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Survival in Jack London's

“To Build a Fire” and “The Call of the Wild”

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Dedication

My dear family especially my mother who was there for me in my hardest times, for her infinite support and guidance.

CHIHI Kheloud

I dedicate this work to my dearest parents, my lovely sisters and brothers and to all the people that I love.

TRABELSSI Ibtissam



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In the name of Allah Who has given us the strength to finish this work, Thanks God.

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Abstract

This study attempts to investigate the manifestation of naturalism and examine the themes in the two short stories of an American writer named Jack London. Analyze the forces of nature and their impact on the characters in Jack London's "The Call of the Wild" and "To Build a Fire" to demonstrate how the environment shapes human destiny. Jack London reveals the indifference of nature toward humans and highlights the conflict between man and nature. Our particular aim is to explain how this American writer shares the same literary style in his stories, which makes him belong to naturalism. Demonstrate that naturalist traits are instances of both the content and the forms.

Keywords: Naturalism, Survival, Snow, Fire, Man, Dog, Cold, Nature.

ملخص Abstract in Arabic

تحاول هذه الدراسة التحقيق في مظاهر المذهب الطبيعي ودراسة موضوعات المذهب الطبيعي في القصتين القصيرتين للكاتب الأمريكي جاك لندن. نسعى لإظهار الطرق التي يعرض بها فيلم نداء البرية و صنع الشعلة لجاك لندن دور البيئة في تشكيل مصير البشر ، ودراسة قوى الطبيعة وتأثيرها على شخصيات القصة يكشف جاك لندن عن لامبالاة الطبيعة تجاه البشر وسلط الضوء على صراع الإنسان ضد الطبيعة هدفنا الخاص هو شرح كيفية مشاركة هذا الكاتب الأمريكي في نفس الأسلوب الأدبي في قصصه مما يجعله ينتمي إلى المذهب الطبيعي في الواقع، نسعى إلى إظهار ليس فقط المحتوى ولكن أيضًا الأشكال هي أمثلة على السمات الطبيعية

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Introduction

General Introduction | 1

The short stories, "The Call of the Wild" and "To Build a Fire" by Jack London, are renowned works of American literature that revolve around survival in the wilderness. Both stories depict characters confronting the harsh realities of nature and facing life-and-death situations in the wilderness. "The Call of the Wild" tells the story of Buck, a domesticated dog forced to adapt to a brutal life as a sled dog in the Klondike during the gold rush. Meanwhile, "To Build a Fire" portrays an unnamed man's struggle to survive in the extreme weather conditions of the Yukon. Both works reflect the naturalist movement of the time, which emphasized the impact of the environment on human behavior and the struggle for dominance in nature. These stories continue to captivate readers and scholars, highlighting the importance of preparation, knowledge, and primitive instincts in fighting for survival in the Wild.

Throughout our study of both short stories, this study of short stories attempt to point out the main themes of naturalism, and examine the forces of nature and their effects on the characters of both stories. In the first chapter, we aim at analyzing how many men can bear the difficulty of natural adventures and survival in the 19th century. Moreover, it is the most influential writer. The second and third chapters discuss the themes of naturalism, man and his resistance to conflict with nature, and survival methods in nature.

This study aims to delve into various aspects of wilderness survival depicted in Jack London's literary works, "The Call of the Wild" and "To Build a Fire", particularly, this dissertation aims to:

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- To investigate how wilderness survival is portrayed in "The Call of the Wild" and "To Build a Fire."
- To look into how Jack London handled survival in these stories concerning the naturalist movement.
- To examine the characters' reactions to dangerous situations and severe conditions.
- To investigate the importance of knowledge and adaptation in surviving in the Wild as portrayed in these stories.
- To compare the survival strategies employed by the characters in "The Call of the Wild" and "To Build a Fire."

The selection of "The Call of the Wild" and "To Build a Fire" is made for various reasons. First, the two short stories are considered good models of naturalism in American literature. Second, they establish how American literature is affected by Jack London's philosophy.

Our main objective in this dissertation is to make a deep investigation of survival techniques and give answers to the questions below:

1. How do the characters in "The Call of the Wild" and "To Build a Fire" differ in their approach to survival in extreme environments, and what factors contribute to these differences?
2. How does the naturalist movement influence the portrayal of survival in the wilderness in "The Call of the Wild" and "To Build a Fire"?

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3. What is the significance of the survival theme in "The Call of the Wild" and "To Build a Fire" for contemporary literature and society?

The hypothesis proposes that the survival in Jack London's "The Call of the Wild" and "To Build a Fire" reflects the author's experiences in the wilderness and the naturalist movement of the time. It also suggests that these stories emphasize the significance of instinct, adaptation, and knowledge in the struggle for survival in extreme environments. In this study, we will derive information from novels as a primary source related to naturalism, a field highlighting the literary similarity of both stories in the extent of nature's indifference to man. We seek to show not only content but form as well. The research tools used to collect data are libraries and searches on the internet. This study highlights how the writer Jack London expressed "The Call of the Wild" and "To Build a Fire" And the role of the natural current and the survival of the wilderness.

Our study mainly focuses on The Call of the Wild and To Build a Fire and how Jack London and Charles Darwin portrayed naturalism in their short stories. Both they illustrate the negative impacts of an uncaring environment on people's lives and perfectly cover nature's influence on a person's fate. Naturalism in Literature Criticism of industrial society also appeared in literature in a new style of writing known as naturalism. Naturalists challenged the idea of social Darwinism by suggesting that some people failed in life, simply because they were caught up in circumstances they could not control.

Jack London's piece is part of the Naturalism movement. "London depicts protagonists fighting to win in a causal naturalist universe. He writes of a man whose

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objective, animalistic decisions are predetermined by nature and weaker than nature. Many of his stories focus on the instincts of animals and the questionable survival of men in extreme conditions and situations.

Charles Darwin created a context that made naturalism, with its emphasis on theories of heredity and environment, a convincing way to explain the nature of reality in the late nineteenth century.

In *The Call of the Wild*, Jack London uses the regression of Buck, an anthropomorphic dog, to illustrate the naturalistic principle of how the "forces of heredity and environment" govern the development of one's character ("American Literary Naturalism"). The central theme of the story "To Build a Fire" is one portrayed by many existentialist writers: that man lives a solitary existence that is subject to the relentless, unforgiving forces of nature. An ever-so-subtle part of this theme is that man's goal is to find meaning in his existence.

- Jack London and Charles Darwin revealed the indifference of nature toward individuals.
- They perfectly portrayed the conflict between man and nature. The two short stories present the theme of humanity's fragile insignificance within nature.

**CHAPTER-I. The
Philosophical and
Literary Contexts**

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Introduction

Naturalism is one of the most well-known literary tenets of the 19th century. It is a literary movement that emphasizes how objective and discrete environmental, social, and hereditary variables affect human nature using scientific principles. It also identifies some of its traits. Therefore, this chapter focuses on the philosophy of naturalism and the context in which the movement appeared. It also sheds light on the pioneers of the movement.

I.1. The Philosophical context

I.1.1. Realism

Literary Realism is a literary movement that represents reality by portraying mundane, everyday experiences as they are in real life. It features well-known characters, settings, and narratives, primarily from society's middle and lower echelons.

American Realism began as a reaction to and rejection of Romanticism, emphasizing emotion, imagination, and the individual. The movement began as early as the 1830s but reached prominence and held sway from the end of the Civil War to the end of the nineteenth century. Realism reflected the ravages of war, the grittiness of the Industrial Revolution, the hardships of city life, and the injustices that surfaced in a new age. Realists stuck to their goal of representing the hard facts of life by highlighting the individual.

