

Chapter 1 - Into The Primitive:

Summary:

The first chapter is about Buck a half-breed of Saint Bernard and Scotch Shepherd. Buck is four years old and lives with Judge Miller and his sons, daughters, and grandsons. Buck is the king of the demesne, making sure everyone is safe.

One day when Buck is out for a stroll with the gardener's helper Manuel, the unthinkable happens. Buck is aware of Manuel's gambling problem, nevertheless, he couldn't foresee Manuel selling Buck for quick money. The man who bought Buck proceeds by transporting him to a so-called crack dog doctor.

When the doctor finally gets to see Buck, he makes sure to demonstrate his position of power. By beating Buck down with a club, until Buck concedes. Buck is about to be sold again, this time to a French Canadian named Perrault. Perrault also bought a dog named Curly from the doctor. Buck and Curly are later introduced to Francois whom Buck would come to know as a fair man. These dogs accompanied by two other dogs were from this day on going to help Perrault and Francois to find the yellow metal in the Arctic darkness.

Vocabulary list:

Demesne - "And over this great demesne Buck ruled" - The legal possession of land as one's own.

Acquaintance - "But Buck did not read the newspapers, and he did not know that Manuel, one of the gardener's helpers, was an undesirable acquaintance" - A person known to one, but usually not a close friend.

Menacingly - "But when the ends of the rope were placed in the stranger's hands, he growled menacingly" - Something that threatens to cause evil, harm, injury, etc.

Tormentor - "More tormentors, Buck decided, for they were evil-looking creatures, ragged and unkempt; and he stormed and raged at them through the bars." - A person or thing that afflict with great bodily or mental suffering.

Soliloquize - "Answers to the name of Buck' the man soliloquized, quoting from the saloon-keeper's letter which had announced the consignment of the crate and contents" - To talk to oneself.

Conciliated - "Again and again, as he looked at each brutal performance, the lesson was driven home to Buck: a man with a club was a lawgiver, a master to be obeyed, though not necessarily conciliated." - To overcome the distrust or hostility of.

Reflections:

Pick one or a few central quotes from the chapter. Explain why each is significant.

"He was beaten (he knew that); but he was not broken." This quote is found right after Buck is beaten down by the man in the red shirt. As written I think Buck was put in his place by getting beaten by the man, but nevertheless, Buck won't let this change his personality,

therefore he was not broken. I believe we will see the same Buck throughout the rest of the book, still the king of the demesne but also the same fierce dog when enraged. On the other hand, Buck was still beaten by the man in the red shirt, therefore I believe if Buck were to encounter the man again stay submissive.

Chapter 2 - The Law Of Club And Fang:

Summary:

The second chapter starts off with Buck being almost sleep deprived, we get to read all about the shock and surprises in this new place. These surprises requires Buck to be on constant alert. Luckily for Buck so far he's been in the right place at the right time. Sadly the same didn't apply for Curly when she was passing by one of the huskies, he leapt and ripped her face open from "eye to jaw". But being a bystander isn't easy, traumatised by the experience Buck decides to be even more careful.

As a newcomer Buck has to be taught the ways of his new life. To do this Francois decides to put a harness on Buck and let him run as a sled dog. Buck ends up doing really well and shocks Francois with his performance.

Perrault comes back with two new huskies, brothers even. They are called Billee and Joe and are different as night and day. Perrault also returns with another dog later on named Sol-leks.

From what we can assume to be the same night, Buck learns how the other dogs sleep. This lesson impresses Francois once again. Dave and Sol-leks both huskies were soon to help Buck by steering him out of his errors. This change in lifestyle made Buck stronger day by day, not without consequences though as he's not fed enough and therefore he's slowly starving. The only way to cease this hunger was by theft, he needs to steal to stay alive. With the hunger problem solved Bucks muscles can finally grow stronger than ever before.

Vocabulary list:

Ignominiously - "The tent, illumined by a candle, glowed warmly in the midst of the white plain; and when hem as a matter of course, entered it, both Perrault and Francois bombarded him with curses and cooking utensils, till he recovered from his consternation and fled ignominiously into the outer cold" - deserving or causing public disgrace or shame.

