



Novels and Stories: The Call of the Wild / White Fang / The Sea-Wolf / Klondike and Other Stories

Jack London , Donald Pizer (Editor)

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This *Library of America* volume of Jack London's best-known work is filled with thrilling action, an intuitive feeling for animal life, and a sense of justice that often works itself out through violence. London enjoyed phenomenal popularity in his own time (which included the depressions of the 1890s and the beginnings of World War One), and he remains one of the most widely read of all American writers.

Novels and Stories: The Call of the Wild / White Fang / The Sea-Wolf / Klondike and Other Stories Details

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From Reader Review Novels and Stories: The Call of the Wild / White Fang / The Sea-Wolf / Klondike and Other Stories for online ebook

Cwn_annwn_13 says

Novels and Stories was the first of a two volume set that I scored for cheap on ebay a few years ago. The second, Novels and Social writings concentrates on his political/social novels and essays while this one is comprised of his Alaskan and sea bearing adventure stories.

This book weighs in at over 1000 pages and includes three GREAT novels in Call of the Wild, The Sea Wolf and White Fang as well as multitudes of his short stories.

I can't say enough about how much I love Londons writings and how much admiration I have for him as a man as well. I've read Call of the Wild about every two years or so since the first time I read it as a child and I get more out of it every time I re-read it. His adventure stories on one level are just great red blooded adventure stories that anyone who has any heart or spirit would enjoy and there is a deeper level to London as well. His stories are highly spiritual if you are able to look at them on another level. Although thats something that you have to "feel" from within I suppose.

M2 says

Jack London's epic "The Sea Wolf" is the story of Humphrey van Weyden, an effete young gent forced to become tough and self-reliant by being exposed to the deprivation of a life at sea. Kind of a socialist "Admirable Crichton," if you will. Its depiction of a life at sea at the turn of the last century are at times breathtaking.

Nicole says

Jack London is an extraordinary author. I love his ability to paint a picture with words and leave me completely satisfied at the end of his stories, even though I long for it to go on and on forever. That takes true skill, and London has it. I wish they would read more of London's short stories in middle school and high school. These stories can relate to anyone, regardless of age, and I think these are great to get kids interested in reading. They just grab you.

Franz says

My favorite book as a boy. The adventure, exotic setting, and the character of White Fang propelled me back to the book several times. This book introduced me to London's other books, and for many years London was my favorite author. This is the first time I've reread White Fang in decades. In some ways it holds up well, in others it reads as dated. London's social concerns seep through the book, and I wonder how much his views affected me. He was, paradoxically, a racist socialist Nietzschean. When I was a boy I would have given the book 5 stars. This was written in the day when adult fiction and juvenile fiction coincided more frequently, it

seems, than it does today.

Heather Cullen says

The Call of the Wild sat on my shelf as a kid for ages because I loved the picture of the wolf on the cover. I loved the movie White Fang because living next to a river with the forest behind you and having your sole companion be that of a beautiful half wolf seemed to me like true paradise. It is only until now that I've discovered I was born to read the words that Jack London has written.

(after reading in full) I can actually see and appreciate the steam that comes off my breath when it's cold enough outside. In other words you get close at least to hearing that call of the wild yourself.

James says

Many consider The Sea-Wolf by Jack London to be among the best sea stories ever written. I found it a moving and epic tale. Not only did it achieve great popular and literary success, but it also was effectively realized in several cinematic versions (most recently as a TV mini-series). The story ranks in the great tradition of one of London's literary influences, Herman Melville, while I saw similarities to another story of a life changed by sea voyage, captured by Rudyard Kipling in Captains Courageous.

Drawing upon his experiences seal hunting in the North Pacific, London created a story with a lot of realism. He put himself and his contradictory nature into the two opposing characters, the captain Wolf Larsen, a ruthless and rugged individualist, the superman, and Humphrey van Weyden, a weak, but highly cultivated and virtuous gentleman. It is in the clash of these two forces that London gives vent to his innermost struggles: idealism versus materialism, conscience versus instinct, desire versus soul. Humphrey joins Larsen's crew when a ferry he is on sinks. Later in the story he and the captain are joined by a young woman, Maude Brewster who, like Humphrey, is well-educated and literate. During one of their discussions Brewster and Larsen take opposite positions on the importance of desire versus soul. The argument is concluded when Humphrey says:

The man's soul is his desires. . . There lies the temptation. It is the wind that fans the desire until it leaps up to mastery. That's temptation. It may not fan sufficiently to make the desire overmastering, but in so far as fans at all, that far is it temptation. And, as you say, it may tempt for good as well as for evil. (pp. 674-75)

But the main philosophy demonstrated in the novel is a form of Social Darwinism. It is this that is the philosophy espoused by Wolf Larsen as justification for his tyrannical domination of others. Larsen's library is noted to contain works by Darwin, Malthus and Spencer - all seminal theorists of the concept. Darwin himself rejected the concepts of Social Darwinism even though his biological theories were generally used to support and inform the sociological concept that social inequality is the inexorable result of meritocratic division of available resources. Larsen summarizes the concepts of Social Darwinism in his extended analogy of a yeasty ferment of existence.