One of the most famous realistic writers, Charles Dickens, directed his attention more toward revelation theories than representational ones.

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I.1.2. Naturalism

Naturalism is an extreme form of literary Realism based on the belief that science can explain all social phenomena. Nature writers adopted a deterministic view and maintained objectivity in their storytelling. They detach from the emotional components of the story and act more as impartial observers of what is happening. When discussing feelings, the focus is on the primal feelings of survival, usually in a hostile world. Determinism in naturalism is the idea that nature or fate influences an individual's life course and personality.

Objective naturalism, like subjective naturalism, posits that a meaningful life is possible in a purely material world devoid of limited and unlimited spiritual realities. American naturalism ranges in belief and position. It includes authors such as Stephen Crane, Henry James, Jack London, William Dean Howells, and Theodore Dreiser. Faulkner is renowned for analyzing social structures based on slavery and societal transformations. He is also a prolific naturalist writer. He also explored genetic influences beyond the individual's control. Nature literature often implements a third-person point of view that acts as an observer with no opinion. The narrator tells the story as it is. If emotions are mentioned, they are explained scientifically. It contains many themes, such as the struggle for survival, determinism, violence, and greed. Emotions are seen as primal and part of survival rather than psychological, the desire for domination, and an indifferent universe.

Nature Adventures is a 19th-century art movement that sought to depict realistic objects in a natural setting. It became one of the main styles of the century and led, with Realism, to the impressionist movement. As narrated in the two novels,

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there are many daring adventures in a harsh world, and its heroes are the man and the dog.

The tendency to seek unusual challenges or position oneself far from a space that the average person would consider ordinary or safe. People with robust and adventurous nature is about pushing boundaries, taking risks, and being competitive.

I.1.3. The Influence of Naturalism on London's Works

Instead of using supernatural or spiritual explanations, naturalism focuses on explanations that come from the laws of nature. Beyond the belief that everything can be explained using nature, naturalism is also a term for a particular style of art and literature from the 19th century.

Charles Darwin, an English biologist and naturalist, wrote his influential book *On the Origin of Species* in 1859. His book highlighted his theory of evolution, which stated that all living creatures evolved from a common ancestor through a series of natural selections. Darwin's theories greatly influenced naturalist writers. From Darwin's theory, naturalists concluded that all human nature was derived from an individual's environment and hereditary factors.

A group of American writers emerged at the end of the nineteenth century under the influence of European naturalists, particularly Emile Zola, whose theories about the operation of the cosmos and their awareness of social pathologies led them to naturalism, a new and harsher realism.

Jack London (1876–1916) was one of the most famous American writers of his time and was regarded as one of the greatest naturalist novelists in America. He

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has been at the forefront of the move toward realistic fiction and Realism in America. He has been deeply influenced by Darwin's ideas of constant struggle in nature and "The Survival of the Fittest". He shows his philosophy of naturalism ultimately in *The Call of the Wild*.

Most naturalists demonstrated a concern with the animal or the irrational motivations for human behavior, sometimes manifested in connection with sexuality and violence. In America, naturalism had been shaped by the war, by the social upheavals that undermined the comforting faith of an earlier age, and by the disturbing teachings of Charles Darwin. Darwinism stressed the animalist nature of man and suggested that the irresistible forces of evolution dominated him. The pessimism and deterministic ideas of naturalism pervaded the works of such writers as Frank Norris, Jack London, Theodore Dreiser, and Hemingway. Their detailed descriptions of the lives of the downtrodden and the abnormal, their frank treatment of human passion and sexuality, and their portrayal of men and women overwhelmed by the blind forces of nature still exert a powerful influence on modern writers.

I.2. The Biographical and Literary contexts

I.2.1. Charles Darwin

Charles Darwin was recommended as a naturalist on HMS *Beagle*, which was bound on a long scientific survey expedition to South America and the South Seas (1831–36). His zoological and geological discoveries on the voyage resulted in numerous important publications and formed the basis of his theories of evolution. Seeing competition between individuals of a single species, he recognized that within a local population, the individual bird, for example, with the sharper beak might have

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a better chance to survive and reproduce, and that if such traits were passed on to new generations, they would be predominant in future populations. He saw this natural selection as the mechanism by which advantageous variations were passed on to later generations and less advantageous traits gradually disappeared. He worked on his theory for more than 20 years before publishing it in his famous *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* (1859). The book was immediately in great demand, and Darwin's intensely controversial theory was accepted quickly in most scientific circles; most opposition came from religious leaders. Though Darwin's ideas were modified by later developments in genetics and molecular biology, his work remains central to modern evolutionary theory. His many other important works included *Variation in Animals and Plants under Domestication* (1868) and *The Descent of Man* (1871). Charles died April 19, 1882, in Downer, Kent, in Westminster Abbey.

I.2.2. Jack London

Jack London was an American novelist and short-story writer whose best-known works, among them "The Call of the Wild" (1903) and "White Fang" (1906), depict elemental struggles for survival. During the 20th century, he was one of the most extensively translated American authors.

Deserted by his father, a roving astrologer, he was raised in Oakland, California, by his spiritualist mother and his stepfather, whose surname, London, he took. At age 14, he quit school to escape poverty and gain adventure. He explored San Francisco Bay in his sloop, alternately stealing oysters or working for the government fish patrol. He went to Japan as a sailor and saw much of the United

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States as a hobo riding freight trains and as a member of Charles T. Kelly's industrial army (one of the many protest armies of the unemployed, like Coxe's Army, that was born of the financial panic of 1893). London saw depression conditions, was jailed for vagrancy, and in 1894 became a militant socialist.

During the remainder of his life, London wrote and published steadily, completing some 50 books of fiction and nonfiction in 17 years. Although he became the highest-paid writer in the United States at that time, his earnings never matched his expenditures, and he was never freed of the urgency of writing for money. He sailed a ketch to the South Pacific, telling of his adventures in *The Cruise of the Snark* (1911). In 1910, he settled on a ranch near Glen Ellen, California, where he built his grandiose Wolf House. He maintained his socialist beliefs almost to the end of his life.

Jack London's output, typically hastily written, is of uneven literary quality, though his highly romanticized stories of adventure can be compulsively readable. His Alaskan novels *The Call of the Wild* (1903), *White Fang* (1906), and *Burning Daylight* (1910), in which he dramatized in turn atavism, adaptability, and the appeal of the wilderness, are outstanding. His short story "To Build a Fire" (1908), set in the Klondike, is a masterly depiction of humankind's inability to overcome nature; it was reprinted in 1910 in the short-story collection *Lost Face*, one of many such volumes that London published.

Jack London died at the age of 40 on November 22, 1916, at his home in California. Rumors spread about the manner of his death, and some claimed he

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committed suicide. He had many diseases, such as addiction and other diseases that cause death.

I.2.3. “The Call of the Wild”

In "The Call of the Wild", Jack London uses the regression of Buck, an anthropomorphic dog, to illustrate the naturalistic principle of how the "forces of heredity and environment" govern the development of one's character ("American Literary Naturalism").

