's experiences as a gold digger in the Klondike area. All of the stories that Jack London has written during his „North land cycle“ deal with life and survival in the Alaskan desert of ice. He illustrates the

rough life of the gold diggers and their struggle on society's margins. Just because London's novels involve a lot of Wolves and dogs doesn't it mean that he can be looked upon as a writer of a harmless animal story. As a matter of fact: "The Call of the Wild" is one of the best and most successful novels of him.

## **Story:**

The call of the Wild is a typical history in styles of Jack London. It tells the life of a dog during the big gold rush in Alaska, Judge Miller is the one to steal him from his California Ranch to bring him to Alaska in order to make a sled dog out of him. Involuntary this dog called Buck has to leave behind security and love and is suddenly know into a world of hatred and cruelty. He gets used to the extreme strains of Northern life and learns to endure his master's whipping. After having been sold to several cruel men, John Thornton frees him. Until then all Buck has known that he has powerlessly exposed to the whipping and stick blows of his owners. With Thornton Buck has found a new master on whom he can rely. After all the previous experiences (he had to learn to survive by using his strength and smartless) it doesn't come very easy to Buck to get back to the life of happiness he had once had. Buck wins a competition for Thornton and therefore Thornton and his friends have enough money to travel to Middle-Alaska. From then on Bucks wild instincts (" the call of the Wild ") and his loyalty towards Thornton, whose life he had saved, become to stand in conflict more and more. More and more often Buck goes on little trips to the wildness and sometimes he stays away from the shack for days. Like that he learns to look for food and survive. When Thornton became the victim of an Indian attack, Buck took revenge on him bloodlily. Then he carries out the last step back to Wilderness and becomes the leader of a wolf herd.