The novel's drama proceeds to a resolution of this elemental conflict through van Weyden's struggle toward fulfillment and mastery of life's forces and Larsen's ultimate deterioration. Ironically, the majority of the critics and the public misunderstood the work, thinking it a glorification of the superhuman and individualism, and London later wrote, ". . . I attacked Nietzsche and his super-man idea ... no one discovered that it was an attack upon the super-man philosophy. " In the death of Wolf Larsen and the

survival of Van Weyden and Maude Brewster we see the confirmation of London's claim.

Tiffany says

This is an excellent collection of Jack London. His writing is unfussy, straightforward, and unsentimental. Sometimes I wished he would be more sentimental and spare me some details about animal and human behavior, but alas, then it wouldn't be him. Being a California native, some stories have special significance because I've been there and know just what he's referring to.

R.a. says

I'm becoming more and more a fan of the LOA series.

Although the prices seem a little high, what one gets is GREAT.

Quite the naturalist, London never ceases to excite by juxtaposing ideas, then bringing them to their (almost always) tragic conclusion.

I'll never forget "The Apostate," or some of the other short stories.

The Iron Heel is particularly salient and serves as a reminder to us all, these days.

Christan says

I remember reading The Sea-Wolf while eating an entire box of ho ho's. It was when the ho ho's were still wrapped in foil. I ended up with a stomach ache and an appreciation of London's character, Wolf Larson. Jack London is the reason I am a socialist. Or maybe it is because of George W. Bush...who knows?

Jeff says

The sheer brutality of The Call of the Wild and White Fang shock me now, reading them again for the first time since I was a child. London is a masterful writer, and perhaps I haven't had the urge to revisit him because his subjects-- dogs, boxers, and generally "manly men" kind of subjects and settings have held little appeal. My mistake, really. These subjects are not so much reinforced, as critiqued with an incisive intelligence. The Sea-Wolf, in particular is a really impressive work of philosophical critique mining many of the same veins as Melville did before him. The short stories in this volume are a bit uneven, but there are some gems in there as well. Really looking forward to the second London volume in the LOA series when I get to it, it seems to be focused more on the sort of subjects that appeal to me, but this was well worth the time spent to read it.

Nikki says

At this point I have only read The Call of the Wild, one of the Guardian's 1000 Novels, in the Travel and War category. It was a hard book to read for much of the time, because of the mistreatment to which Buck, the dog protagonist, was subjected. However, just as I suspected, there was a more or less happy ending to Buck's adventures. Watching my own dog sleeping as I was reading, and seeing his paws twitching, I imagined that he too was remembering ancestral dogs' experiences by a Neanderthal campfire.

Humphrey says

This review only pertains to the Klondike Stories; other pieces in this collection are reviewed elsewhere. Yes, To Build A Fire is the best story here. But there are several that approach its level in gripping intensity or laying bare the primal spirits of life. Whoever you consider the great writers of London's time, London belongs with them: his psychologies are worthy of James, his humanness is worthy of Twain, and his pacing is worthy of Howells.

Kevin says

The Call of the Wild is both disturbing and beautiful. Its not often that I cry while reading something, but both the horrific and the beautiful brought tears to my eyes. Its well worth reading if you haven't already. It only took me a few hours one afternoon to read it, but it leaves a big impact. I still don't understand why it was banned and even burned at the time of its release.

Mmars says

When I was in grade school I cried so hard over some animal story in which the animal died in the end that I swore off animal stories. Now, 50 years later, I can only remember reading some James Herriot, Life of Pi, and one where a man could talk with his dogs. There's got to be more! Well, I picked this up at the library bookstore and just finished "Call of the Wild." (***) Honestly, during the first third of the book in which Buck is beaten, fights, fights again and again, and suffers countless ego issues, I wasn't sure if I could finish it. But it was certainly worth the perserverence.

SPOILER ALERT!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

He finally comes into the hands of a more humane human and it was refreshing to have the human die.

Jacob says

I debated a long time about whether this was a four star or five star book. The theme of Klondike stories got old after a while and I think would have been better arranged if interspersed with the other short stories. And London is not a master of the English tongue, although he never writes awkwardly. Despite the amazing variety of his work and innate ability to draw one into a story, the above, coupled with the daunting length of

this tome, nudged me towards 4 stars (4.5 really). His classics are all here, "White Fang", "Call of the Wild" and "Sea Wolf". In addition he wrote some excellent tales ranging from boxing, to South Sea adventures and Socialist commentaries. There is even a sci-fi story, a-la Edgar Rice Burroughs, in the collection. I will admit I would have had a hard time getting through all 900+ pages this year if not for a recent trip onboard a tramp freighter to Alaska (fitting, huh?), but it is well worth picking up as a second or third book to read in addition to your regulars.