So it is no surprise that we love “The Call of the Wild” because a dog is involved. However, if you frantically questioned Call of the Wild's main character Buck, "Who is a good dog?" Who is a decent canine? Who are they? The answer would probably be, "Um. Not me, pal. "Because Buck is not about the "man's best friend" thing. He is all about—you got it—making sure the Call of the Wild does not go to voicemail. Sure, Buck loves humans. He is a good companion to his rich owner in sunny Santa Clara, California. He's a good sled dog after he gets stolen and sold into dog slavery in the Yukon Territory. Moreover, he falls head-over-paws in dog love with his kick-butt owner, Thornton. Above all else, though, Buck comes to love the life of a wild dog. Furthermore this "wildness" is not Hallmark card material. Being a wild dog does not mean skipping through fields of tulips and splashing in babbling brooks. It means near-starvation, running for hours, fighting until death, and sleeping in sub-zero conditions. However, it also means total freedom and a life full of thrilling adventures.

It is no shocker that this book was penned by Jack London, an infamously adventurous novelist who traveled to Japan and Alaska for good yarns. Published

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serially in 1903, "Call of the Wild" is his most famous work, and this is from the guy who brought us *White Fang* and "To Build a Fire." And that fame comes from the fact that it is almost impossible not to be seduced or validated by "The Call of the Wild", even if you are more of a cat person. This short story is about the magnetic pull of wildness on all beasts, including humans. Written at a point in history when technology was shaping the world in baffling ways (airplanes, telephones, and cars were all newfangled inventions), London's story still holds up today for obvious reasons: technology keeps updating. We all feel further and further away from "the wild."

This dissertation examines Jack London's "The Call of the Wild" (1903) from thematic perspective. The story has long been read as a real work with primitiveness and virility at its core. The story follows Buck—a mix of St. Bernard and Scotch collie—throughout his journey as a sled dog. Buck's story begins at the House of Judge Miller in Santa Clara, California. Here, Buck is a beloved domesticated pet, living comfortably. However, after gold is discovered in the Yukon Territory of Canada, Buck is stolen by one of Miller's gardeners as the demand for sled dogs increases. The gardener sells Buck to dog traders and makes a profit, and Buck is soon shipped north, abused, and beaten as he goes.

Along with a sweet, unassuming dog named Curly; Buck is sold to two government couriers, François and Perrault, who put him to work as a sled dog. Buck is soon overwhelmed by his surroundings, mainly when he sees a group of huskies attack and kills Curly. As Buck is forced to adapt to the Wild, his primitive instincts begin to surface. Throughout this time, he develops a hostile relationship with Spitz, the lead sled dog. The two have had numerous altercations, and Buck constantly

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challenges him to undermine his authority. After a final, decisive battle, Buck kills Spitz and appoints himself as the new lead dog, something he convinces his owners to go along with through his stubbornness. The team makes trips in record time with Buck as the lead dog. Eventually, the team and Buck are sold to a mailman, who has the dogs carry difficult, heavy loads. This work results in the death of one of the dogs.

Once more, American gold seekers Hal, Charles, and Mercedes purchase the squad. They overload the sled and unduly beat the dogs because the three are utterly inexperienced. Halfway through a long journey, they run out of food, causing more than half of the dogs to die of starvation. They come across the camp of John Thornton while traveling, but there is still a long distance to go. Thornton warns them that the ice they are about to cross is thinning and that it is unsafe to cross. The Americans disregard him and attempt to leave. The other dogs obey, but Buck refuses to move onto the ice. Hal beats him viciously until Thornton steps in and cuts Buck free. The Americans continue without Buck, only to fall through the thinning ice and perish alongside the remainder of their dogs.

Buck becomes devoted to it, and he even saves Thornton from drowning. One day, Thornton brags that Buck can pull a thousand-pound load and bets more than a thousand dollars on him. After some struggle, Buck can do so, and his master uses the money to search for a hidden mine deep in the Canadian wilderness. His growing desire for the Wild challenges Buck's love for Thornton. He begins to disappear into the forest for longer intervals but always returns to it. Buck hunts bears and moose during these excursions, even befriending a wolf. One day Buck returns to find Thornton and his crew killed by Native Americans, whom the story calls Yeehats.

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Angry beyond comprehension, Buck attacks and kills several Yeehats and scatters the rest. Buck then ventures into the forest and becomes the leader of a wolf pack. He becomes known by the Yeehats as Ghost Dog; because of his swiftness, his shadow is all they can glimpse. Despite being fully wild now, Buck still returns to the place of Thornton's death each year to mourn the loss of his best friend.

However, this study focuses on London's presentation of the environment of dog-sledding in the Klondike, into which the dog Buck, his main character, is thrown, as not only primitive but also distinguished by complex organizational characteristics. The story traces Buck's experiences with several groups of masters, each exhibiting a different leadership style. Buck begins as a mere "hand" in his organization, but he fights for leadership and eventually proves his excellence by rising to the leader position among the team. Although Jack London was never an organized man, his experience as a literary businessman and his previous experience as a manual laborer helped him experience the peak of industrialization and, as a result, the ever-increasing influence of business and business organizations in American society. London is one of the originators of a genre that might be referred to as business fiction. Two theories of organizational behavior, a field in the academic discipline of management, were used for this study: David C. McClelland's achievement motivation theory and Robert J. House's path-goal leader effectiveness theory. Using McClelland's theory, this study found that Buck has a high need for achievement, as do his other characters—human and canine. Buck's character in the story is similar to that of an entrepreneur, as defined by McClelland. The story can be read as the story of a businessman who rises to become C.E.O. Owing to his exceptional abilities as a business leader. In addition, this study applies House's

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theory in evaluating the impact of the various leadership styles of human masters on the behavior and performance of this case study of “The Call of the Wild”, suggesting the possibility of applying organization behavior theories to interpreting other late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century fictions.

I.2.4. “To Build a Fire”

The short story "To Build a Fire" (1908) was set in the Klondike and is a masterly depiction of humankind's inability to overcome nature. It was reprinted in 1910 in the short-story collection, one of many such volumes that London published.

Like many of his stories, Jack London's "To Build a Fire" takes place in the snowy world of the Yukon, where it's so cold your spit freezes before it even hits the ground. Jack London spent a very influential part of his young life mining for gold in the Arctic North and returned to the States a changed man. He was certain that civilization and its modern conveniences had turned everyone (and men in particular) into a bunch of wimps down south. And he felt that people needed to reconnect with their animal instincts if they wished to remain strong against the pampering forces of the modern world. The Yukon seemed like a really good place to do that. (It also seemed like a really good place to get your hands on some gold.)

That said, the protagonist of "To Build a Fire" is no wimp. In fact, he's pretty darn tough. But the guy is a little too confident, and as the narrator of the story remarks, he doesn't really appreciate the significance of the things around him. He is, in short, shortsighted. So this story is a parable of sorts about how it takes more than toughness to survive in the Yukon, with a larger lesson about the merits of humility and preparedness tacked on.

