

Narrative Features of 12 Klondike Stories
by Jack London. Semiodiscursive and
Textual Approach

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To my family...

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ABSTRACT

The present piece of research is concerned with 12 Northern stories written by the American writer Jack London. Its goal is to apply discourse analysis as a framework to the study of narrative texts in order to find out the discursive strategies that are specific for these stories. These twelve short stories about the Klondike and the gold rush were considered to be representative in relation to the nature of this research. In the analysis of the twelve stories chosen for the corpus, the theoretical framework used is based on different linguistic trends and theories currently developing in France, Great Britain, Russia, Spain and the United States. They concern discourse linguistics, narratology and poetics. The present research has four main steps: (1) describing the peculiar characteristics of the plots; (2) showing how London creates his very special narrative world; (3) revealing the polyphonic character of these stories by distinguishing different voices through the one of the narrator and the voices of the characters; this aspect of the analysis allows us to see how these voices sound, in order to configure a world of representations; (4) studying how the writer creates certain particular effects by the use of rhetorical sets. The analysis of the linguistic features of the stories provides essential information concerning the discursive strategies and the general configuration of the twelve stories in the corpus. The conclusions demonstrate the main features of the analysed narrative texts, such as their heterogeneity in their different narrative levels; its polyphony at the enunciative level; its expressive laconism at the stylistic level; and, especially, at the level of interpretation, the proposal of an ethics of action.

RESUMEN

En este trabajo de investigación exploramos doce cuentos del escritor americano Jack London. Nuestro objetivo es la aplicación del marco teórico del análisis del discurso a estos textos narrativos para poner de manifiesto sus estrategias discursivas. Hemos escogido estos doce cuentos sobre Klondike y la “quimera del oro” por ser especialmente adecuados al tipo de investigación que nos hemos propuesto realizar. Para analizar este corpus hemos recurrido a fundamentos teóricos procedentes de diversas corrientes lingüísticas desarrolladas en España, Estados Unidos, Francia, Gran Bretaña y Rusia. Pertenecen a los ámbitos de la lingüística del discurso, la narratología y la poética. En el análisis hemos desarrollado las siguientes etapas principales: 1) la descripción de las características peculiares de la organización textual de los cuentos; 2) la puesta de manifiesto de la creación de un mundo especial; 3) el desvelamiento del carácter polifónico de estos cuentos mediante la distinción de las diversas voces que se expresan a través del narrador y de los personajes; este aspecto del análisis muestra cómo dichas voces configuran un mundo de representaciones; 4) el estudio de los medios retóricos que permiten al escritor crear efectos particulares en la construcción de ese mundo. El análisis de los rasgos lingüísticos de esos doce cuentos del corpus proporciona decisiva información sobre sus estrategias discursivas y su configuración general. En las conclusiones mostramos los principales rasgos de los textos narrativos analizados, a saber su heterogeneidad en los diferentes planos narrativos; su polifonía en el plano enunciativo; su expresivo laconismo en el plano estilístico; y, muy especialmente, en el plano de la interpretación, su propuesta de una ética de la acción.

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Introduction

This piece of research is concerned with 12 stories written by the American writer Jack London (John Griffith, 1876-1916); the main hypothesis, which has inspired my research, is that discourse analysis allows us to describe the specificity of his writing.

As the author of this thesis and as a Russian, I feel compelled to mention that there are a great number of works about Jack London, which were translated in the Soviet Union, where the author was very popular, and admired, due to his socialist views. The socialist works (*Iron Heal, Martin Eden...*) of Jack London were read and promoted in the USSR, as well as the very naturalistic stories that made him famous all over the world (*The Call of the Wild, White Fang, The Sea Wolf and The Northern Stories...*). These short stories were supposed to coincide to a large extent with the ideas to be promoted in the Soviet period.

I had previously researched the literary and philosophical development of Jack London's creation, in a university graduation paper. The graduation paper was written under the guidance of professor Alyokhina M.S., and its title is *The Theme of the Survival of the Fittest in Jack London's Works* (2005). This research aroused my interest in a deeper understanding of this author's works.