Harking - "It was a token that he was harking back through his own life to the lives of his forebears; for he was a civilized dog, an unduly civilized dog and of his own experience knew no trap and so could not of himself fear it." - Listening attentively.

Fastidiousness - "He quickly lost the fastidiousness which had characterized his old life" - Excessively particular or demanding in taste, very hard to please food wise.

Animated - "Buck was glad to be gone, and though the work was hard he found he did not particularly despise it. he was surprised at the eagerness which animated the whole team and which was communicated to him; I but still more surprising was the change wrought in Dave and Sol-leks." - Full of life or excitement, lively.

Dainty - "A dainty eater, he found that his mates, finishing first, robbed him of his unfinished ration" - Of delicate discrimination or taste.

Reflections:

Discuss why some people feel that the book is too violent. Discuss this, using examples.

The call of the wild is a very fast paced book, when it isn't about violence. For example the second chapter starts off with Curly's face literally getting torn off by a husky. This scene is written with quite a lot of detail, especially comparing it to other parts of the book. We get to read how Curly is buried under the other huskies who are tearing her apart. Jack London really knows how to add details that would stick like trauma, for example. *"They closed in upon her, snarling and yelping, and she was buried, screaming with agony, beneath the bristling mass of bodies."* When I read this sentence, I felt like I could hear Curly's whimper slowly fading under the bodies of the other dogs. We also see violence in the first chapter as Buck is getting beat down by the man in the red shirt. This scene is filled with small details describing Buck's condition as he's getting clubbed again and again. *"After a particularly fierce blow he crawled to his feet, to dazed to rush. He staggered limply about, the blood flowing from nose and mouth and ears, his beautiful coat sprayed and flecked with bloody slaver."* We don't necessarily have to feel by Buck, but we can most certainly understand that he's in great pain. The latter sentence even goes as far as to describe how Buck's blood has splattered on to the man's coat. To some people this might be just too much. What ought to be noted is that the book is mainly about dogs, written with human-like thought processes. For all I know, this might have an effect on how we relate to Buck and how we feel for him during these events.

Chapter 3 - The Dominant Primordial Beast:

Summary:

This chapter follows Buck from a new perspective, this time focused more on Buck's relations to the other dogs. The chapter starts off with Buck acknowledging his growth both physically and mentally, he later proceeds by telling us about how Spitz goes out of his way to bully Buck. As the relations between Buck and Spitz grow worse the camp gets invaded by a flock of wild huskies. Perrault, Francois and the dogs fight off the wild huskies, some of the invaders start eating from the food supply. This leaves the camp in a starving situation, where wasting of the food will not be found. During the attack, Spitz sees an opportunity to get rid of Buck and he doesn't let the opportunity go, but leaps into attack. After the attack Perrault and Francois need to use every last resource to get to the nearest city Dawson. One day when Buck spotted a snowshoe rabbit just outside the city, he started chasing it as a cause of bloodlust. He was just thirsty for warm blood and the joy of killing. After chasing this rabbit for a short while, catching up leap after leap, just as he's about to catch it. Spitz smart as he was, lurking behind a long rounded bend, leapt for the rabbit. At this moment Buck knew, he had a chance to finally end this rivalry with Spitz. Buck drove really fast into Spitz shoulder to shoulder, trying to overthrow him. By the looks of things it didn't even surprise Spitz, it was finally time for a final fight. After repeated failure on Buck's side, he

gets the idea to bite Spitz in the forelegs, making Spitz unfit for fighting. The circle of huskies which had gathered around slowly closed in to finish off what remained of Spitz.

Vocabulary list:

Precipitate - "He was not prone to rashness and precipitate action; and in the bitter hatred between him and Spitz he betrayed no impatience, shunned all offensive acts." - To hasten the occurrence of; bring about prematurely, hastily or suddenly.

Adversary - "Buck got a frothing adversary, by the throat, and was sprayed with blood when his teeth sank through the jugular." - A person, group that opposes or attacks; opponent; enemy; foe.

Preeminently - "He was preeminently cunning, and could bide his time with a patience that was nothing less than primitive." - Eminent above or before others; superior; surpassing.

Red-handed - "Francois knew he was behind all the trouble, and Buck knew he knew; but Buck was too clever ever again to be caught red-handed." - To be caught in the very act of crime or wrongdoing.

