The Call of the Wild

【美】杰克·伦敦/Jack London◎著

张勇◎译

杨晓华导读

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野性的呼唤

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回荡在雪原上的生命之歌

《野性的呼唤》是美国著名作家杰克·伦敦的成名作。故事以19世纪的美国阿拉斯加淘金热为背景,讲述了在北方险恶的环境下,一条名叫巴克的狗为了生存,如何从一条驯化的南方狗,退化到似狗非狗、似狼非狼的野蛮状态。

巴克是一条硕大无比的杂交狗, 生活在一个南方文 明的家庭,驯服、温良、勇敢,学会了信任它所认识的人。 但当它被人从南方主人家偷出来, 卖到阿拉斯加这个 偏远又寒冷的地方后, 巴克开始踏上残酷的淘金的道 路,认识到了大棒和犬牙的法则,成为一条拉雪橇的 苦役犬。那里也没有公平的游戏规则,任何时候都绝 不能放弃和倒下,否则甚至会被同类分食。人类用毒 打的方式制服狗, 当它们因饥饿、疲劳、伤病不能为 主人拉雪橇时,主人就无情地将它们杀死。经过残酷的、 你死我活的斗争, 巴克战胜了它最强大的对手斯皮茨, 在一次恶斗后将它打败并杀死,确立了领头狗的地位。 严酷的生活使得巴克学会了狡猾与欺诈, 体内的原始 野性渐渐复燃了,狼的本性被一点点呼唤出来,它经 常听到远方狼的嗥叫。巴克在极地中遇到过五个主人, 和最后一位主人桑顿结下了深厚情谊,桑顿多次将巴

克从极端繁重的苦役中解救出来,巴克也多次营救了身处险境的主人。巴克学会了捕捉种种猎物,掌握所有野生动物的生存技能。然而不幸的是桑顿在一次淘金时被印第安人杀害,巴克与人的最后一根纽带被打断了,它的野性彻底爆发了,发出了恶狠狠的可怕的嗥叫,咬死了杀害主人的凶手。它失去了对人类的信任。一路上多次聆听到的、代表着自由的野性的呼唤,最终让巴克走进狼群,选择与狼共存的原始野性的生活,回归自然。故事结尾呼应了小说的引诗:游牧时代的旧梦倏然跃动,/挣扎于习俗的锁链中;/严冬的沉睡里,/野性再度苏醒。

小说的作者杰克·伦敦是美国著名的具有民族色彩的现实主义作家。他的一生作品颇丰,共创作了约50部作品,其中最为著名的有《野性的呼唤》《海狼》《白牙》《马丁·伊登》以及一系列优秀短篇小说《热爱生命》《老头子同盟》《北方的奥德赛》《马普希的房子》《沉寂的雪原》等。这些充满生命力的故事,令他在美国现代文学和世界文学史上都享有崇高的地位。

杰克·伦敦 1876年1月12日出生于旧金山,在一个既无固定职业又无固定居所的家庭中长大。童年生活凄苦,但他一直热爱读书,阅读了大量游记、传奇和冒险小说,从读书中得到慰藉。青年时期开始海上的漂泊生活,前往日本、俄国海域捕猎海豹,之后又跋涉雪原,去阿拉斯加淘金,历尽千辛万苦却淘金失败,并患上了败血症。然而颠沛流离的经历给予他

II

丰富的生活经验和创作素材,阅读也给予他深厚的文学素养和思想的启迪。他的思想融合了尼采的超人哲学、斯宾塞的社会达尔文主义和马克思的科学社会主义。他认为人类社会是残酷的生存竞争的战场。他的座右铭是:凡是别人能做到的事,我一定要做到,并且还要做得更好!《野性的呼唤》使他一举成名,但他挥金如土,以致入不敷出,所以后期的作品往往比较粗糙。1916年11月22日,他因注射了过量的吗啡,粉救无效离开了人世。

