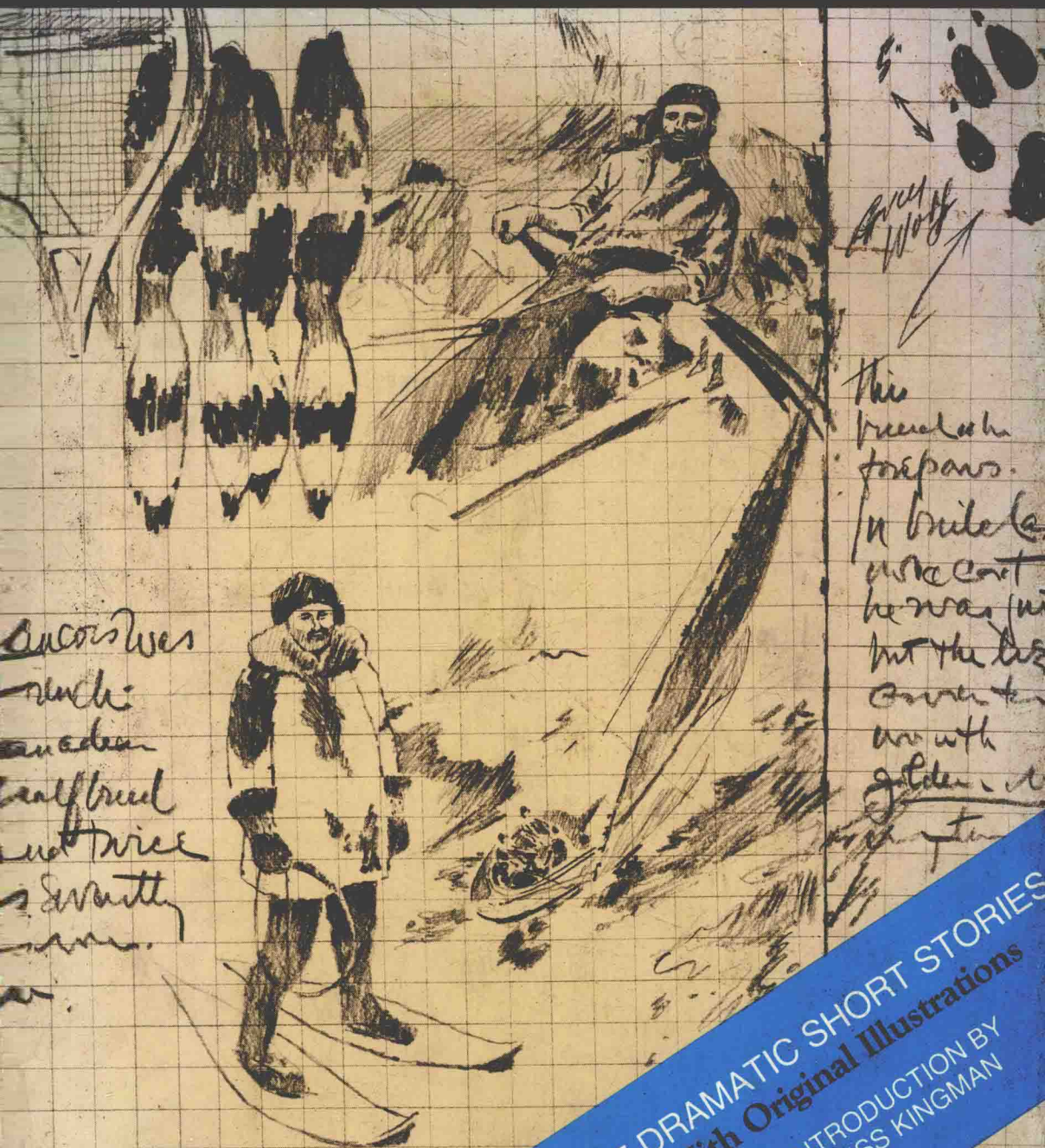


# JACK LONDON

## Stories of Adventure



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47 DRAMATIC SHORT STORIES  
With Original Illustrations  
INTRODUCTION BY  
RUSS KINGMAN

# STORIES

## OF ADVENTURE

by JACK LONDON

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The Complete Novel of  
THE GAME

PLUS 46 SHORT STORIES INCLUDING  
AN ODYSSEY of the NORTH  
BROWN WOLF  
LOVE of LIFE  
THE SUN-DOG TRAIL  
THE DEATH of LIGOUN  
SEVEN TALES of the FISH PATROL

Introduced by Russ Kingman  
Compiled by Frank Oppel

CASTLE

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# Introduction



"Please, Miss, could I have something to read?"