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"To Build a Fire" is a rewrite of (and huge improvement on) an earlier story that appeared in a boy's adventure magazine in 1902 and had a wildly different ending. Around this time, American readers couldn't get enough of literature that was based on the Klondike Gold Rush, which occurred when the discovery of gold led more than 100,000 people to flock to Canada's Yukon Territory between 1897 and 1899. Jack London was a part of this entire hullabaloo, and it made its way into much of his fiction. It can be interpreted as saying that your will exists, but this will is enslaved by forces beyond your control. Naturalistic writing came out in the 19th century, and it was a profound ideology stemming from realism. "To Build a Fire" is the tragic tale of a man who decides to travel alone through the hostile environment of the Yukon in sub-freezing temperatures and falls victim to the unrelenting and unforgiving power of nature. During his journey, the man gets his feet wet as he falls through the ice into the water of a hot spring (London 122). Because of the severity of the cold, which is "one hundred and seven degrees below the freezing point», the man's life depends upon his ability to promptly light a fire to keep his body from freezing (122-23). After one half-successful fire-starting endeavor and several other pitiful attempts, the hopelessness of the man's alone struggle against the hostile environment of the Yukon begins to become apparent. After a lengthy episode of panic in which the man tries desperately to return the feeling to his extremities by "running around like a chicken with its head cut off" (128), the man at last "grows calm and decides to meet death with dignity." (Labor 66). The story's central theme, as portrayed by many existentialist writers, is that man lives a solitary existence that is subject to the relentless, unforgiving forces of nature. An ever so subtle part of his theme is that it is man's goal to find meaning in his existence. Generally, the themes

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of naturalism based stories are man against nature or the awakening that nature is indifferent to men. In this story, the author wanted to show humans vulnerability since the story shows how the main character is susceptible to the harsh conditions and the continuous the unfriendly expanse of the Yukon can come to be the solitary individual who inhabits a cruel and indifferent cosmos. At the conclusion of the story, we finally see the man come to the realization, in a roundabout way, that it was best to meet his fate with dignity, thus giving meaning to an otherwise meaningless and cruel story. This existential theme in "To Build a Fire "is not likely to be a mere coincidence but instead appears to be part of London's intentional design. According to Charles Child Walcott, Jack London was greatly influenced by the ideas of such men as Charles Darwin, Herbert Spencer, and Friend Rich.

Conclusion

Naturalist fiction in the United States often concentrated on the non-Anglo, ethnically marked inhabitants of the growing American cities, many of them immigrants and most belonging to a class spectrum ranging from the destitute to the lower middle class. Writers were skeptical of, or downright hostile to, the notions of bourgeois individualism that characterized realist stories about middle-class life.



**CHAPTER-II. Survival in
The Call of the Wild**

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Introduction

"The Call of the Wild" tells the story of a domesticated dog named Buck who is stolen from his home in California and sold into the brutal world of the Yukon during the 1890s Klondike Gold Rush. The story portrays Buck's journey from a pampered pet to the wild and ferocious leader of a pack of wolves. Because it examines issues related to adaptability, survival, and the instinct of wild animals. This chapter seeks to shed light on the survival techniques employed in London's "The Call of the Wild".

II.1. Survival

In Jack London's "The Call of the Wild," Buck is an average domesticated dog from a loving family until he is kidnapped and forced to become a sled dog during the Alaska Gold Rush. There, he was obligated to adapt to the harsh conditions of the Wild if he wished to survive. Buck was a brilliant dog and was able to learn by watching the native dogs; if he had not, he would not have been able to survive.

Buck goes through a difficult adjustment regarding his treatment, including being free, suffering maltreatment, and working hard. At first, he is a pampered "king" at Judge Miller's estate, where he is free. For example, he can go anywhere on the property and do anything he wants to, anytime. Since this is his first treatment experience, all he knows is freedom. Secondly, he experiences abuse from humans. For instance, he is kidnapped and then beaten with a club. Since that is a new experience for Buck, seeing as how Judge Miller never beat him or physically hurt him at all,

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Survival is a central theme in the story, and London depicts the harsh realities of life in the Yukon wilderness. Buck must learn to adapt to his new environment to survive. He must learn to navigate the treacherous terrain, endure harsh weather conditions, and outsmart dangerous predators. Buck's survival instincts are tested repeatedly as he faces various challenges, including attacks by other dogs, wolves, and even humans.

London also portrays the idea of the survival of the fittest, where only the most robust and most adaptable creatures can survive in the unforgiving wilderness. Buck must fight and compete with other dogs for food and dominance. He also learns from his human masters that only the strong and ruthless survive, as they are the ones who can withstand the harsh conditions of the Yukon. Buck gradually becomes more and more feral as he adapts to his new life in the Wild, shedding his domesticated ways and embracing his primal instincts.

In the harsh environment of the Yukon, Buck learns to adapt to his new surroundings and eventually becomes a skilled and powerful sled dog. He faces many challenges, including cruel treatment from humans, harsh weather conditions, and violent encounters with other dogs and wild animals.

Throughout his journey, Buck's survival depends on his ability to tap into his primitive instincts and adapt to his new environment. He learns to hunt for food, navigate treacherous terrain, and fight for his place in the pack.

Buck's experiences in the wilderness of the Yukon also highlight the importance of relationships and alliances in the struggle for survival. He forms close bonds with other dogs, especially his leader and mentor, the experienced sled dog

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named Spitz. Buck ultimately challenges and defeats Spitz in a fight for dominance, becoming the pack's leader and ensuring his survival.

As Buck watched the other dogs chow down on their food, his breath warmed his chest as he let out a low growl at Spitz. The sly Spitz had taken Buck's food and outsmarted him. Buck soon learned that living in this condition would require new knowledge and a quick-thinking mind. Even though other dogs are almost as wild as he is, Buck possesses the quality of intelligence. Because of his cunning, quick decisions, capacity to consider the implications of his actions, and adaptability in adjusting to his new surroundings, he is the only member of his pack to survive.

Buck can make quick but intelligent decisions without time to think about them. Buck has to draw these conclusions in certain circumstances, such as when he saves Thornton from getting carried away in the river. "Buck had sprung in on the instant; and at the end of three hundred yards, amid a mad swirl of water, he overhauled Thornton" (65). As Thornton falls into the rapids, Buck leaps to his feet without thinking twice about whether he should risk his life. As Buck went to save Thornton from the river, he put his own life at risk to save Thornton. He also used this quality in the final fight against Spitz. In the fight, Buck has to think quickly about what he will do, such as leap out of the way or attack. Buck has the advantage of hasty but shrewd thinking, which helps him fight and stay out of danger's path. The quality that allows him to make decisions in life-or-death situations helps him survive in the middle of the harsh, cold wilderness.

Survival in "The Call of the Wild" is not just about physical strength and cunning. Buck also develops a deep connection with nature and learns to respect the

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natural world around him. He becomes attuned to the rhythms of the wilderness and learns to read the signs of nature to anticipate danger and navigate his environment.

Buck learns many lessons to survive. Buck's next lesson in adapting to his new life involves finding a warm place to sleep. He sees lights one night in François and Perrault's tent, and because he has been used to sleeping by the Judge's fireplace, Buck enters their tent only to be bombarded by curses and flying objects. Buck is shocked to discover that all of the other canines are, in a sense, "teammates" and that they have buried themselves under the snow as he wanders around the encampment in the chilly, biting wind piercing his injured shoulder. Thus, Buck learns how the other dogs sleep and keep warm, so he selects a place for himself and is soon asleep; once again, he learns another lesson about how to survive in this new and hostile country.

For days, Buck was always hungry, and even though he was given a half pound of food a day more than the other dogs, he never seemed to have enough, and he suffered from perpetual hunger pains. This is partly because Buck is a civilized dog and a fastidious eater, and the other dogs wolf down their food, then come over and steal Buck's rations. Buck quickly learns, however, that to survive, he, too, must wolf down his food. In a civilized society, Buck would never have had to steal food, but now he realizes that to survive and thrive in this hostile northern environment, he will have to learn to steal in secret and clever ways. London claimed that Buck's food thefts "marked the decay or disintegration of his moral nature." However what Buck is learning is that in such a wilderness as this, his old sense of morality hinders survival.