杰克·伦敦崛起于社会底层,热爱生活,自强不息,冒险与拓荒中的重重困难与艰险都成了他的欢乐,他的一生都在与命运抗争、搏斗。其作品体现了强烈的独特个性,气势逼人,充满阳刚之气。质朴的语言,跌宕的情节,人与自然的生死搏斗,错综复杂的社会关系,都深深吸引着读者,震撼着读者的心灵。勇敢、坚毅和爱在他的作品中得到生动的刻画。

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约翰·史密斯,美国田纳西州人,学者,曾任亚利桑纳州立大学青少年文学研究中心资深顾问,2004年应邀到中国台湾从事英文教学工作。他认为:"中国学生若想提高英文水平,必须从阅读英文经典开始。"因此,他和几位美国专家一起遴选了在英美校园最受欢迎的青少读物30余种,并根据现代流行英语加以改写,成为这套"美国编译的青少经典"。该丛书首先在台湾出版,大受欢迎。中国致公出版社特地引进,并根据大陆读者习惯重新审订,并邀请相关专家撰写导读。

目 录

1. Into the Primitive	
投身荒野	001
2. The Law of Club and Fang	
棍子和牙齿的法则	032
3. The Dominant Primordial Beast	
有统治欲的原始野兽	058
4. Who Has Won to Mastership	
统治权的取得者	099
5. The Toil of Trace and Trail	
辔轭和雪道的苦役	125
6. For the Love of a Man	
为了一个人的宠爱	169
7. The Sounding of the Call	
呼唤的声音	209

1. Into the Primitive

Old longings nomadic leap, Chafing at custom's chain; Again from its brumal sleep Wakens the ferine strain.

Buck did not read the newspapers, or he would have known that trouble was brewing, not alone for himself, but for every tidewater dog, strong of muscle and with warm, long hair, from Puget Sound to San Diego. Because men, groping in the Arctic darkness, had found a yellow metal, and because steamship and transportation companies were booming the find,

☆投身荒野

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游牧时代的旧梦倏然跃动, 挣扎于习俗的锁链中; 严冬的沉睡里, 野性再度苏醒。

巴克没读报纸,因此他不知道一场骚乱正在酝酿之中,那骚乱不止关系到他自己,也关系到从普格海峡到圣地亚哥的每一条强壮、长毛的海水狗。由于在北极圈探险的人发现了一种黄色金属,而航运公司又

thousands of men were rushing into the Northland. These men wanted dogs, and the dogs they wanted were heavy dogs, with strong muscles by which to toil, and furry coats to protect them from the frost.

Buck lived at a big house in the sun-kissed Santa Clara Valley. Judge Miller's place, it was called. It stood back from the road, half hidden among the trees, through which glimpses could be caught of the wide cool veranda that ran around its four sides. The house was approached by graveled driveways which wound about through wide-spreading lawns and under the interlacing boughs of tall poplars. At the rear things were on even a more spacious scale than at the front. There were great stables, where a dozen

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将这件事说得天花乱坠, 所以成千上万的人都开始涌向北方。这些人都需要狗, 而且是大狗, 这些狗要有强壮的筋骨以便承重, 也要有厚厚的毛皮以便御寒。

巴克住在阳光普照的圣克拉拉谷的一座大房子里。据说那曾是米勒法官的宅邸。它位于大马路的后面,被树阴遮住一半,但从树缝间还可以看到四周有着宽大、阴凉的游廊。几条石子铺成的车道蜿蜒穿过几块宽阔的草地,一直通到这座大房子,路两旁,高大的白杨枝干交错。大房子后面比前面更为宽阔:那儿有几个大马厩,十几个马夫和小孩子在摆龙门阵;几排佣人住的小屋,上面缠满了葡萄藤;一排整齐的

野性的呼唤 0

grooms and boys held forth, rows of vine-clad servants' cottages, an endless and orderly array of out-houses, long grape arbors, green pasture, orchards, and berry patches. Then there was the pumping plant for the artesian well, and the big cement tank where Judge Miller's boys took their morning plunge and kept cool in the hot afternoon.

