

中文导读英文版

中短篇小说精选



The Selected Short Stories of Jack London

杰克·伦敦短篇小说精选

[美] 杰克·伦敦 著
王勋 纪飞 等 编译

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内 容 简 介

本书精选了美国著名作家杰克·伦敦的16篇短篇小说，其中包括《热爱生命》、《意外》、《生命法则》、《黄金谷》和《投宿》等公认的短篇小说经典名篇。这些作品被翻译成多种文字，影响了一代又一代世界各地的人们，其中许多作品都被改编成戏剧、电影、电视剧和卡通片等等。

无论作为语言学习的课本，还是作为通俗的文学读本，这些经典名篇对当代中国的读者都将产生积极的影响。为了使读者能够了解英文故事概况，进而提高阅读速度和阅读水平，在每篇的开始部分增加了中文导读。

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图书在版编目(CIP)数据

杰克·伦敦短篇小说精选=The Selected Short Stories of Jack London: 中文导读英文版/ (美) 杰克·伦敦(London, J.) 著; 王勋等编译. —北京: 清华大学出版社, 2010.7
ISBN 978-7-302-22590-4

I. ①杰… II. ①杰… ②王… III. ①英语—语言读物 ②短篇小说—作品集—美国—近代 IV. ①H319.4: I

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2010) 第 078443 号

责任编辑: 李 晔

责任校对: 梁 毅

插图绘制: 王异宝

责任印制: 李红英

出版发行: 清华大学出版社

地 址: 北京清华大学学研大厦 A 座

<http://www.tup.com.cn>

邮 编: 100084

社 总 机: 010-62770175

邮 购: 010-62786544

投稿与读者服务: 010-62795954, jsjic@tup.tsinghua.edu.cn

质 量 反 馈: 010-62772015, zhiliang@tup.tsinghua.edu.cn

印 刷 者: 清华大学印刷厂

装 订 者: 三河市金元印装有限公司

经 销: 全国新华书店

开 本: 170×260 印 张: 17.75 字 数: 299 千字

版 次: 2010 年 7 月第 1 版 印 次: 2010 年 7 月第 1 次印刷

印 数: 1~5000

定 价: 29.00 元

产品编号: 037736-01



杰克·伦敦 (Jack London, 1875~1916), 原名约翰·格利菲斯·伦敦 (John Griffith London), 美国著名作家, 在现代美国文学和世界文学里享有崇高的地位。

杰克·伦敦生于旧金山, 是个私生子。后来, 母亲改嫁给境况不佳的约翰·伦敦。他的童年是在穷苦中度过的, 当过牧童、报童、童工、工人、水手。他还参加过 1893 年大恐慌中失业大军组成的抗议队伍, 以流浪罪被捕入狱, 被罚做苦工几个月。出狱后, 他一边拼命干活, 一边刻苦学习, 广泛涉猎达尔文、斯宾塞、尼采和马克思等人的著作。1896 年, 他考进加利福尼亚大学, 一年后辍学。后来受到阿拉斯加淘金热的影响, 杰克·伦敦加入了淘金者的行列, 却因病空手而归。在经历各种失败和挫折之后, 杰克·伦敦萌发了写作的愿望。

1899 年, 他发表了第一篇小说《给猎人》; 1900 年, 在他出版短篇小说集《狼之子》后, 立即享誉文坛, 并获得了丰厚的收入。从此, 杰克·伦敦埋头读书写作, 成为了职业作家。他是个多产的作家, 一生共写了 19 部长篇小说、150 多篇短篇小说以及 3 部剧本等。除《狼之子》之外, 杰克·伦敦的著名作品还有: 描写反抗压迫、回归自由与自然的《野性的呼唤》(1903), 描写伦敦贫民生活的特写集《深渊中的人们》(1903), 描写兽性般残忍和利己主义的长篇小说《海狼》(1904), 野性的幼狼如何从荒野中进入文明世界的《白牙》(1906), 政治幻想小说《铁蹄》(1908), 自传体长篇小说《马丁·伊登》(1909) 等。1916 年杰克·伦敦在精神极度苦闷、空虚中自杀身亡。