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Buck, however, reasons that to survive, he must adjust in every way he can.

Overall, "The Call of the Wild" depicts a world where survival is the ultimate goal, and only those who can adapt and overcome the challenges of the environment can thrive. It is a powerful portrayal of the struggle for survival in the face of adversity and how it can transform even the most domesticated creatures into fierce and powerful beings. Explains how survival is intricate and multifaceted, requiring mental and physical toughness and a profound knowledge of the natural world. Through Buck's journey of survival, London offers a powerful commentary on the human condition and our relationship with nature.

II.2. Naturalism in the Call of the Wild

"The Call of the Wild" by Jack London is a classic example of naturalism in literature. Naturalism is a literary movement that emerged in the late 19th century and emphasized the role of natural forces, heredity, and the environment in shaping human character and destiny. The story depicts the struggle for survival in the harsh and unforgiving environment of the Alaskan wilderness. The main character, a domesticated dog named Buck, is taken from his comfortable life in California and sold into the brutal world of sled dog racing in the Yukon.

London portrays Buck's transformation from a pampered house pet to a fierce and independent creature that must rely on his instincts to survive. The story emphasizes the laws of nature and how they shape the behavior of animals and humans. Buck is subject to the "law of club and fang," which dictates that the strongest and most ruthless survive in the Wild.

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In "The Call of the Wild," naturalism is evident in several ways:

The emphasis on instinct: Throughout the short story, Buck is driven by his primal instincts, such as the desire to hunt, kill, and assert dominance over other animals. His instincts are portrayed as essential for his survival and are contrasted with the civilized and domesticated behavior he exhibited before his journey to the North.

The role of society: The story depicts a society where humans and animals are in constant conflict, competing for resources and power. The humans in the story are portrayed as brutal, selfish, and indifferent to the suffering of animals. Buck's owners, for example, are shown to be cruel and abusive, using violence and fear to control their dogs. The story suggests that this social hierarchy results from natural selection, in which the fittest and most adaptable individuals survive.

The naturalistic worldview in "The Call of the Wild" is deterministic, meaning that characters' fates are determined by forces beyond their control, such as genetics and the environment. Buck's fate is tied to his physical strength and ability to adapt to his surroundings. The other sled dogs, too, are subject to the same laws of nature, and only the strongest and most ruthless survive.

London uses Buck's transformation to illustrate the naturalistic principle of determinism. Buck's behavior is determined by his environment and the natural forces surrounding him. He is subject to the laws of nature, such as the struggle for survival and the dominant hierarchy of the pack.

London also emphasizes the harshness and brutality of the natural world. Buck is constantly battling for survival, fighting against other dogs and wild animals.

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The harsh environment forces him to adapt and develop his survival skills. Cold and hunger are constant threats to Buck's survival and the other sled dogs. The natural world is indifferent to their suffering, and survival is only possible through adaptation and the struggle to overcome obstacles.

As the story progresses, London reveals that Buck's new world, a harsh environment sharply juxtaposed with the comfortable life he knew in Santa Clara Valley, has neither "peace, nor rest, nor a moment's safety" (43). The "social context and environment" of this new world affect Buck's "interaction and character development" within it, compelling him to disregard the comfort of his past to embrace the reality of his new situation. To survive, he must be the pack's most vital, most intelligent, and most cunning dog. This forces him to quickly learn how to keep warm, eat hastily, and steal food when necessary, all things that mark "his adaptability, his capacity to adjust himself to changing conditions" (London 59). In such a harsh environment, where imminent death threatens those who cannot adapt, Buck must live by the principle of "kill or be killed, eat or be eaten," which necessitates the arousal of his repressed primordial instincts (London 167). To survive, Buck must slay Spitz, challenge Francois, and defy Hal not only to assert his dominance in this new world but also to satisfy the desires of his atavistic instincts.

The theme of the survival of the fittest is also evident in the story. Buck's transformation into a wild dog results from his ability to adapt and survive in the harsh environment of the Yukon. A person cannot survive if they cannot adapt to the natural surroundings.

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In conclusion, "The Call of the Wild" is a prime example of naturalism in literature, portraying a harsh and unforgiving natural world that shapes the fate of its characters. London uses the character of Buck and his experiences to illustrate the principles of determinism, the influence of natural forces on human behavior, and the harshness and brutality of the natural world. London's depiction of Buck's transformation from a domesticated pet to a wild and independent creature highlights the role of natural forces in shaping character and destiny.

II.3. Discussion of the Role of Nature in Survival

Nature plays a critical role in human survival. Since the dawn of humanity, humans have relied on the natural environment for food, water, shelter, and other necessities of life. Our ancestors' ability to adapt to changing environmental conditions was a key factor in their success in spreading across the globe.

Here are some specific ways in which nature plays a role in human survival:

Water: Access to clean water is essential for human survival, and much of our water supply comes from natural sources such as rivers, lakes, and aquifers.

Climate regulation: The natural environment plays a crucial role in regulating the Earth's climate and maintaining a livable human environment.

Mental health: It has been demonstrated that exposure to nature improves mental health and well-being by lowering stress and anxiety levels and boosting mood.

In short, nature is essential to human survival, and protecting the natural environment is critical for our continued well-being.

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II.4. Man vs. Nature

The conflict between people and the environment is a major issue. It can take many forms, including conflicts with wild creatures, battles against extreme weather, and environmental effects caused by human activity.

Throughout history, humans have been forced to adapt to the natural environment and, in many cases, overcome its challenges to survive. From the earliest civilizations that built their homes and cities on the fertile banks of rivers to modern-day communities that face the threat of natural disasters such as hurricanes, earthquakes, and wildfires, humans have always had to contend with the power of nature.

However, the relationship between humans and nature is not always adversarial. Many people find peace, solace, and inspiration in the natural world, and some cultures have developed a deep respect for the environment as a sacred and essential part of life. As we face increasing challenges from climate change and other environmental crises, it is essential to find ways to live in harmony with nature and to develop sustainable practices that protect the planet for future generations.

II.5. Survival of the fittest

Herbert Spencer, a philosopher, coined the expression "Survival of the Fittest" in the middle of the 19th century. The concept of "survival of the fittest" refers to the idea that in a competitive environment, the most robust and most adaptable individuals are most likely to survive and reproduce, passing on their advantageous traits to their offspring. While often associated with Charles Darwin's

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theory of evolution by natural selection, the phrase "survival of the fittest" was coined by Spencer to describe his ideas about social and economic competition. However, the concept of natural selection—that organisms better adapted to their environment are more likely to survive and reproduce—is a vital part of Darwin's theory of evolution. It's important to note that "survival of the fittest" does not necessarily mean "survival of the strongest." Rather, it refers to the individuals that are best adapted to their environment and have the greatest reproductive success.

In some cases, this may mean having physical strength, but in others, it may mean having certain behavioral or cognitive traits advantageous in a particular environment. Overall, "survival of the fittest" is a complex concept debated and interpreted in various ways. It remains a fundamental principle of evolutionary theory and continues to be studied by scientists and scholars in various fields.

Conclusion

In conclusion, survival is a fundamental aspect of human existence, and our ability to adapt and overcome challenges has been critical to our success as a species. From the earliest days of human history, humans have relied on the natural environment for food, water, shelter, and other basic needs. Our relationship with nature has shaped our evolution and development.