And over this great demesne Buck ruled. Here he was born, and here he had lived the four years of his life. It was true, there were other dogs. There could



平房,一望无际;还有长长的葡萄架、青青的牧场、 果树园和浆果地。接着,你还能看见一台抽水机架在 自流井上,旁边还有一个水泥浴池,米勒法官的孩子 们经常在早上来这里洗浴,或者在大热天的下午过来 乘凉。

巴克统治了这个庄院。他出生在这里,并且已经 在这里生活四年了。没错,这里也有别的狗,可是在 not but be other dogs on so vast a place, but they did not count. They came and went, resided in the populous kennels, or lived obscurely in the recesses of the house after the fashion of Toots, the Japanese pug, or Ysabel, the Mexican hairless—strange creatures that rarely put nose out of doors or set foot to ground. On the other hand, there were the fox terriers, a score of them at least, who yelped fearful promises at Toots and Ysabel looking out of the windows at them and protected by a legion of housemaids armed with brooms and mops.

But Buck was neither house dog nor kennel dog. The whole realm was his. He plunged into the swimming tank or went hunting with the Judge's sons;

这个地盘里,他们都是些无名小卒,根本算不了什么。 他们或来来回回地走动,或住在拥挤不堪的狗窝里, 或躲在屋子的某个昏暗的角落里,跟日本种的狗托兹 和墨西哥种的无毛狗耶塞必尔一样,难得把鼻子伸出 门外,更别提出去走动了。还有些狐种狗,少说也有 一二十只,每逢托兹和耶塞必尔从窗口探出头来,他 们便发出可怕的尖叫声,这时便有一大群女仆拿着扫 帚和拖把过来保护他们。

巴克既非家狗又非野狗。但这里的全部领土都是他的。他和法官的儿子们一齐跳进游泳池,或者去打猎:在黄昏或清晨的时候,他陪着法官的女儿茉莉和

he escorted Mollie and Alice, the Judge's daughters, on long twilight or early morning rambles; on wintry nights he lay at the Judge's feet before the roaring library fire; he carried the Judge's grandsons on his back, or rolled them in the grass, and guarded their footsteps through wild adventures down to the fountain in the stable yard, and even beyond, where the paddocks were, and the berry patches. Among the terriers he stalked imperiously, and Toots and Ysabel he utterly ignored, for he was king—king over all creeping, crawling, flying things of Judge Miller's place, humans included.

His father, Elmo, a huge St. Bernard, had been the Judge's inseparable companion, and Buck bid fair to

4 4

爱丽丝散步;冬天的夜里,在书房熊熊的炉火前面,他躺在法官的脚边;他把法官的孙子们驮在背上,或者和他们在草地上打滚,或者保护他们到野外探险——比如说走到马厩那边的院子里的喷水池边,甚至跑到外面有蟾蜍的地方或者浆果园。他在那些狐种狗面前昂首阔步,也根本不把托兹、耶塞必尔放在眼里,因为他是这里的王,统治着米勒法官宅邸所有爬的、走的、飞的东西,甚至包括这里的人。

他的父亲叫艾尔墨,是一条高大的圣伯纳种狗, 曾是法官形影不离的伴侣,巴克可能会继承父亲的地 follow in the way of his father. He was not so large—he weighed only one hundred and forty pounds—for his mother, Shep, had been a Scotch shepherd dog. Nevertheless, one hundred and forty pounds, to which was added the dignity that comes of good living and universal respect, enabled him to carry himself in right royal fashion. During the four years since his puppy—hood he had lived the life of a sated aristocrat; he had a fine pride in himself, was even a trifle egotistical, as country gentlemen sometimes become because of their insular situation.

But he had saved himself by not becoming a mere pampered house dog. Hunting and kindred outdoor delights had kept down the fat and hardened his

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位。可让人遗憾的是,他父亲那么魁梧,但他的体重却仅有一百四十磅,因为他的母亲西布是一条苏格兰种的牧羊犬。可尽管如此,一百四十磅的体重再加上养尊处优而生成的威严,也足以使他气度不凡了。从幼时至今的四年间,他过着饱食终日的奢侈生活,志得意满,甚至有一点自命不凡,好像那些因为孤陋寡闻而妄自尊大的乡下绅士们一样。

但他没有让自己变成一个被宠坏的家狗。他通过 打猎和其他户外嬉戏来控制脂肪、锻炼肌肉;而且他 muscles; and to him, as to the cold-tubbing races, the love of water had been a tonic and a health preserver.