The time was 1886. The speaker was ten-year-old Jack London, shabbily clothed, carrying a bundle of old newspapers under his arm. The woman was Ina Coolbrith, librarian in the Oakland Library. The occasion was Jack London's introduction to the wide world of literature.

Ina Coolbrith favored the young enthusiast and guided him through the world of books, earning his undying adoration. For him, she was his "noble lady." And from that day until he died, Jack London read everything he could find. Reading opened the world to him: a man could accomplish anything he wanted if he dared.

Jack London remains one of the world's literary giants. Year after year his books are published in greater numbers, both here and abroad, and few authors have had as many biographers. He was an excellent portrayer of his times and his knowledge of philosophy and psychology added depth to his works while his rich and unusual adventures make them exciting to read. Also, his writings show a fine sense of drama, a poetic soul, a burning passion for social reform, and a determination to give his readers something new, interesting, and vital each time they pick up a story.

Reading Jack London is a magical return to the turn of the century in the Klondike, at the front in the Russo-Japanese War, in the South Sea Islands, in the London slums, with the rough and tough California Fish Patrol, in the middle of smuggling operations with oyster pirates, or on a hike from Carmel through Northern California in search of a home; but that magic carpet which is the Jack London tale will also take you to the household of Pontius Pilate during the crucifixion of Christ, to the infamous Mountain Meadow massacre, in a strait-jacket in the dungeons of San Quentin prison, in a sailing ship as it struggles to round Cape Horn, or in the boxing ring. Wherever his stories take you, you will be on a trail of adventure.

This volume contains some of Jack London's finest work, including *The Game* and 46 short stories. Here you will find his first story appearing in a magazine, "A Thousand Deaths," which Jack London never knew was printed since it hit the newsstands while he was fighting his way over the Chilcoot Pass enroute to the Klondike gold fields.

By the time Jack London had reached high school, he had stuffed pickles into jars in a cannery, had earned the title, "Prince of the Oyster Pirates," and had spent seven months as a seaman aboard the sealing ship, "Sophia Sutherland" on a trip to the Bering Sea. He had also been a member of the California Fish Patrol, had labored in an Oakland jute mill, had worked as a coal heaver in the power plant of the Oakland, San Leandro and Haywards Railroad, and had spent nearly a year as a hobo tramping his way across the United States and Canada.

On July 14, 1897, the S.S. "Excelsior" entered the Golden Gate and tied up in San Francisco. In a matter of hours, the United States and the rest of the world knew about the Klondike gold discoveries. The Klondike gold rush became a national madness and 21-year-old Jack London was right in the thick of it. On July 25th, he left for the Klondike. In July of the following year, he returned with very little gold in his poke but the experiences he lived and heard about were destined to make him the best paid and most popular author in the world.

At that date, his only writing success was the publication of "A Thousand Deaths." But Jack London was determined to be a professional writer. He wrote everything — stories, articles, anecdotes, jokes, sonnets, ballads, villanelles, songs, light plays in iambic pentameter and heavy tragedies in blank verse.



**Lecturing at Camp Reverie 1901**





**A famous caricature by James Montgomery Flagg**



**London at age 10 — about the time he met Ina Coolbrith at the Oakland  
Public Library**



**In front of his house on the Jack London Ranch**



One year later, *Overland Monthly* accepted "*To the Man on Trail*," for its January, 1899 issue. Twenty-three-year-old Jack London had arrived. Few authors ever wrote more steadily than did Jack London during that year. He sent off more than 200 manuscripts and began to earn his reputation as a keen observer of the world in which he lived and an unswerving loyalist to his craft.

To fully appreciate Jack London's stories, you need to understand that their underlying motif is reform of society. The primordial world with all of its savagery is really the sweatshop where the poor work-beast was suffering excessively long hours for barely enough money to keep his family from starving. Jack London attempts to show the worker that no matter what the odds, there is victory for the one who is steadfast in the face of adversity, who fights for his just rights.

In America's early years, prosperity was closely related to expansion. Westward was the cry for the man willing to pay the exacting price to realize his dream. On the frontier, men were equal. There were no trade unions and no capitalist-owned factories. It was equal opportunity for those who were willing to face hardship to carve a home in the wilderness. It was backbreaking work but a man could hold up his head and be proud.