Prostrate - "This failed to drive Buck from his prostrate rival" - to cast (oneself) face down on the ground in humility or to show submissiveness.

Reflections:

Write a short section from the perspective of another dog or human character.

Dave wasn't feeling hungry after the days long trip. He was more tired of the constant rivalry in the team. He had his position as a wheel-dog and he had no urge to climb, especially not with Spitz as the leader. Spitz would always take the joy out of his accomplishments, making sure he didn't feel any pride in his work.

Dave wandered up the frozen tops just around the camp, he needed to distance himself from the team. The higher up he got the colder it was, nevertheless, the cold couldn't bite through his thick fur. There he stood, as high up as he was going to wander, enjoying the big white glaciers not far in the distance under the darkest of skies.

Something wasn't right though, these small black dots far in the distance, weren't dots anymore, they had morphed into small blobs. And it didn't take long before the small blobs grew in size and soon thereafter they looked very much alive. As they grew in size, Dave finally saw it. They were wild huskies, heading straight for the camp. In pure instinct, Dave started calling for the other dogs. No one responded, he knew they could hear him.

Dave wasn't the one who cried wolf. He would even consider himself as the most honest in the team. So why didn't they respond? Dave started hasting down to the camp, but he knew the tough terrain was going to slow him down. He glanced over the camp again and the huskies had still not arrived, he had time. Buck and Spitz circled each other and that's when he understood, they had caught the attention of everyone. Just as Dave sat foot in the camp, it was too late. The time had run out, and the battle had already begun.

Chapter 4 - Who Has Won To Mastership:

Summary:

Chapter 4 is about what came to be after the fight for power, the fight of Buck and Spitz. The chapter starts off with Francois not fully understanding how the roles of the dogs have shifted. Francois tries to put Sol-leks in the leading position even though all of the dogs knew that is rightfully belonged to Buck.

After some chasing around by Francois and Perrault, they finally came to the conclusion, Buck had won, not only against Spitz, but they had too lost. They decided to harness Buck in the foremost position and off they were. Buck made sure the whole team pulled harder than ever before, this shift in power had also made the group dynamic much better again. Buck, the born leader even broke two new huskies in the trail with celerity.

After a record run, running an average of 40 miles each day for fourteen days. After official orders, Francois and Perrault had to leave Buck and the team. All of the dogs were tired, but not as tired as Dave for he really struggled to keep up. But he couldn't leave the trail because there was his life, his pride and his success. He would rather die in the harness than leave the trails. At last when his body finally gave in, the driver shot the dog with his revolver to end his suffering.

Vocabulary list:

Gleefully - "‘Eh? Eh?’ Francois cried, slapping his thighs gleefully." - Full of joy; delighted.

Lugubriously - "Then he fell, and lay where he fell, howling lugubriously as the long train of sleds churned by." - Mournful or gloomy, especially in an affected or unrelieved manner.

Exertion - "They swung out on the trail with remarkable lack of exertion, turned their heads uneasily, and stopped in surprise." - Vigorous action of effort.

Perplexed - "The driver was perplexed." - Completely baffled; very puzzled.

Convulsive - "By convulsive efforts he got on his feet, staggered, and fell." - involuntary muscular contractions; spasm like.

Reflections:

Discuss huskies and the use of dogs in cold climates.

Huskies are breed to be good sled dogs. They've got thick fur to protect against the cold and have long and strong legs for dragging through things. Huskies were initially breed from greyhounds mixed with different types of polar dogs. This came to be because greyhounds were fierce runners but they had very little fur needed to survive in the cold climates, to get the big furs the huskies needed they used the polar dogs. In the book, huskies aren't the only dog-breeds acquired by perrault. But Buck who is a mix of Saint Bernard and Scotch Shepherd. Bucks characteristics are that he's a big and strong dog. Also, he very rarely complains about the cold. Without reading up on his breed, we know that he got his great size from the saint bernard side as well as his great furr keeping him warm.