In 2006 I started an inter-university master where I attended a discourse analysis class. This course allowed me to see that discourse analysis was an appropriate approach for the accomplishment of such a kind of research. The study is divided into four parts.

- Part I presents the hypothesis; it explores the state of the art by reviewing some traits of London's life and personality, placed in his epoch; it also includes a short account of critical literature on London's works.

- Part II consists of the theoretical framework, i.e. the main theories and models that are used for the thesis.
- Part III presents the analysis. It includes a step-by-step analysis of the narrative discourse aspects of the stories, following the approaches presented in the theoretical framework.
- Part IV consists of the general conclusions of the analyses and propositions for the further development of the research.

I will conclude with a presentation of the bibliography compiled during this research.

PART I
PROPOSAL OF RESEARCH.
STATE OF THE ART

1. QUESTIONS, HYPOTHESES AND OBJECTIVES. THE CORPUS

1.1 On Jack London's Narrative Discourse

When I decided to explore London's discourse, I had already observed that the plots of the *Northern Stories* involved plenty of action, but they were also very conversational, with authentic voices and dialects. These stories are actually full of jokes, tricks and games. Very often, especially in the later stories, London presents ideas in pairs: adventure fiction versus stories of psychological insight, masculinity/ femininity, the ancient world/ the modern world, race difference/ brotherhood, individualism/ socialism, romanticism/ naturalism. In many cases the same topic is treated from different points of view.

There are also other important strategies in the Klondike tales that deserved analysis: experiments on the plots; on composition (frame story, several plot layers, among others); on different modalities of narration; on descriptions (exotic settings, powerful recreations); and on language (approachable but rich in vocabulary registers and stylistic variations).

In addition to this, I observed that there was always a big emphasis upon the characters. The *Northern Stories* exhibit recurring characters and character types, particularly the Northland Hero, a character that is rugged and adept at survival in the frozen wilderness and lives by the Code of the Northland, with its insistence upon brotherhood and community. There are other stereotypes, among them the Indian and the Woman. I had expected that the examination of some of the most significant stories with these defining

characters in mind would reveal that they overlap in almost everyone, such as the conjunctions occurring between the Indian and the Woman, yet each story tends to lay its emphasis upon one or the other.

The main question that I am aiming to answer through my research is the following:

What are the discursive strategies that are specific to Jack London's narrative discourse? This is the general question. The aim is to answer it and to describe these strategies. It is also worth mentioning that this aim involves numerous related questions concerning various aspects of London's narrative discourse, which will also be answered.

These observations and my readings on discourse analysis and on theory of narrative texts led me to establish these core hypotheses:

1. The plots of the stories characteristically depict a certain initial dysphoric situation that directly connects to the real world. The variants of the final situation are often dysphoric too;
2. The use of a story within the main story is frequent and plays a particular role in the construction of the meaning;
3. The author manages to capture the reader's attention thanks to the strong tension created, though using very few elements in these stories;
4. The staging of the characters, done through their voices, contributes as well to the construction of meaning. The world of representations, beliefs and opinions is built through the voices of the narrator and the characters.
5. The world created in these stories is particularly powerful and has a very strong expressive force due to the various and very particular stylistic resources that the author uses.

In accordance with the given hypotheses, the objectives of my research are the following:

1. To describe the peculiar characteristics of the plots. I aim to find out how the author organizes the heterogeneity of sequences in his texts. Here I will also explore the plot structure, and verify whether the brevity of the exposition contributes to the quick creation of tension; and to reveal the elements of the plot that permit the creation of tension (Chapter 9).
2. To study how London creates a very special world, mainly by his descriptions of his characters and landscapes, especially in the Great North (Chapter 10).
3. To distinguish the different voices (of narrators and characters), and how they sound in polyphony, in order to configure a world of representations, beliefs and opinions along these short stories (Chapter 11).
4. To analyse how the author creates certain particular effects by the use of rhetorical sets; to characterize the type of language between literary norm and dialectal traits and features of colloquial language, and to classify the resources and the tropes in the construction of the created worlds (Chapter 12).

