

Jack London



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- Poor and adventurous background
- Life is a struggle for survival—Victims of forces we cannot control
- Savage nature forces us to confront ourselves—we are either destroyed or recreated
- Millionaire rancher in Sonoma—House burned down
- Alcoholism, kidney disease, suicide

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- Naturalism
 - Nietzsche's "Superman"
 - World of power and force of will
 - Human structure is invented—way of order and meaning in universe of chaos and without truth
 - Know rules, play game, and overcome
 - Civilization is veneer of our savage nature—removes us from ourselves

- Why the title?
- List some diction and imagery from the text which London uses to create the brutal Yukon landscape.
- What elements of naturalism does the story incorporate?
- What are some of the central themes, goals, purposes, ideas of the text?
- Why does London use a nameless narrator?
- Compare/contrast the man and the dog? How does the quote that the man is “quick and alert in the things of life, but only in the things, and not in the significances” relate to the differences between the man and the dog?
- List the elements of the man’s downfall.
- Describe the death sequence. How does the man approach it? How does it come to him?