本书精选了杰克·伦敦的 16 篇短篇小说, 采用中文导读英文版的形式出版。在中文导读中, 我们尽力使其贴近原作的精髓, 也尽可能保留原作的故事主线。我们希望能够编出为当代中国读者所喜爱的经典读本。读者在阅读英文故事之前, 可以先阅读中文导读内容, 这样有利于了解故事背

前言



景，从而加快阅读速度。我们相信，该经典著作的引进对加强当代中国读者，特别是青少年读者的人文修养是非常有帮助的。

本书主要内容由王勋、纪飞编译。参加本书故事素材搜集整理及编译工作的还有郑佳、刘乃亚、赵雪、熊金玉、李丽秀、熊红华、王婷婷、孟宪行、胡国平、李晓红、贡东兴、陈楠、邵舒丽、冯洁、王业伟、徐鑫、王晓旭、周丽萍、熊建国、徐平国、肖洁、王小红等。限于我们的科学、人文素养和英语水平，书中难免有不当之处，衷心希望读者朋友批评指正。



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热爱生命

Love of Life

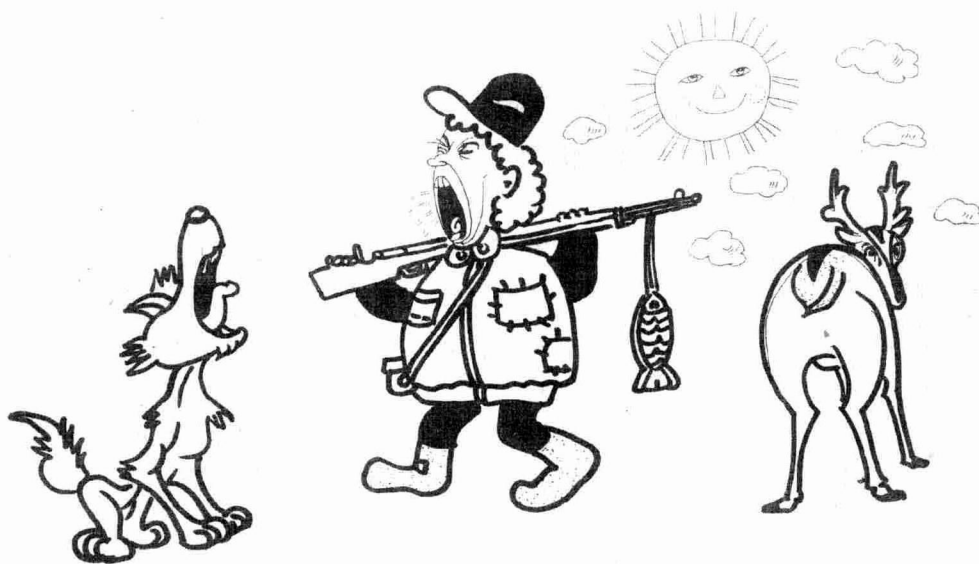


两个人沿着没有人迹的河岸行进，他们的目标是战胜饥饿，找到某个藏着食物的河边地窖，然后再继续前进到目的地。但是，现在的处境很不好，他们都背着沉重的东西，口袋里没有食物，枪里没有子弹，还受了伤。他们一前一后沉默地前进着，走进了一条冰冷的溪流。这时，走在后面的人扭伤了脚，他停下来叫了声“比尔”，但是走在前面的比尔没有回头，伤脚的人眼睁睁地看着那位同伴越走越远，消失在溪对岸山坡的那一边。