While humans have shown remarkable resilience in adversity, our survival is not guaranteed. The impacts of climate change, environmental degradation, and other threats to the natural world pose significant challenges to our continued existence on this planet. It is up to all of us to work together to find solutions to these challenges and to develop sustainable practices that allow us to live in harmony with nature.



**CHAPTER-III. Survivals
in "To Build a Fire"**

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Introduction

III.1. Survival

"When you are on the battlefield, survival is all there is. Death is the only great emotion." This quote by Samuel Fuller relates to the protagonist in the short story "To Build a Fire" by Jack London, which is the tragic tale of a man who decides to travel alone through the hostile environment of the Yukon in sub-freezing temperatures and falls victim to the unrelenting and unforgiving power of nature. During his journey, the man gets his feet wet as he falls through the ice into the water of a frozen spring (London 122). Because of the severity of the cold, some "seventy-five degrees below [the] freezing point," the man's life depends upon his ability to promptly light a fire to keep his feet from freezing (122-23). After one half-successful fire-starting endeavor and several other pitiful attempts, the hopelessness of the man's lone struggle against the hostile environment of the Yukon begins to become apparent. After a lengthy episode of panic in which the man tries desperately to return the feeling to his extremities by "running around like a chicken with its head cut off" (128), the man at last "grows calm and decides to meet death with dignity." (Labor 66). That man leads a solitary existence and is vulnerable to the unrelenting, unforgiving elements of nature. An ever-so-subtle part of this theme is that man's goal is to find meaning in his existence. When people are put in a life or death situation, the steps they take to survive to share a certain correspondence mentioned in "Deep Survival" by Laurence Gonzales. However, when faced with a life-threatening circumstance, the protagonist disregarded several of these instructions, ultimately resulting in his demise. The steps that the main character

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failed to complete during his expedition into the vast wilderness include staying calm, taking decisive action, and surrendering the fear of death.

He continued to remember that there was a good chance he would die. First, it says, "It was as though he had just heard his death sentence" (London 85). This comment demonstrates how the man's dread of death prevents him from thinking clearly. Next, the man focuses on the fact that he may be freezing to death rather than concentrating on finding a way to survive. The author says, "A certain fear of death came to him. He realized that this was a matter of life and death rather than just the freezing of hands and feet" (London 89). The last example of the man's fear of death is the sentence, "Maybe, if he ran on, his feet would thaw out; and, anyway, if he ran far enough, he would reach camp and the boys... Moreover, at the same time, he also thought that he would soon be stiff and dead and would never return to the camp and the guys" (London 89). This explains how, even after everything, he still has not let go of the thought of his potential death, even after all of his efforts. Letting go of the fear of death is a critical item in survival, and if the man could have let go, he could have made it to the camp.

As the man's situation deteriorates, his emotional state oscillates between determination and acceptance. He seemed to anticipate his impending death at times while also having faith in his ability to survive. These shifting reactions represent universal human themes of optimism and denial. When the snow falls on his fire, the man's initial shock reflects the certainty of his death, but his calm reaction and effective response seem optimistic. Being a living thing, he has an innate desire to continue, so he struggles to survive and will not give up. As he repeatedly drops the matches, he attempts to innovate. When the matches fail, his thoughts quickly turn to

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the price he would pay for survival: killing the dog to warm his hands. This thinking reflects a man in a desperate situation, forced to think quickly and willing to kill for his survival. After he cannot kill the dog, a "certain fear of death" comes over him. This fear causes him to panic and run in an act of desperation. He repeatedly runs and trips over himself, alternating between resistance and acceptance. He finally concedes defeat and waits in the snow after accepting his impending demise. His final imaginative visions resemble accounts of near-death experiences by survivors of such situations. The shifts between the man's perspective on his life and death, his need to struggle, and his stages of acceptance reflect the more significant aspects of Realism.

It is apparent from the narrator's use of the phrase "unable to imagine" that the man's decisions and actions ultimately caused his death. The narrator also keeps a judicial distance from him.

The man observes facts and numbers without understanding their consequences. To the man, it is simply "cold and uncomfortable; that was all." He does not think about how the cold might affect or kill him. Part of this obliviousness is his lack of experience. The man is a newcomer to the Yukon, and this is his first winter there, so he has a limited understanding of the danger it holds. He acts on what he has learned from his own experience, such as avoiding water hidden in the creek or chipping ice off the dog's paws. However, he ignores the advice of others, like that of the old man on Sulfur Creek, who tells him not to travel alone. The man is trapped in his hubris, or overconfidence, leading to doom. He believes he can build a fire and resist the cold using the information and experience he does have. However, he does not think beyond his immediate needs and succumbs to the

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extreme cold. From here, we conclude that the man is the cause of his death because he surrendered to death. When one ventures out into nature, one should be prepared for everything.

At the end of the story, in the moments before the man's death, his imagination suddenly flourishes. He considers the likelihood of his demise and envisions the lads discovering his body in the snow. These imaginative acts are linked to his acceptance of his death. Before focusing on survival, he considered only the resources and what they could achieve. Once he accepts his death, he begins to imagine and imaginatively apply the wisdom of the older man at Sulphur Creek (that no one should hike alone in weather below 75 degrees) to his situation.

III.2. Naturalism in "To Build a Fire"

Naturalism was a literary movement or tendency from the 1880s to the 1930s that used detailed Realism to suggest that social conditions, heredity, and the environment had an inescapable force in shaping human character. Characters can be studied through their relationship with their environment. Jack London's work was based on naturalism, and "To Build a Fire" was no different.

When Jack London wrote "To Build a Fire," he embraced the idea of naturalism because it mirrored the events of daily life. Naturalism showed how humans had to be wary at every corner because, at any time, death could be there, waiting for them to make a mistake and forfeit their lives. He illustrated the brutality and callousness of nature by using naturalism, the most realistic literary trend, and by emphasizing how, no matter what you do, nature will always exist. Also, the author uses nature to illustrate the story's tone by vilifying nature and using it as an obstacle.

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London also presented the basic idea of Darwinism and the survival of the fittest; if you are dumb, you will die. Collectively, London used naturalism to show how, in life, humans can depend on nothing.

The story starts with an unnamed man in Yukon, more than 75 degrees below zero. It did not lead him to meditate upon his frailty as a creature of temperature or upon man's frailty in general, able only to live within certain narrow limits of heat and cold. From there on, it did not lead him to the conjectural field of immortality. Moreover man, he only had one objective: to get to the boys by six that night. Throughout the story, it is evident that the man is cocky. He believes that regardless of his circumstances, he will make it. He does not even bring a sled with him; it says, "He carried nothing but the lunch wrapped in the handkerchief" (1048). As he continues his journey, frostbite begins to develop across his body. The nature of snow performs its duty; if one does not wear proper gear in 75-degree weather, frostbite will take action. It started on this man's cheeks, but this did not bother him. He says, "What were frosted cheeks? A bit painful, that was all; they were never serious" (1050). Later on, the man builds a fire successfully. After briefly basking in its warmth with the dog, they move on with their quest. As they travel, nature is seen on the face of the man. Suddenly, the ice beneath the man broke, he fell through, and his feet got wet. He quickly tries to make a fire to keep warm.