Chapter 5 - The toil of trace and trail:

Summary:

Chapter 5 starts by describing the great deal of toil that the dogs are experiencing. Buck, for example, has dropped 25 pounds, which is relatively less than the other dogs. They haven't rested fully in a very long time, and when they finally are supposed to get some. They're sold to the first buyer Hal and Charles. Hal and Charles are traversing with Hal's sister and

Charles's wife Mercedes. The family is eager to get going and leaves no rest for the dogs. The new chauffeurs show their inexperience when they can't even get the sled going, but during the journey, they will experience great starvation as their plan is all wrong. Day by day they lose more and more dogs, having an all-time high of fourteen dogs, now down to five. Sometime after the family breaks through the ice of Yukon and stop at the nearest camp, John Thornton's camp. Buck one of the last ones alive decides that he won't get up. He will either die here and now than to get out on that brittle ice again. After Buck receives several whip slashes, Hal decides to switch the whip to a club. Hal keeps on striking down on Buck and after some time Thornton steps in and stops Hal from killing Buck.

Vocabulary list:

Malignant - "On the next day Koonah went, and but five of them remained: Joe, too far gone to be malignant;" - Evil in nature or effect; malevolent.

Inexorable - "And so it went, the inexorable elimination of the superfluous." - Unyielding; unalterable.

Innocuously - "With the dogs falling, Mercedes weeping and riding, Hal swearing innocuously, and Charles eyes wistfully watering, they staggered into John Thornton's camp at the mouth of the White River." - Not harmful or injurious; harmless.

Quarreling - "Mercedes ceased weeping over the dogs, being too occupied with weeping over herself and with quarreling with her husband and brother." - an angry dispute or altercation; a disagreement marked by a temporary or permanent break in friendly relations.

Recuperation - "There was no power of recuperation left, no reserve strength to call upon." - to recover from sickness or exhaustion.

Reflections:

Write a poem based on a chapter. If you write several, try different forms, styles and tones in your writing.

No matter the man,
we push on command.
Tired and sore,
nothing but full-bore.
Hungry and doomed,
still looking groomed.

Chapter 6 - For The Love Of A Man:

Summary:

Chapter 6 is primarily about John Thornton's mastership over Buck. The chapter starts off by introducing us to John Thornton's other dogs, Skeet and Nig. At John's camp Buck finally gets the rest he was in dire need of. While listening to the birds sing and the water driving down Yukon, he slowly regained the strength he had once obtained. With watching his masters ever move he finally got a chance to use his strength on a man named Burton who picked the wrong fight in a bar. After two leaps Buck gets a small bite from Burton's neck, leaving him on the floor with the surgeon over him. The second time Buck saves Thornton's life was when they were leading a boat down the river with Thornton in it. Eventually, John

falls in the river and Buck does everything in his power to get him out of there alive. After several attempts, Buck with got John out of the river with the help of Hans and Pete. Later in the chapter, John uncarefully bragged about how great Buck is when he gets a bet he just couldn't resist. This bet has Buck break loose a five hundred pound sled and walk off with it for a hundred yards. Which Buck pushes himself to do, for his master, John Thornton.

Vocabulary list:

Expediency - "Other men saw to the welfare of their dogs from a sense of duty and business expediency;" - The quality of being convenient and practical despite possibly being improper or immoral; Convenience.

Transient - "His transient masters since he had come into the Northland had bred in him a fear that no master could be permanent." - Not lasting, enduring, or permanent; transitory.

Hankering - "'I'm not hankering to be the man that lays hands on you while he's around,' Pete announced conclusively, nodding his head toward Buck." - A longing; craving.

Conjuration - "It seemed like a conjuration." - Supernatural accomplishment by invocation or spell.

Clamor - "Thornton's doubt was strong in his face, but his fighting spirit was aroused--the fighting spirit that soars above odds, fails to recognize the impossible, and is deaf to all save the clamor for battle." - Noisy shouting

Chapter 7 - The Sounding Of The Call:

Summary:

Chapter 7 starts off right after Buck had earned John Thornton sixteen hundred dollars. Money that was later spent on dogs and other equipment for their new expedition. An expedition the was heading even more north than anyone else had succeeded with before. After a long search when finally the second spring came they found what the were searching for, gold and tons of it. But when the men started mining and gathering all the gold, nothing was needed for the dogs. This made Buck restless and the vision of the more primitive man, the short-legged hairy man came to mind more frequently. I believe this primitive man is Buck turning/reliving his ancestor's lives, a more dangerous and survival of the fittest kind of lifestyle. Buck gets a strong urge to follow the call/sounds from the forest and one night he sprang for the howl. Buck closes in on the howling and right as Buck spots the wolf, he tries to flee. After some chasing around, the wolf realizes that Buck means no harm and they sniff noses, in turn becoming friends. Buck follows his "wood brother" for quite a bit until he remembered his loving master John Thornton. Buck starts heading back towards the camp and the wolf isn't happy about it. For two days and nights, Buck never let Thornton out of his sight. But after some time, the restlessness came back and Buck started living on his own. Hunting on his own, sleeping on his own. And day by day, more wolf-like instincts came back to him. During Buck's alone-time he took on larger and larger pray, making sure they died. One day Buck notices another trail that led straight towards John Thornton's camp. Buck starts running for the camp hoping everyone is fine. At the camp, he finds everyone dead, killed by the yeehats. Filled with rage Buck ran on a killing-spree killing every yeehat he saw until they fled. This, in turn, got him the name, Ghost Dog in yeehat tales. After the tragic event, Buck hears the call again. But this time he has no master and is, therefore, he was

ready to obey. Running towards Buck were now wolves, waiting for them to attack, Buck stayed motionless. After several tries by the wolves, Buck killed everyone that dared to oppose him. But no dog could ever protect themselves against this amount of wolves, therefore he had to retreat down the quarry and be vulnerable only from the entrance. After some waiting his long lost "wood brother" approached him friendly. This, in turn, leads to his acceptance in the wolf pack. The same wolf pack he sometimes during the winter leads thought the pale moonlight.

Vocabulary list:

Riotous - "Sometimes they went hungry, sometimes they feasted riotously, all according to the abundance of game and the fortune of hunting." - marked by or involving public disorder.

Salient - "The salient thing of this other world seemed fear." - most noticeable or important.

Commingled - "Every movement advertised commingled threatening and overture of friendliness." - blended thoroughly into a harmonious whole.

Pertinacity - "But in the end Buck's pertinacity was rewarded; for the wolf, finding that no harm was intended, finally sniffed noses with him." - the quality of being pertinacious; persistence.

Imperiously - "But after two days the call in the forest began to sound more imperiously than ever." - domineering in a haughty manner; dictatorial.

Reflections:

Discuss how and why Buck changes throughout the story, using examples.

Throughout the book, Buck's change is most apparent in the last chapter. Were he finally leaves all of his civil manners behind and rejoines the wolves. In the beginning of the book we get the expression that Buck is this calm dog that does nothing else than keeping order in his neighborhood. "*Buck lived at a big house in the sun-kissed Santa Clara Valley. Judge Miller's place, it was called. [...] And over this great demesne Buck ruled*". Even though the text can make us feel like Buck owns the world, it's all about perspective. "*He escorted Mollie and Alice, the Judge's daughters.*" and "*he carried the Judge's grandsons on his back*". And both of these are examples of his local perspective, he's not a ruler, more so he's an orderer. But after Buck gets kidnapped and put in this extremely dangerous environment, we start seeing Buck as an observer. Buck had showed everyone that he would avoid getting into trouble and that why he surprised himself when he sprang at Spitz. "*He sprang upon Spitz with a fury which surprised them both, and Spitz particularly, for his whole experience with Buck had gone to teach him that his rival was an unusually timid dog*". When he was greeted with this new environment he needed to step back, be careful and learn the rules first. And that's what he did, before he sprang at Spitz. After Buck and overthrew Spitz, he was done observing. Now he needed to be the leader/ruler he'd always wanted to be. This time it was real, the other dogs actually accepted him as the rightful leader. "*He took Buck by the scruff of the neck [...] dragged him to one side and replaced Sol-leks. The old dog did not like it, and showed plainly that he was afraid of Buck*".

After Buck is saved by John Thornton he kinda falls into a knight's roll with a strong love for his master, and a great desire to protect his master at any cost. "*For a long time after his rescue, Buck did not like Thornton to get out of his sight*". But since Buck's battle with Spitz he had these visions of a man, a very primitive man. And as Buck got more and more close

to the wildlife the oftener the vision of the man came to him. I believe this vision of the primitive man to be a idé of Buck becoming more primitive and close to his ancestors.