太阳就要落山了，他在水中站了一会儿，眺望了一下远方，又环视了一眼周围，冷得直发抖。掉进水里的枪发出的响声将他惊醒，他捡起枪，摸索着上了岸，接着便急忙登上山坡，但没有看见同伴的影子。他蹒跚地走向坡下潮湿的低谷。他仍抱着希望，相信比尔会在前方的地窖里等他，然后和他一起顺河而南下，穿过大熊湖，最后到达温暖富足的哈德逊湾公司码头。

他靠着太阳和自己的头脑，没有迷路；又靠着头脑中的希望，没有倒下，不断地从地上采些无味的浆果充饥。第二天，他虚弱地摔倒在地。他先生火烧水，接着数了好几遍火柴，这才把六十七根火柴分三个地方藏好；然后检查了自己的行李，再检查自己的身体，他的受伤的脚又疼又肿。

第三天一早，他发现自己正前方站着一只驯鹿，便拿着没有子弹的枪，吓跑了它。带着更疼痛的脚和更饥饿的胃，他查看了地形，再次检查了自己的行李，又数了火柴，犹豫着要不要把装着金子的皮袋子丢下，但最终还是带着金子出发了。他想用精神上的想象满足空虚的胃，但无济于事。



浆果的怪味麻木了他的舌头，他来到一个满是松鸡的山谷，但一个也没能抓住。他又来到一个山谷，那里满是驯鹿。他想吃狐狸叼着的松鸡，也没能办到。傍晚时他发现一条河里满是灯芯草，便毫不犹豫地大嚼起来。他在水塘里寻找青蛙或蚯蚓，无功而返。他又想捕捉小鱼，但差不多把水塘舀干，连鱼的影子也没瞧见。他绝望地号啕大哭。但很快，他便开始生火烧水、检查行李，跟前一晚不一样的是，身体的痛苦和天气的寒冷没有让他睡成觉。第四天一早就下起了大雪，他继续赶路。到处都是冰冷的水，这天夜里他醒了好几次。他把毯子撕成细条包在脚上，再次对着金子犹豫，终于又带着它们继续上路了。

这时，太阳出来了，他知道前两天他走偏了方向，现在要纠正回去。他在水塘里逮住两条小鱼，生吞了下去；傍晚他又找到三条小鱼，这让他感觉好了一点。这个陌生的地方到处都是驯鹿，也到处是狼。又一个早晨来临时，他丢下了一半的金子，拿着枪上了路。他绊倒在一个松鸡窝面前，在嚼完了里面的小松鸡后，他又跟在翅膀受伤的母松鸡后面追了很久，最终还是让它跑走了。这些活动耗完了他所剩无几的体力，他疲惫地倒地而睡。接下来又是一个雾天，他扔掉了剩下的金子。他不断地怀疑枪里还有子弹，带着这种幻想走了很久，突然发现眼前站着一头大棕熊。他清醒过来，摆出最强壮的姿势，握着猎刀一动不动地站在那里，吓跑了棕熊。

他一下子倒在地上，害怕自己在没有饿死之前被其他东西残暴杀死。因为，不断有狼从这里经过。傍晚，他发现了狼群吃剩的骨头，没等自己联想完自己也可能很快变成白骨，他便啃起了那些带有血迹的骨头，还把砸碎的骨头粉末吞进肚里；然后，便带着剩下的骨头上路了。接下来的几天，他都靠着这些骨头和心中的求生信念，维系着如同游丝的生命。

一天，他终于清醒过来，发现自己在一条大河边，远方的入海口还停泊着轮船。他看到自己的旁边有一条病狼，才确认这不是幻觉，知道自己走错了路，他已经快来到北冰洋了，停着的是一搜捕鲸船。他跌跌撞撞地朝着船的方向出发。每走一会儿都要停下一阵，与此同时，那头病狼也歪歪斜斜地跟着他。第二天下午时，他发现了比尔的残骸，旁边是一只跟他的一样的装金子的鹿皮袋。他想吃小鱼，又怕自己太虚弱而掉进水里，只能作罢。他与船的距离越来越近，身体也越来越弱。他不停地向前爬，后面尾随着病狼，舔食着他的血迹。他知道狼正伺机将他咬死，他也要伺机咬死狼，这两个垂死的生命一前一后，忍耐了很久。终于，狼潜伏上来，