"The man's red beard and mustache were likewise frosted, but more solidly, the deposit taking the form of ice and increasing with every warm, moist breath he exhaled. Also, the man was chewing tobacco, and the muzzle of ice held his lips so rigidly. When the man desperately tried to relight the fire, he removed his gloves and lost all feeling in his hands, it was nearly impossible to get the fire going. Once the

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fire is lit, he believes that he is now safe. He soon realizes this is not true; he builds a fire under a tree with a load of snow capsized among the branches. As the flames grow stronger, the snow melts and finally falls onto the fire, causing it to disappear. Nature once again proves to man that he cannot outsmart her. She has control of the wilderness, even though he once thought he did. The man understands that he needs to start a new fire and do it swiftly. He begins the new fire in the open but has no feelings. After several attempts to start a new fire, he finally develops a strategy to light a match that works. He now has a fire, and it says that to him, "it meant life, and it must not perish" (1055). Despite his hard work to start this fire, nature retakes control, and this fire also fails.

The man seemed panicked and worried. Nature shows mercy to no man. If he had remained calm and thought about his situation, he might have had a chance to survive. Nature showed no mercy when the man failed to relight the fire using only his palms. "He was losing his battle with the frost. It was creeping into his body from all sides." (1754); the man's unfortunate mistakes cost him his life, and nature felt no sympathy for him. He was another man who failed to defeat nature for one more day. If the man had brought along a companion for the journey, as the older man in the town had suggested, he would still be alive. However, his stubbornness would not submit to that. "The old-timer on Sulfur Creek was right; he thought in the moment of controlled despair that ensued: After seventy-five below, a man should travel with a partner." (1752). Instead, the man brought a wolf dog to keep him company. The dog's sole purpose was to serve as a vent for the man's resentment after realizing all the errors he had committed.

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The fact that the man is new to the Klondike already indicates that he will probably get lost if he ventures out. This foreshadows the death of the man. London describes the traveler, a newcomer in the land," as being unaware of "his frailty as a creature of temperature... able only to live within certain narrow limits of heat and cold" (Robert S. Puchalik). The man does not know how frail the human body can be. The setting is essential because if he knew the territory he was in, he would probably have a higher chance of surviving.

However, I cannot seem to internalize that the man chose a dog over a human to accompany him on the journey. The dog was not perfect for anything. The dog was more intelligent because its instincts did not think it was a good idea to go on the journey, but despite his intelligence, He was supposed to be accompanied by a human, not a dog.

The man envied how the dog could just sit in the snow, and his warm fur would protect him from the elements. The mistakes that artificial reflect everyday life by showing how just one accident or miscalculation can cost you your life. Naturalism used the environment to show how fierce and apathetic the world can be.

III.3. Man versus nature

When a man faces nature, he does not win. In "To Build a Fire," Jack London explores this theme. The unnamed protagonist overestimates his abilities while failing to understand how unforgiving Mother Nature is. He goes outside in temperatures below 75 degrees and tries to live by doing everything he can think of. However, he also doesn't think things through, like starting a fire under a tree with snow-covered branches or disobeying locals' advice and ending up dead.

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On the other hand, the dog in the story moves on to find other humans and lives to see another day. In "To Build a Fire," London explores the theme of man versus nature in a heartbreaking tale about an indifferent man. The first mistake a man makes is being outside in the first place. As a newcomer to the land and his first winter there, he only sees the cold as uncomfortable and not as dangerous. He disregards that people are delicate and cannot exist in extreme cold or heat. Instead, he figures he will be okay despite the advice given to him because "those old-timers were rather over-advising, some of them" (1119).

The man tries so hard to prove that he is brave enough to be out in the cold by himself that he dismisses the advice, costing him his life. On the other hand, the dog is not trying to prove anything to him. Thus, he quickly realizes that it is colder than seventy-five degrees and too cold to travel. The dog "had its instinct and that made it question eagerly every unwonted movement of the man as if expecting him to seek shelter somewhere and build a fire after being aware of it, the dog wanted to use fire" (1115). A hint of worry enters the man's mind when he begins to experience frost on his cheeks. However, he quickly dismisses it by stating that while frosted cheeks are painful, they are not dangerous. Though the dog is often disappointed in the man, he never tries to stop him. "It was not concerned with the man's welfare" (1117). This is because the man shows no affection towards the dog and only sees it as something he must assert dominance over. In addition, this line explains how Mother Nature feels towards people, or rather, how it does not. When the man dies after attempting to build a fire for the second time, the dog lingers on for a little while. However, when the man does not wake up, the dog leaves.

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The dog does not mourn the man's death, only the food and fire he provides. This is another example of how Mother Nature does not mourn the deaths of people; instead, it goes on like nothing ever happened. These incidents highlight how individuals frequently assume that everything will sort them out, although this is rarely true. When one ventures out into nature, one should be prepared for everything.

After the horrible accident we discussed, the main character, "the man," fails to cross the Yukon wilderness alone in the winter and freezes to death. While the struggle against nature and nature's ultimate dominance in this struggle is evident, much of his failure is symbolic of his arrogance in the face of the immutable forces of nature. The man is aware of the danger but ignores it; this is evidenced when the narrator contrasts his thoughts about the situation with the man's wolf-dog: "Its feeling was closer to the truth than the man's judgment." In addition, despite the man's knowledge of hidden streams of water under the snow, he is not more careful and falls through thin ice, ultimately leading to his downfall when his legs freeze, and he cannot start a fire or run to safety. Then it ends with his death.

If there is a conflict in this story, it will be between man and nature as they struggle to survive in the cold wilderness. This conflict is never resolved, resulting in the man's death. His lack of supplies and food forces him to submit to the forces of nature. He regrets not listening to the old-timer's advice (470). He is then overwhelmed by panic and tries to make his last attempt at survival, but he fails. At this point, he accepts his death and tries to meet it with dignity. This conflict helps us better understand the central character and conflict because, knowing of the man's arrogance and cockiness, it is no surprise that at the end of the story, he dies for not

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being more understanding of nature's warning signs, proving the point that nature is more powerful than man.

III.4. Discussion of the Role of Nature in Survival

In a society such as the one we live in, nature has become drowned out by aspects more parallel to our lives. Humans no longer value nature as much as we should. Nature has been shoved to the back of our minds, and pretenses have been created, allowing us to think it is possible to ignore the forces of nature in our lives. Beams of warm light and soft background noises of chirping birds and distant running water while standing amid grand shades of green and brown—this is often the image that pops into a person's head once the word "nature" is uttered, not the extreme conditions it crafts that take more lives than one can count. Nature is all around us, and it is a part of us; humanity was born from it and can just as easily be destroyed. Humanity is in significant conflict with nature, and consequently, our lives are negatively impacted. To resolve this conflict, humans must realize that nature is always present.

In the excerpt from *To Build a Fire* by Jack London, man conflicts with nature because he is unaware of its capabilities. He puts his self-pride before his survival and suffers the consequences imposed on him by nature.

Jack London's story, "To Build a Fire," is about a struggle for survival between man and nature through overconfidence and arrogance instead of experience and intelligence. These struggles arise from man's arrogance and overconfidence in ignoring the signs of nature. The man tries hard to meet his boys at the agreed location and time, but the thick ice makes his journey impossible. Man tries to

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overcome the challenges of his environment to survive, but nature proves to be more powerful than man.

The central character in this story is the "man," although we never learn his name. The man's primary goal is to reach the old camp to meet his boys (458). The man is a dynamic character who believes that he can conquer anything. In the end, he changes by confessing that he should have listened to the old timer; he also discovers that he is not just in danger of losing his fingers and toes, but he is in danger of losing his life (470). The man did not realize how dangerous his actions would be, resulting in his ignorance, which led him to his death the central conflict here in the story is man versus self. The man conflicts with himself by remaining overly confident in himself and his unfamiliar surroundings. He does not pay attention to the danger he is facing and attempts to overcome this danger by forcing nature to conform to his will. Man vs. self aids in our comprehension of the choices the main character makes throughout the narrative and helps us comprehend why he is the way he is. As said, "But man is a part of nature, and his war against nature is inevitably a war against himself." If man were to face nature, he would permanently lose if not accompanied by another. The powers of nature are much stronger than a single human body.