Objectives 1, 2 and 3 are based on the theories of the text presented in the theoretical framework (c.f. Chapters 3-6), where different theories about discourse and narrative texts are taken into consideration.

This study is concerned with literary discourse; it will be done within the frame of linguistics and from a semio-discursive perspective.

The project will focus on 12 short stories of Jack London, the American writer who lived and produced his work at the beginning of the twentieth century, and was acknowledged as one of the most famous writers in the United States at that time.

Jack London was a prolific writer. During the period from 1899 until his death in 1916, he wrote 50 books and over 1000 articles. Though he became most famous by his stories of the Klondike, he actually wrote on a wide range of subjects; at different periods of his life he was influenced by various philosophical and literary streams, which were clearly reflected in his creative work.

London's view of the world developed as he studied the theories of several scientists. By carefully examining his works, it is possible to trace his emotional, philosophical and literary development through the characters in his stories and novels and the way they react to their environment.

I believe that in all the studies on Jack London and his creative works, too little attention has been paid to the discursive peculiarities of the language of this outstanding writer. That is why in the present research I am aiming to carry out a discourse analysis of Jack London's creative works.

1.2 The Corpus

The corpus will consist of 12 of the short stories by Jack London that are traditionally called *Northern Stories*. These are the stories that the author wrote about the Klondike and the gold rush. The volumes that I am going to include in the research are:

- *The Son of the Wolf*, 1900
- *The Children of the Frost*, 1902
- *Love of Life and Other Stories*, 1907
- *Lost Face*, 1910

From each volume the stories were chosen considered to be representative in relation with the nature of the research.

The stories under analysis are the following:

- In the volume *The Son of the Wolf* – “The White Silence”, “In a Far Country” and “To the Man of Trail”
- In *The Children of the Frost* – “The League of Old Men”, “The Law of Life” and “Nam Bok, the Liar”
- In *Lost Face* – “Lost Face”, “The Wit of Porpotuk” and “To Build a Fire”
- In *Love of Life and Other Stories* – “Love of Life”, “Brown Wolf” and “The Story of Keesh”.

2. JACK LONDON

2.1 Studies of Jack London's creative work

Jack London is acknowledged to be one of the most dynamic figures in American literature. He used to be a sailor, a vagabond, an Argonaut of the Klondike, a social reformer, a farmer with a scientific bias, a correspondent and a self-made millionaire, an adventurer who travelled all over the world. Not only his life but also his literary achievements were greatly admired. This is why the quality of his prose rather than his bright individuality has gained an undisputed place in the history of world literature and has made him one of the most translated American authors. As the famous American author Upton Sinclair declared.

[...] He has really been a king among our fiction writers, and the brightest star that has ever shone on our horizon. He combined tremendous talent with a great mind. [...] (in Bykov, 2004)

Jack London was a prolific writer. Though what made him most famous were his stories of the Klondike, he wrote on subjects ranging from boxing to romance, from survival in the Arctic to labour strife in Australia. He led a harsh and erratic life which was clearly reflected in his writings; born illegitimate, raised as a poor "beast of burden," constantly looking for adventure and all the knowledge the world might offer, he died young as a result. The fact that his gift for writing ever materialized came to be quoted as an example of "the American Dream."

In spite of his fame, for a long time he had been perceived as a shallow writer who did not care about style. In most critics' opinion London's later works suffered a decrease and a crisis. Since he was in the habit of writing a thousand words a day, he was producing low-level texts that he never cared to polish.

London was a self-taught person, interested not only in American science and philosophy, but in the views of European intellectuals and their creative works. His view of the world changed dramatically as he studied the works of different scientists; by carefully sorting through his works, it is possible to trace his emotional and literary development through the characters in his stories and the way they react with their environment.