他和狼扭打在一起，他咬住狼的脖子。半小时后，他喝到了暖和的狼血，随后，翻身睡着了。

捕鲸船上的人发现了他，救了他。开始的时候，船上的人发现他不断地搜集陈面包，但这只是心理上害怕饥饿的行为表现。没过多久，他便恢复正常了。

"This out of all will remain—

They have lived and have tossed:

So much of the game will be gain,

Though the gold of the dice has been lost."

They limped painfully down the bank, and once the foremost of the two men staggered among the rough-strewn rocks. They were tired and weak, and their faces had the drawn expression of patience which comes of hardship long endured. They were heavily burdened with blanket packs which were strapped to their shoulders. Head-straps, passing across the forehead, helped support these packs. Each man carried a rifle. They walked in a stooped posture, the shoulders well forward, the head still farther forward, the eyes bent upon the ground.

"I wish we had just about two of them cartridges that's layin' in that cache of ourn," said the second man.

His voice was utterly and drearily expressionless. He spoke without enthusiasm; and the first man, limping into the milky stream that foamed over the rocks, vouchsafed no reply.

The other man followed at his heels. They did not remove their foot-gear, though the water was icy cold—so cold that their ankles ached and their feet went numb. In places the water dashed against their knees, and both men staggered for footing.

The man who followed slipped on a smooth boulder, nearly fell, but recovered himself with a violent effort, at the same time uttering a sharp exclamation of pain. He seemed faint and dizzy and put out his free hand while he reeled, as though seeking support against the air. When he had steadied himself he stepped forward, but reeled again and nearly fell. Then he stood still

and looked at the other man, who had never turned his head.

The man stood still for fully a minute, as though debating with himself. Then he called out:

“I say, Bill, I’ve sprained my ankle.”

Bill staggered on through the milky water. He did not look around. The man watched him go, and though his face was expressionless as ever, his eyes were like the eyes of a wounded deer.

The other man limped up the farther bank and continued straight on without looking back. The man in the stream watched him. His lips trembled a little, so that the rough thatch of brown hair which covered them was visibly agitated. His tongue even strayed out to moisten them.

“Bill!” he cried out. It was the pleading cry of a strong man in distress, but Bill’s head did not turn. The man watched him go, limping grotesquely and lurching forward with stammering gait up the slow slope toward the soft sky-line of the low-lying hill. He watched him go till he passed over the crest and disappeared. Then he turned his gaze and slowly took in the circle of the world that remained to him now that Bill was gone.

Near the horizon the sun was smouldering dimly, almost obscured by formless mists and vapors, which gave an impression of mass and density without outline or tangibility. The man pulled out his watch, the while resting his weight on one leg. It was four o’clock, and as the season was near the last of July or first of August,—he did not know the precise date within a week or two,—he knew that the sun roughly marked the northwest. He looked to the south and knew that somewhere beyond those bleak hills lay the Great Bear Lake; also, he knew that in that direction the Arctic Circle cut its forbidding way across the Canadian Barrens. This stream in which he stood was a feeder to the Coppermine River, which in turn flowed north and emptied into Coronation Gulf and the Arctic Ocean. He had never been there, but he had seen it, once, on a Hudson Bay Company chart.

Again his gaze completed the circle of the world about him. It was not a heartening spectacle. Everywhere was soft sky-line. The hills were all low-lying. There were no trees, no shrubs, no grasses—naught but a tremendous and terrible desolation that sent fear swiftly dawning into his eyes.

“Bill!” he whispered, once and twice; “Bill!”