Everyone seems to underestimate the power of Mother Nature. Those unfamiliar with such a powerful force should not test their luck with Mother Nature. Although the beauty of nature often hides unforeseeable danger, it is essential to stay clever and treat her with respect; as stated in "To Build a Fire," Jack London shows that Mother Nature is not a power to be feared through description, characterization, and foreshadowing. Jack London describes how a man's irrational resolve finally

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results in his death. He is not concerned about the darkness or bone-chilling temperatures; he is a newcomer to the Alaskan wilderness. The narrator states, "But all this—the mysterious, far-reaching hair-line trail, the absence of sun from the sky, the tremendous cold, and the strangeness and weirdness of it all—made no impression on the man. It was not because he was used to it. He was a newcomer in the land, a chechaquo, and this was his first winter." (London 525). This quote describes the unnamed man's ignorance by saying the cold made no impression on him and that he would continue his journey regardless. Later in his journey, the man realizes how cold it is. As the man spits, his saliva crackles in midair. The narrator states, "Undoubtedly it was colder than fifty below—how much colder he did not know. However, the temperature did not matter. He was bound for the old claim on the left fork of Henderson Creek, where the boys were already. From here, nature is more powerful than man's arrogance and lack of foresight. The symbolism is the weakness of man amidst the power of nature. Man can adapt to his environment to a point. He will lose if he disregards the rhythms and indications of nature.

Nature is not reasoning or deliberate force but rather an environment where a man can live or die regardless of intent. Nature does not care about anything. Since it has no mind, a man in nature seeks to tame it with his power.

The man's refusal to treat nature as a force that can and will kill him without concern is his downfall. Nature exists beyond the scope of reason; it has no structured purpose, only existence. The extreme cold in the Yukon is suited to some animals and unsuited to others; the dog can survive without tools, but the man cannot. The cold that kills the man is not a weapon but a fact of life; nature, in this

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sense, is a place where man invades, a place where man is not meant to be, and if found in it, he must respect the power of nature and not mock it.

III.5. Survival of the fittest

No one plans or wants to lose their life due to an unfortunate mishap. Wouldn't it be better to check twice and to think ahead? No wonder our mothers ask so many questions before we leave the House. "The phrase 'survival of the fittest' has often been used to describe the circumstances of natural selection, the idea that only those most prepared to survive in their environments do so. In the theory of natural selection, the party (whether man or animal) that survives is the one that overcomes the hardships of the conflict and adapts to the environment around them, thus making them a more robust species. Survival of the fittest is a significant theme in Jack London's short story. The primary conflict involved humans and dogs and between humans and nature. Within the story, we can quickly notice that the man and the dog are fighting to survive, and the fittest will survive.

Jack London specialized in stories about the wilderness. Naturalism was London's mantra, and this story is a perfect example of this. In "To Build a Fire," the setting is the Yukon. Man will always fail at survival of the fittest when his opponent is nature. The man failed to notice nature's warnings and, in his arrogance and hubris, was not equipped to withstand what nature could dish out. In "To Build a Fire," he faces three challenges: the extreme cold of the Klondike, the absence of any company, and his lack of familiarity with the road. Jack London's "To Build a Fire" causes distress in readers and makes them wonder how a simple topic can be so horrific. In "To Build a Fire," the central message is survival of the fittest in the

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world. He died because he could not make it back without freezing to death. The man did not care and did not realize how serious it was. The man thought he was powerful and could beat nature, but that is not what happened. Like man, nature is immovable. Thus, no one can alter or subdue it. The author said, "Fifty degrees below zero stood for a bite of frost that hurt."(London 332). The dog wanted to return because it was so chilly, but the guy was unaware of their danger. "He was quick and alert in the things of life, but only in the things and not in their significance."

Conclusion

The death of a man in an indifferent environment indicates man's vulnerability to the power of nature, while the dog's survival is instinctive. We have seen that it is not the strongest who always survives in the end, but the one who survives creates and uses his abilities to adapt to different situations. Therefore, survival has nothing to do with strength but instead with preparing to face danger. However, the will of nature determines everything. This is similar to what Charles Darwin expressed: "Survival is not for the strongest or the most intelligent of the races, but for the most responsive and adaptive to change." London also presented the basic idea of Darwinism and the survival of the fittest, if you are dumb, you will die. Nature did not kill the dog, not because it favored the dog over the man, but simply because the dog's ancestors were native to the environment the two were struggling through. It was pure luck and obedience on the dog's part when faced with a force greater than itself that led to its survival, nothing more; nature has no favorites; survival of the fittest is complete.



Conclusion

In the nineteenth century, American literature witnessed a new literary movement called naturalism, which describes advanced Realism.

Naturalism is a word derived from nature; it suggests that art and literature should present the world and people just as science shows they are. It developed in America in the nineteenth century after being published in France by Emile Zola. Many writers of the nineteenth century were influenced by this movement, such as Jack London, whose literary works made significant contributions to the history of literature. He played a significant role in American naturalistic literature. Darwin's theory of evolution strongly influenced him.

In examining the two short stories, we mainly focused on analyzing the thematic features of naturalism through "The Call of the Wild" and "To Build a Fire" by Jack London.

"The Call of the Wild" and "To Build a Fire" are classic stories written by Jack London, and they share several common themes and motifs.

One of the central themes in both stories is the struggle for survival in the harsh, unforgiving wilderness. The main characters in each story find themselves alone in the wilderness, facing extreme cold and other challenges. They must rely on their resourcefulness and survival skills to stay alive, and their success or failure in this struggle becomes a test of their character.

Another theme in both stories is the power of instinct and the primal nature of humanity. The protagonist of "The Call of the Wild," Buck, is a domesticated dog who must use his innate instincts to survive in the wilderness. Similarly, the

protagonist of "To Build a Fire" is a man who must confront his primitive instincts and rely on his animal instincts to survive.

Finally, both stories deal with the relationship between humans and nature and how humans can be humbled and overpowered by the natural world. In each story, the wilderness is portrayed as a force to be reckoned with, capable of inspiring awe and instilling fear.

We have divided our work into three chapters. In the first chapter, we dealt with the biographical elements of both writers, an overview of the two short stories, naturalism, and the influence of Darwin on this writer. The second and third chapters were devoted to examining the role of the environment in the two short stories and manifesting the thematic features of naturalism. To conclude our research, we have noticed that Jack London used naturalistic themes in his works. This study clearly explained that the characters of both short stories were victims of harsh and uncaring environments and that they were not the masters of their lives; they could not surrender and rise above their will.

In both short stories, the writer tends to demonstrate the idea of "survival of the fittest" and how a man needs to find meaning in the sufferings of his solitary existence in an environment that is both hostile and indifferent towards his suffering. Thus, this work can be extended to a further study discussing the issue of psychoanalysis in both works since the harshness of nature has altered the psychological state of the characters portrayed in the two short stories.

Conclusion | 45

Overall, "The Call of the Wild" and "To Build a Fire" are both potent tales that probe vital facets of the human experience, such as our connection to nature, our potential for survival, and the strength of our instincts and primal nature.



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