I cannot but say that during the twentieth century the writer was extremely popular around the world, including Russia, and he still arouses great scholarly interest. He draws attention by his colourful biography as well as by his books. Since I am going to carry out an analysis of some of Jack London's creative works I find it reasonable to trace the tendencies in the studies that have been undertaken regarding this prominent author. In spite of the fact that there was a huge number of printed copies, for a long time he had been underestimated by conservative critics and academic studies (especially in the field of philology). He was often accused of being inconsistent and for his naive commitment to socialist ideas.

I would like to repeat that Jack London was extremely popular in the Soviet Union since the beginning of the twentieth century. This is why in the 1920s a number of critics wrote studies on the writer; after the Second World War interest in his creation increased and in the 1950-1960s his works became the subject of steady scholarly research. Due to the ideological bias of that time, in London's works his socialist views and his criticism of capitalism were being emphasized.

Several important contributions to the study of Jack London's creative works were made, such as Bykov's *Jack London* (1968), which enriched London's biography with new facts. Another prominent literary critic, Bogoslovsky, in *Jack London* (1964) made a very important contribution as it provided different kinds of literary and philosophical analyses of the writer and his work. He also wrote a doctoral dissertation (1963) that concentrated mostly on the beginning of London's

creative path. Gruzinskaya (1957) investigated London's creative works and analysed the plots and their organization, the characters, and the main topics London dealt with, and she intended to do a brief stylistic analysis.

Also Irving Stone's *Sailor on the Horseback* (1950), on London's life, was translated. Here it should be mentioned that this book is considered to be the most widely read and available biography of Jack London. However, some scholars have noted that Stone's work at times incorporated London's fiction as basis for fact. In addition to this, recent research, for instance Kingman (1979) also questions some of Stone's conclusions concerning London's death and other details. Nevertheless, this book is still considered to be the most famous of all London's biographies.

In the mid-1960s there was a new period in the study of Jack London in the United States as a great number of facts had accumulated and they became the basis for the elaboration of new aspects of the writer's creation.

This is why I need to mention another biography, which is closely connected with the writer's short stories. It is *Jack London and the Klondike* (1961) by Walker. This biography is a scholarly and reliable discussion of London's life in the Yukon, an exemplary history.

There was a noticeable surge of interest in Jack London's works connected to the 100 anniversary of the writer in 1980. This is when Zverev's book *Jack London* (1980) was published. He, as well as Bogoslovsky, concentrated on the literary analysis of London's creation, his philosophical views and the influence of the writer's biography on his writings. Zverev also wrote several articles on the writer that were published as a prologue to London's volumes.

In the next 15-20 years some studies appeared containing literary and philosophical analyses of the writer's creation. They also approach linguistic aspects as in *Male Call: Becoming Jack London* (1996) by Auerbach in which the author not only suggests comparing the author's life with his

creation, but also deals with the main themes and character types in the short-stories. I would also like to mention *The Critical Response to Jack London* (1995) by Nuernberg. It is a well-organized book that contains several dozen wide ranging articles covering London's major works.

Insofar as the bibliographic study of London's creation is concerned, in the last 45 years a great number of bibliographies have been published in the United States, which have enriched and enlarged the quantity of modern studies on Jack London. Among them *Jack London's bibliography* published in 1966 by Woodbridge. It includes more than 2,500 entries. Hamilton, in his "*Tools of My Trade*": *The Annotated Books in Jack London's Library* (1986), comments on the four hundred books in London's personal library, and their relationship to his particular writings. In what refers to the chronological representation of the writer's works, mention must be made of Kingman, who, in his *A Collector's Guide to Jack London First Appearances* (n.d.), gives a chronological listing of London's short stories as they were published in American magazines.

2.2 Reflection of London's Biography on His Creative Works

As it has been mentioned before, Jack London led an erratic life, which definitely found its reflection in his creative works. This is why the Discourse Analysis of the writer's stories wouldn't be complete without a brief presentation of his biography.

2.2.1 London's Youth and Social Environment

John Griffith London (1876-1916) was born in San Francisco of an unmarried mother of wealthy background, Flora

Wellman. His father, William Chaney, was a journalist, a lawyer and a major figure in the development of American astrology. When he found out about Flora's pregnancy, he left her so that late in 1876 she married a partially disabled Civil War veteran, John London, who turned into a father for the writer.