He cowered in the midst of the milky water, as though the vastness were pressing in upon him with overwhelming force, brutally crushing him with its complacent awfulness. He began to shake as with an ague-fit, till the gun fell from his hand with a splash. This served to rouse him. He fought with his fear and pulled himself together, groping in the water and recovering the weapon. He hitched his pack farther over on his left shoulder, so as to take a portion of its weight from off the injured ankle. Then he proceeded, slowly and carefully, wincing with pain, to the bank.

He did not stop. With a desperation that was madness, unmindful of the pain, he hurried up the slope to the crest of the hill over which his comrade had disappeared—more grotesque and comical by far than that limping, jerking comrade. But at the crest he saw a shallow valley, empty of life. He fought with his fear again, overcame it, hitched the pack still farther over on his left shoulder, and lurched on down the slope.

The bottom of the valley was soggy with water, which the thick moss held, spongelike, close to the surface. This water squirted out from under his feet at every step, and each time he lifted a foot the action culminated in a sucking sound as the wet moss reluctantly released its grip. He picked his way from muskeg to muskeg, and followed the other man's footsteps along and across the rocky ledges which thrust like islets through the sea of moss.

Though alone, he was not lost. Farther on he knew he would come to where dead spruce and fir, very small and weazened, bordered the shore of a little lake, the titchin-nichilie, in the tongue of the country, the “land of little sticks.” And into that lake flowed a small stream, the water of which was not milky. There was rush-grass on that stream—this he remembered well—but no timber, and he would follow it till its first trickle ceased at a divide. He would cross this divide to the first trickle of another stream, flowing to the west, which he would follow until it emptied into the river Dease, and here he would find a cache under an upturned canoe and piled over with many rocks. And in this cache would be ammunition for his empty gun, fish-hooks and lines, a small net—all the utilities for the killing and snaring of food. Also, he would find flour,—not much,—a piece of bacon, and some beans.



Bill would be waiting for him there, and they would paddle away south down the Dease to the Great Bear Lake. And south across the lake they would go, ever south, till they gained the Mackenzie. And south, still south, they would go, while the winter raced vainly after them, and the ice formed in the eddies, and the days grew chill and crisp, south to some warm Hudson Bay Company post, where timber grew tall and generous and there was grub without end.

These were the thoughts of the man as he strove onward. But hard as he strove with his body, he strove equally hard with his mind, trying to think that Bill had not deserted him, that Bill would surely wait for him at the cache. He was compelled to think this thought, or else there would not be any use to strive, and he would have lain down and died. And as the dim ball of the sun sank slowly into the northwest he covered every inch—and many times—of his and Bill's flight south before the downcoming winter. And he conned the grub of the cache and the grub of the Hudson Bay Company post over and over again. He had not eaten for two days; for a far longer time he had not had all he wanted to eat. Often he stooped and picked pale muskeg berries, put them into his mouth, and chewed and swallowed them. A muskeg berry is a bit of seed enclosed in a bit of water. In the mouth the water melts away and the seed chews sharp and bitter. The man knew there was no nourishment in the berries, but he chewed them patiently with a hope greater than knowledge and defying experience.

At nine o'clock he stubbed his toe on a rocky ledge, and from sheer weariness and weakness staggered and fell. He lay for some time, without movement, on his side. Then he slipped out of the pack-straps and clumsily dragged himself into a sitting posture. It was not yet dark, and in the lingering twilight he groped about among the rocks for shreds of dry moss. When he had gathered a heap he built a fire,—a smouldering, smudgy fire,—and put a tin pot of water on to boil.

He unwrapped his pack and the first thing he did was to count his matches. There were sixty-seven. He counted them three times to make sure. He divided them into several portions, wrapping them in oil paper, disposing of one bunch in his empty tobacco pouch, of another bunch in the inside band of his battered

hat, of a third bunch under his shirt on the chest. This accomplished, a panic came upon him, and he unwrapped them all and counted them again. There were still sixty-seven.