By 1893, when Jack London was beginning to write, the frontier had all but passed except for the northern frontier that was the Klondike. It was the time when the nation declared itself unmistakably capitalistic. Such a system required vast overseas markets, a huge labor force and, especially, a large surplus army of unemployed workers. The working man had to be content with his low wages while his employer became rich because there was always another man ready to take his job. He had to suffer child labor, no job insurance, no savings, and poor working conditions.

Jack London knew the condition of the working man because he was one of them. A glance at the fiction of the time shows it to be sentimental revery. Life as it was seldom, if ever, appeared in print. It was an opportune time for Jack London's debut as a writer. It was a time of war between classes as the working man battled for a better share of the nation's wealth — a just share. Jack London became his spokesman and he was to speak loud and clear.

Jack London wanted to inspire the working man to settle for no less than that which he deserved. He wanted him to explore the unknown, to break trail, because only man could help himself. The Jack London story gives man the courage to push on by showing how the environment can be overcome and success possible, even against great odds, but only for those willing to fight.

**Russ Kingman**



## Haunts of Jack London

BY NINETTA EAMES



IN something less than eight years Jack London has achieved international renown. At twenty-nine, his books, twelve in number, flood the English-speaking markets. This is rapid growing, even for a twentieth-century author, but Mr. London learned early the straight course to work. Not the spasm of energy usually characteristic of genius, but a steady enforcement of drill, and the comprehensive adjustment of effort to obstacle which is oftenest the essential of success.

"Genius—there is no such thing," he declares. "What is called such is simply another name for hard work; work along natural law—law with no crack or break in the chain that connects the Alpha and Omega of things."

Jack London of to-day has that "holiday in the eye" that bespeaks a man conscious of having enlarged his destiny; made room in his days for ampler work and pastime. He has recently taken up life in the Coast Range—gained title to a wild tract in the Sonoma hills, whereon to set up the kingdom of home. Out of his own rock and sand he purposes to erect a spacious bungalow, the site within sound of village bells, but woods and mountains away from the



THE TRANSLUCENT, ALDER-HUNG POOL OF THE SONOMA

church-goers. He points with deep content to the dwelling of his nearest neighbor—the house of an eagle—an "airy cart-load of fagots" aswing high up in a splintered fir.

Notwithstanding its sequestration, the London ranch commands a vast freedom of landscape—fifty miles of garden valley merging into a silver line of bay, and farther to the south, Mount Diablo arching dimly against the azure; across the valley, notching the full-length horizon on the east, the Mayacmas ridge steeples above the bleached adobes of old Sonoma; while to the north and west, sentined by Hood's Mountain and cloud-buffed St. Helena, a world of beautiful wooded hills spread their laps to make room for arcadian homes and vineyards.

Mr. London's steep acres run up to a huddle of sky-fronting knolls, some pinnacled with firs and redwoods, and others, the fewer by count, smoothed into softness by yellowing oat-stubble. Lengthwise the ranch, down a giant trenchway, a clear, cold stream plunges through primeval forests, pausing at rifts in the

green to hold a shining mirror to the sun. In the crisp, warm sunlight, and throughout the short, dew-cooled nights, one hears always the chorusing of the cascades—the *vox jubilante* of God's wilderness.

While superintending the building of his bungalow, the author makes home with friends whose summer lodge is within a mile's walk, across hills terraced with vines which offer the lure of shade with promise of fruited purple clusters. In this wildwood haunt he lives brotherly with Nature and human hearts, working aye for larger ends, his thoughts so plainly in tune that men catch them on the quick, and are held and moved imperiously to join in the primal harmony.