As teenager, London took various hard labour jobs, which were later reflected in his *The Apostate* (1906). He pirated oysters on San Francisco Bay, served on a fish patrol to capture poachers, and, in 1893 he sailed the Pacific on a sealing ship; this is when he wrote his first stories. In 1894 he joined Kelly's Army of unemployed working men, and after its disintegration, hoboed around the country, served time in prison and returned to attend high school at the age of 19, but soon, as the writer himself described, lacking money and understanding that the university couldn't give him everything he needed, London had to leave it.

He became acquainted with socialism early in life and was known as the Boy Socialist of Oakland, for his street corner oratory. He was a prolific reader, and consciously chose to become a writer so as to escape from the horrific prospects of life as a factory worker. He started writing stories, poems and jokes and sent them to various magazines; but almost always without any success. So, as he later admitted, he decided he was a loser, gave up writing and went to the Klondike to search for gold.

2.2.2 Klondike and Its Effect on the Writer's Self-Formation

Together with his brother-in-law Shepherd, Jack London arrived there in August 1897. Zverev mentions that London, in his biographical novel *John Barleycorn* (1913), recalled.

[...] "I had let career hang, and was on the adventure-path again in the quest of fortune". [...] (1913: 87)

After a year in Alaska he fell ill and had to return to San Francisco as poor as he had been before leaving. However, this year in the North served as a university for him.

[...] It was in the Klondike that I found myself. There nobody talks. Everybody thinks. You get your perspective. I got mine. [...] (*No Mentor but Myself: Jack London on Writers and Writings*, 1999: 164)

In Klondike he also found himself as an artist, as the impressions of the winter of 1897 in the Yukon provided the golden basis for his stories for many years, the first of which, *To the Man of Trail* was published in the *Overland Monthly* in January of 1899. After that, in the same magazine, he published *The White Silence* (1899), *The Son of the Wolf*, *On the Forty Mile* (1899), *In a Far country* (1899) and other stories that together with the *Northern Odyssey* (1900) formed the first volume, *The Son of the Wolf* (1900), which triggered London's literary fame. Later on, his fame grew as he published his next volumes, *God of His Fathers* (1901), *The Children of Frost* (1902), and especially *The Call of the Wild* (1903), a novel which consolidated his reputation as one of the greatest American writers.

[...] When London's first northern stories began to appear in print, readers were amazed by their novelty, and by the unusualness of the artistic world to which they gave expression. There was nothing else like them in American literature of that time. [...] (Zverev, 1980: 14)

Northern Stories were the first writings of young London that were a great success. These stories show a bright world, full of energy and action. There are a great number of people of different professions, characters, ages, nationalities and religions. The content of the stories is always different; some of them are about human heroism, others deal with human cruelty. They all speak about adventures, about the fight with Nature, the passion for gold, about the will to live and faith in man.

London often underlines in his stories the bad influence of society and the good influence of the wild North.

When a man journeys into a far country, he must be prepared to forget many of the things he has learned, and to acquire such custom as are inherent with existence in the new land; he must abandon the old ideals and the old gods, and oftentimes he must reverse the very codes by which his conduct has hitherto been shaped. To those who have protean faculty of adaptability, the novelty of such change may even be a source of pleasure; but to those who happen to be hardened to the ruts in which they were created, the pressure of the altered environment is unbearable. [...] (*In a Far Country*, 1899: 21)

The heroes of London's best stories are placed in unusually dramatic, extremely tense situations, where everything that is alien and inauthentic falls away and their true nature emerges with merciless exactitude. The method of psychological delineation in the 'northern' stories admits no blurring of the strokes, no capricious play of nuances, no obscurity in the author's attitude to his characters; it evokes associations with the graphic clarity of a poster-artist.