He dried his wet foot-gear by the fire. The moccasins were in soggy shreds. The blanket socks were worn through in places, and his feet were raw and bleeding. His ankle was throbbing, and he gave it an examination. It had swollen to the size of his knee. He tore a long strip from one of his two blankets and bound the ankle tightly. He tore other strips and bound them about his feet to serve for both moccasins and socks. Then he drank the pot of water, steaming hot, wound his watch, and crawled between his blankets.

He slept like a dead man. The brief darkness around midnight came and went. The sun arose in the northeast—at least the day dawned in that quarter, for the sun was hidden by gray clouds.

At six o'clock he awoke, quietly lying on his back. He gazed straight up into the gray sky and knew that he was hungry. As he rolled over on his elbow he was startled by a loud snort, and saw a bull caribou regarding him with alert curiosity. The animal was not more than fifty feet away, and instantly into the man's mind leaped the vision and the savor of a caribou steak sizzling and frying over a fire. Mechanically he reached for the empty gun, drew a bead, and pulled the trigger. The bull snorted and leaped away, his hoofs rattling and clattering as he fled across the ledges.

The man cursed and flung the empty gun from him. He groaned aloud as he started to drag himself to his feet. It was a slow and arduous task. His joints were like rusty hinges. They worked harshly in their sockets, with much friction, and each bending or unbending was accomplished only through a sheer exertion of will. When he finally gained his feet, another minute or so was consumed in straightening up, so that he could stand erect as a man should stand.

He crawled up a small knoll and surveyed the prospect. There were no trees, no bushes, nothing but a gray sea of moss scarcely diversified by gray rocks, gray lakelets, and gray streamlets. The sky was gray. There was no sun nor hint of sun. He had no idea of north, and he had forgotten the way he had come to this spot the night before. But he was not lost. He knew that. Soon he

would come to the land of the little sticks. He felt that it lay off to the left somewhere, not far—possibly just over the next low hill.

He went back to put his pack into shape for travelling. He assured himself of the existence of his three separate parcels of matches, though he did not stop to count them. But he did linger, debating, over a squat moose-hide sack. It was not large. He could hide it under his two hands. He knew that it weighed fifteen pounds,—as much as all the rest of the pack,—and it worried him. He finally set it to one side and proceeded to roll the pack. He paused to gaze at the squat moose-hide sack. He picked it up hastily with a defiant glance about him, as though the desolation were trying to rob him of it; and when he rose to his feet to stagger on into the day, it was included in the pack on his back.

He bore away to the left, stopping now and again to eat muskeg berries. His ankle had stiffened, his limp was more pronounced, but the pain of it was as nothing compared with the pain of his stomach. The hunger pangs were sharp. They gnawed and gnawed until he could not keep his mind steady on the course he must pursue to gain the land of little sticks. The muskeg berries did not allay this gnawing, while they made his tongue and the roof of his mouth sore with their irritating bite.

He came upon a valley where rock ptarmigan rose on whirring wings from the ledges and muskegs. Ker—ker—ker was the cry they made. He threw stones at them, but could not hit them. He placed his pack on the ground and stalked them as a cat stalks a sparrow. The sharp rocks cut through his pants' legs till his knees left a trail of blood; but the hurt was lost in the hurt of his hunger. He squirmed over the wet moss, saturating his clothes and chilling his body; but he was not aware of it, so great was his fever for food. And always the ptarmigan rose, whirring, before him, till their ker—ker—ker became a mock to him, and he cursed them and cried aloud at them with their own cry.

Once he crawled upon one that must have been asleep. He did not see it till it shot up in his face from its rocky nook. He made a clutch as startled as was the rise of the ptarmigan, and there remained in his hand three tail-feathers. As he watched its flight he hated it, as though it had done him some terrible wrong. Then he returned and shouldered his pack.