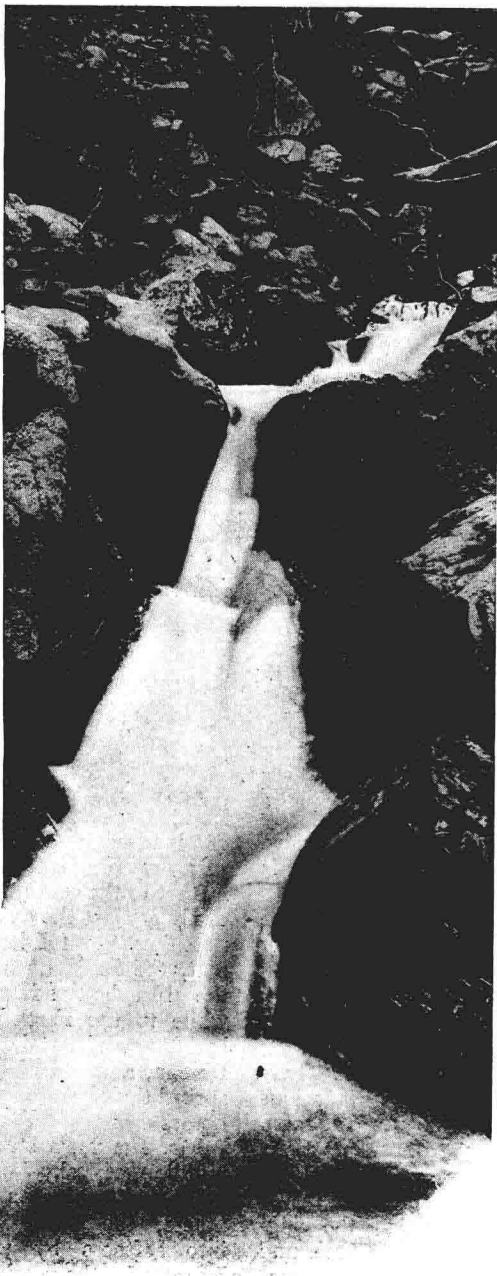
Whatever his change of abode, Jack London's writing-hours are the same—from early morning until luncheon at one. His afternoons are mainly given to swimming in a translucent,

alder-hung pool of the Sonoma, or in horseback rides through this delightfully picturesque region. He is, in fact, an enthusiast over outdoor exercise, accounting a man's

muscles of foremost importance, the essential basis of his mental and spiritual vitality.

London's chief attraction lies not so much in his fame as in his personality. He appears to have absorbed the good of the earth and the sun. His naturalness is that of the child, and there is manifest obliviousness of the fact that he has written successfully. In seeing him thus one is forcibly reminded of the "warm human" he portrays as "shot through with flashes and glimmerings of something finer and God-like, with here and there sweetnesses of service and unselfishness, desires for goodness, for renunciation and sacrifice, and with conscience, stern and awful, at times blazingly imperious, demanding the right—nothing more nor less than the right."

When riding through the village, a huge wolf-dog at his horse's heels, Mr. London makes a great stir. The loungers before the one store and the several saloons stare with interest-



A CLEAR, COLD STREAM PLUNGES THROUGH PRIMEVAL FORESTS

ed, friendly faces, while every street urchin shrills after in good-fellowship, "Hello, Jack!" and receives a boyish "Hello!" in response, the rider's eyes smiling, and one hand waving triumphantly a brace of plump chickens, the first product of the new ranch.

He rides bareheaded, his smooth-shaven face and fine column of neck bronzed to

matched to corduroy knee-breeches and leggings, the polished dark sorrel of Washoe Ban, and the tawny fur of the wolf-dog.

This trail-worn husky is the hero-to-be of London's forthcoming tale. He is still a fine brute, massive of head and chest, with narrow, inscrutable eyes, and the long sweep of body and tail and swinging



MR. LONDON WRITING "THE SEA WOLF" AT A MAKESHIFT TABLE, DEEP IN THE FERNS AND VINES ON THE BANK OF THE WILDWATER

delicious warmth of color, his outing shirt thinly veiling the figure of a Greek athlete, and his look that of one who feels it the happiest thing in life to be astride a horse. Not a looker-on but watches from sight the artistically grouped trio—the man, the horse and the dog—a moving study in browns against the rich green of laurels; a crop of sun-burnished hair

trot peculiar to his forebear, the wolf. Years of service in harness have broken his spirit, and except when his master rides forth, "Wolf" rests apart, not slinking from proffered attention, but with dignity claiming seclusion as his well-earned right.

A few yards from the lodge, down a steep bank of the Wildwater, a makeshift table,



THE SPOILS OF AN AFTERNOON'S RIDE THROUGH THE PICTURESQUE GLADES OF THE SONOMA VALLEY

backed against a stump, stands deep in the ferns and vines. Here it was that Jack London wrote "The Sea Wolf." Alder, bay and buckeye canopy and curtain this brookside study. The spot embodies the all-tenderness of Nature; the liquid slide of water over stones, nesting twitters in the tree-tops, the soft rustle of breeze-stirred fronds and grasses, and a pervading scent of wine-flowered calycanthus—all strangely out of keeping with the formidable creation of a Wolf Larsen.