His first readers were surprised by the freshness of his material, the exciting plots, the unfamiliarity of his heroes; it was impossible not to appreciate the strict internal organization of each story, the forceful use of rising dramatic tension. Jack London created strong, whole, vivid personalities, but he always tried neither to oversimplify nor coarsen the inner life of his characters.

His vision of the Northland was about the wandering of an entire people. These people were seeking *home* – or rather the means to make homes – but many found something different in the Northland from what they had expected. London introduced a saga of the white man in the Yukon, with its Indians and its testing of the white man's codes of behaviour. In the Klondike, London saw treasure and

treachery; great beauty and horror; a code of brotherhood as well as stupid cruelties inspired by bigotry, ignorance, and cowardice, that, as we will see, are keenly reflected in his stories. He unknowingly entered a true faraway country seeking treasure, an anti-heaven to be conquered but also a place where virtues of comradeship, bravery, and humility in the face of awesome landscape could prevail over greed. London was able to narrate a personal and a national myth of the Northland that struck a deep chord.

[...] Those of the Northland are early taught the futility of words and the inestimable value of deeds. [...](*The White Silence*, 1899: 16)

This thought, uttered in *The White Silence*, expresses in aphoristic form the whole underlying philosophy of the Klondike cycle. For London's countless *chechaquos* – greenhorns, totally unaware of what awaits them there – the North becomes the severest test of human potential to which they will ever be subjected.

The North changes men, bringing them face to face with the inescapable realities of an existence about which they had no previous conception. London's stories question the true meaning of such concepts as *cold*, *shelter*, *rest* as in the circumstances where the protagonists are placed, they discover the new and essential matter of life, leaving behind everything false and inessential that seemed important before coming to the North. London's intention was to show men liberated from selfish individualism, bitterness, mutual distrust; so that strangers literally become brothers, as they had been many centuries before, when all were united in the necessity of a struggle for existence.

I will try to show in the further chapters that this was one of the strongest impressions, which he brought back from his *northern Odyssey*. London endowed those of his heroes who most resembled himself with a consciousness of human brotherhood, which helped them to overcome the prejudices inculcated by "civilization" and to clean their soul of the moral pollution of uncontrollable self-importance. London tended to

show in every story that even in the grimmest situations man is not helpless – that the decisive factors are his spiritual qualities, his moral attributes.

2.2.3 Dogs and Wolves

The stories and novels about animals occupy a very important place in London's creative works. He knew animals well and managed to picture them as real. Two narratives belong to the cycle of the Northern stories; these are *The Call of the Wild* (1903) and *White Fang* (1906).

Intending to produce works that would redeem the species of sled dog, London remarked that *The Call of the Wild* (1903)

[...] got away from me, and instead of 4000 words, it ran 32000 before I could call halt (in London, Charmian, 1921: 389).

The Call of the Wild (1903) is considered London's greatest literary achievement and a classic prototype of American literature. The story of Buck, a dog who becomes the leader of a wolf pack during a physically and psychologically challenging journey in the Yukon wilderness, constitutes a good example. This novel exemplifies the adept use of animal protagonists for which many of London's works have been praised.

The fittest survive by adapting to the man with the club (the stronger individual) and the strength of the herd (the power of the masses). By this adaptation man or dog may be temporarily defeated but ultimately will survive.

Man or dog becomes hardened to nature physically and also hardened spiritually to greed, thievery, cunning, violence, and individualism in society and nature. Finally, when man or dog has gained sufficient strength and craft, he may prey on those weaker than himself, knowing that, as London saw it,

[...] Mercy did not exist in the primordial life. It was misunderstood for fear, and such misunderstanding made for death. Kill or be killed, eat or be eaten, was the law. (*The Call of the Wild*, 1976: 77)

With *White Fang* (1906) London also concentrated on dog-eat-dog life. As *The Call of the Wild* (1903) was a study in regress, so London intended to make *White Fang* a study a progress, a case of evolution. In *Buck* the call of the wild was victorious, in *White Fang* (1906) – the feeling of love for man. The end of the story, in which wolf ends up in California happily playing with puppies, is contradicted by the whole direction of the author's thought. The "rebel" Buck, running away from civilization to the wild and leading a wolf-pack in pursuit of moose, is an image which corresponds to the ideas that prevailed in the days of the writer's youth.