As the day wore along he came into valleys or swales where game was

more plentiful. A band of caribou passed by, twenty and odd animals, tantalizingly within rifle range. He felt a wild desire to run after them, a certitude that he could run them down. A black fox came toward him, carrying a ptarmigan in his mouth. The man shouted. It was a fearful cry, but the fox, leaping away in fright, did not drop the ptarmigan.

Late in the afternoon he followed a stream, milky with lime, which ran through sparse patches of rush-grass. Grasping these rushes firmly near the root, he pulled up what resembled a young onion-sprout no larger than a shingle-nail. It was tender, and his teeth sank into it with a crunch that promised deliciously of food. But its fibers were tough. It was composed of stringy filaments saturated with water, like the berries, and devoid of nourishment. He threw off his pack and went into the rush-grass on hands and knees, crunching and munching, like some bovine creature.

He was very weary and often wished to rest—to lie down and sleep; but he was continually driven on—not so much by his desire to gain the land of little sticks as by his hunger. He searched little ponds for frogs and dug up the earth with his nails for worms, though he knew in spite that neither frogs nor worms existed so far north.

He looked into every pool of water vainly, until, as the long twilight came on, he discovered a solitary fish, the size of a minnow, in such a pool. He plunged his arm in up to the shoulder, but it eluded him. He reached for it with both hands and stirred up the milky mud at the bottom. In his excitement he fell in, wetting himself to the waist. Then the water was too muddy to admit of his seeing the fish, and he was compelled to wait until the sediment had settled.

The pursuit was renewed, till the water was again muddied. But he could not wait. He unstrapped the tin bucket and began to bale the pool. He baled wildly at first, splashing himself and flinging the water so short a distance that it ran back into the pool. He worked more carefully, striving to be cool, though his heart was pounding against his chest and his hands were trembling. At the end of half an hour the pool was nearly dry. Not a cupful of water remained. And there was no fish. He found a hidden crevice among the stones through which it had escaped to the adjoining and larger pool—a pool which he could not empty in a night and a day. Had he known of the crevice, he could have

closed it with a rock at the beginning and the fish would have been his.

Thus he thought, and crumpled up and sank down upon the wet earth. At first he cried softly to himself, then he cried loudly to the pitiless desolation that ringed him around; and for a long time after he was shaken by great dry sobs.

He built a fire and warmed himself by drinking quarts of hot water, and made camp on a rocky ledge in the same fashion he had the night before. The last thing he did was to see that his matches were dry and to wind his watch. The blankets were wet and clammy. His ankle pulsed with pain. But he knew only that he was hungry, and through his restless sleep he dreamed of feasts and banquets and of food served and spread in all imaginable ways.

He awoke chilled and sick. There was no sun. The gray of earth and sky had become deeper, more profound. A raw wind was blowing, and the first flurries of snow were whitening the hilltops. The air about him thickened and grew white while he made a fire and boiled more water. It was wet snow, half rain, and the flakes were large and soggy. At first they melted as soon as they came in contact with the earth, but ever more fell, covering the ground, putting out the fire, spoiling his supply of moss-fuel.

This was a signal for him to strap on his pack and stumble onward, he knew not where. He was not concerned with the land of little sticks, nor with Bill and the cache under the upturned canoe by the river Dease. He was mastered by the verb "to eat." He was hunger-mad. He took no heed of the course he pursued, so long as that course led him through the swale bottoms. He felt his way through the wet snow to the watery muskeg berries, and went by feel as he pulled up the rush-grass by the roots. But it was tasteless stuff and did not satisfy. He found a weed that tasted sour and he ate all he could find of it, which was not much, for it was a creeping growth, easily hidden under the several inches of snow.

He had no fire that night, nor hot water, and crawled under his blanket to sleep the broken hunger-sleep. The snow turned into a cold rain. He awakened many times to feel it falling on his upturned face. Day came—a gray day and no sun. It had ceased raining. The keenness of his hunger had departed. Sensibility, as far as concerned the yearning for food, had been exhausted.