And herein London has the advantage: he is largely independent of environment. Whatsoever lies next him, his creative genius absorbs, translates, and fits to the work in hand. His mind runs parallel to Nature's laws, and is made thereby strong with the strength of the immutable, and the sharer of universal force. Thus

writer and book are fundamentally the same—made of the same stuff, since that which befalls his heroes has befallen him or is potential with him. Imagination in him generates the strong, the pictorial and the heroic as inevitably as the sun and soil bring forth oak and sequoia.

Notwithstanding this virility of fancy, Jack London is prone to regard his story-writing as so much needful effort toward a more vital and august end—the social redemption of the race. The soul in him chants the pæan of Brotherhood. The novel that brings him fame and fortune, brings a yet more golden largess—freedom of speech and pen to clarion organized, international, revolutionary social reform. This is the "Game" his soul plays from start to finish, the regnant purpose of his nights and days, the object of his untiring toil.

# **TABLE of CONTENTS**

|                                |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| INTRODUCTION                   | IV  |
| HAUNTS OF JACK LONDON          | XI  |
| 1 • TO THE MAN ON THE TRAIL    | 1   |
| 2 • AN ODYSSEY OF THE NORTH    | 9   |
| 3 • A THOUSAND DEATHS          | 27  |
| 4 • THE PRIESTLY PREROGATIVE   | 39  |
| 5 • THE MINIONS OF MIDAS       | 49  |
| 6 • DIABLE—A DOG               | 59  |
| 7 • IN YEDDO BAY               | 71  |
| 8 • THE LEOPARD MAN'S STORY    | 79  |
| 9 • LOVE OF LIFE               | 83  |
| 10 • PLANCHETTE                | 101 |
| 11 • THE UNEXPECTED            | 131 |
| 12 • TWO GOLD BRICKS           | 149 |
| 13 • THE HANDSOME CABIN BOY    | 157 |
| 14 • BROWN WOLF                | 165 |
| 15 • THE SUN-DOG TRAIL         | 177 |
| 16 • A RELIC OF THE PLIOCENE   | 189 |
| 17 • THE STORY OF JEES UCK     | 201 |
| 18 • THE LEAGUE OF THE OLD MEN | 215 |
| 19 • THE ONE THOUSAND DOZEN    | 227 |
| 20 • A HYPERBOREAN BREW        | 239 |
| 21 • WHICH MAKE MEN REMEMBER   | 251 |
| 22 • THE MASTER OF MYSTERY     | 259 |
| 23 • KEESH, THE SON OF KEESH   | 267 |
| 24 • NAM-BOK THE UNVERACIOUS   | 275 |
| 25 • THE DEATH OF LIGOUN       | 287 |
| 26 • LI WAN, THE FAIR          | 295 |



|                                  |     |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| 27 • THE GAME                    | 307 |
| 28 • SIWASH                      | 333 |
| 29 • PLUCK AND PERTINACITY       | 343 |
| 30 • THE SICKNESS OF LONE CHIEF  | 349 |
| 31 • AT THE RAINBOW'S END        | 357 |
| 32 • THE BANKS OF THE SACREMENTO | 365 |
| 33 • THE MARRIAGE OF LIT-LIT     | 373 |

#### SEVEN TALES OF THE FISH PATROL

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| 34 • WHITE AND YELLOW                       | 383 |
| 35 • THE KING OF THE GREEKS                 | 388 |
| 36 • A RAID ON THE OYSTER PIRATES           | 394 |
| 37 • THE SIEGE OF THE "LANCASHIRE<br>QUEEN" | 400 |
| 38 • CHARLEY'S "COUP"                       | 405 |
| 39 • DEMETRIOS CONTOS                       | 411 |
| 40 • "YELLOW HANDKERCHIEF"                  | 417 |
| 41 • A DAUGHTER OF THE AURORA               | 423 |
| 42 • THE LOST POACHER                       | 431 |
| 43 • CHRIS FARRINGTON, ABLE SEAMAN          | 439 |
| 44 • THE SUNLANDERS                         | 447 |
| 45 • WHERE THE TRAIL FORKS                  | 461 |
| 46 • DUTCH COURAGE                          | 469 |
| 47 • JAN, THE UNREPENTANT                   | 477 |

**1**

**TO THE MAN ON THE TRAIL**