And this was the manner of dog Buck in the fall of 1897, when the Klondike strike dragged men from all the world into the frozen North. But Buck did not read the newspapers, and he did not know that Manuel, one of the gardener's helpers, was an undesirable acquaintance. Manuel had one besetting sin. He loved to play Chinese lottery. Also in his gambling, he had one besetting weakness—faith in a system; and this made his damnation certain. For to play a system requires money, while the wages of a gardener's helper do not lap over the needs of a wife and numerous progeny.

* * *

喜欢水,喜欢冲冷水澡,那的确是养生的一剂良方。

这便是巴克在 1897 年秋季的生活状况,那时候克朗代克金矿的发现正在把世界各地的人吸引到冰天雪地的北方去。可巴克没读报纸,也不知道那个叫曼纽的园丁助手是一个靠不住的家伙。曼纽有一个改不掉的老毛病,他喜欢中国式的赌博。而且他有一个无法摆脱的弱点——他相信自己掌握了一种必胜的方法,所以他注定要倒霉——因为这种赌博的方法需要钱,而一个园丁助手的工资还不够养活他的妻儿。

The Judge was at a meeting of the Raisin Growers' Association, and the boys were busy organizing an athletic club, on the memorable night of Manuel's treachery. No one saw him and Buck go off through the orchard on what Buck imagined was merely a stroll. And with the exception of a solitary man, no one saw them arrive at the little flag station known as College Park. This man talked with Manuel, and money chinked between them.

"You might wrap up the goods before you deliver them," the stranger said gruffly, and Manuel doubled a piece of stout rope around Buck's neck under the collar.

"Twist it, and you'll choke him plenty," said Manuel,

4 4

法官到葡萄干制造业协会开会去了,孩子们忙着组织一个健身俱乐部。在这个难忘的夜里,曼纽做出了一件背信弃义的事情。没有一个人看到他和巴克穿过果树园;在巴克看来,这不过是一次普通的散步而已。除了一个孤独的男子之外,没有一个人看见他们走到大学公园那个小旗站。那个男子和曼纽谈话的时候,口袋里的钱叮叮当当地响。

"你应该先把货物捆好再交给我!"那陌生人声音低沉地说。于是曼纽就用一根结实的绳子绕着巴克的脖子,在颈箍下面绑了两道。

曼纽说:"你只要拉紧绳子,就可以让他喘不过气

and the stranger grunted a ready affirmative.

Buck had accepted the rope with quiet dignity. To be sure, it was an unwonted performance, but he had learned to trust in men he knew, and to give them credit for a wisdom that outreached his own. But when the ends of the rope were placed in the stranger's hands, he growled menacingly. He had merely intimated his displeasure, in his pride believing that to intimate was to command. But to his surprise the rope tightened around his neck, shutting off his breath. In quick rage he sprang at the man, who met him halfway, grappled him close by the throat, and with a deft twist threw him over on his back. Then the rope tightened mercilessly, while Buck struggled in a

来。"陌生人咕噜了一声以表示响应。

The same

巴克欣然地让曼纽扣住绳子。说实在的,这让他觉得不太习惯,但是他已经学会了信任他所认识的人,并且相信他们比自己聪明得多。但当他看到绳子的另一头被交到一个陌生人手里的时候,他就开始低声怒吼起来。他仅仅在暗示他的不愉快,他自信这暗示就等于命令。但让他感到惊讶的是,那个陌生人居然开始勒紧绳子,以至于他无法呼吸了。他勃然大怒地跳起来扑向那人,那人却在他跳到半空时,紧紧地扼住他的喉咙,然后用力一扭,就把他摔得四脚朝天。接着,绳子被毫不留情地越勒越紧,巴克疯狂地挣扎着,

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