2.2.4 After Klondike

The Sea Wolf (1904), one of London's modern novels, is not directly connected with the Northern Stories, but they have a lot in common, as both novel and stories were created in a similar mood. It is written in the tradition of the sea adventure novel, as the action takes place on the ship. Many readers were offended by the author's worldview but others defended him bravely. As for the critics, some of them considered the novel to be cruel, crude and even disgusting. But most of them unanimously admitted that the talent with which it was written would increase the quality of modern literature. It is said that *The Sea Wolf* (1904) created a new landmark in the modern American novel by making it more complicated, more serious and subtle.

During the period of 1900-1904 London worked hard, he wrote not only stories, narratives and novels but also worked as a publicist. In 1902 he was sent to South Africa as a special correspondent to write about the war between the

Boer and the British. But when he arrived in England, he found out that the war had finished. Still, he stayed in London and decided to study carefully the poorest layer of the English society. For some time he lived in one of the London slums and visited shelters for the poor, and as a result of this investigation he wrote *People of the Abyss* (1903), where for the first time the writer tried to protect the poor as hard as he could. This novel is considered to be very important in London's literary evolution as here he turned to realism. From the individual protest of the northern characters he went straight to urban reality. After visiting England, the writer went to the Far East in 1904, but he did not stay there long.

While working as a journalist and a writer, Jack London still participated in the socialist movement and in early 1905 he went on a lecture tour around the country. London also wrote a great number of political articles in the early 1900s. They were later included in the volumes *The War of Classes* (1905) and *Revolution* (1910). London's desire for a socialist revolution came to fruition in *The Iron Heel* (1908). *The Iron Heel* is a fictionalized account of the masses overthrowing the capitalist oligarchy in America.

During the second period of his literary career, London creates a string of other writings, among them the narrative *The Game* (1905), *Tales of the Fish Patrol* (1905), *Moon-Face* (1906), *Before Adam* (1906), the volume *The Road* (1907). All these books are very different in their themes and artistic features.

In 1907 Jack London and his wife Charmian decided to travel around the world on their own boat *Snark*. In the summer of 1909 the writer fell ill so that they had to return to California. During his journey on *Snark* Jack began to write the novel, which is regarded as his best, and one of the greatest books in American literature, *Martin Eden* (1913). The novel is considered to be autobiographical at some point; it is a social tragedy that reflects the life of an artist in society, the destiny of human personality. The character of the novel is new though he has much in common with the Northern heroes. Here I refer to such qualities as strength, energy, will and a

capacity to reach one's objective. On the other hand, this new character is different, as he is an artist, a person that creates beauty and unlike the heroes of the North, he breaks. The publishing of *Martin Eden* was extremely important for American realistic literature as it inspired a whole generation of writers and after thirty years it would be called the greatest American novel.

After 1909 Jack London started losing interest in realism and criticism and after 1910 he separated from the workers' movement and concentrated on his farm. In the books of this period, *Time Does Not Wait* (1910), *The Valley of the Moon* (1913), I may hear the motives of the return to nature. He also wrote an autobiographical narrative, *John Barleycorn, or Alcoholic Memories* (1913) where he basically discusses alcoholism.

During a period spanning sixteen years of his artistic work London wrote 50 books. A few months before his death, London left the worker's movement and suffered a spiritual crisis. Often troubled by physical ailments, during his thirties he developed kidney disease of unknown origin. He died on November 22, 1916 on the ranch. The cause of his death had not been established exactly, so there is still a widespread opinion that he committed suicide like his protagonist Martin Eden.

Determined to overcome the impoverished conditions into which he was born, London became at a very young age the type of "rugged individualist" often featured in his short stories and novels. He worked in several jobs, including that of sailor on a sealing ship and trail-breaker on a gold mining expedition in the Klondike. Through these jobs London developed physical strength and a sense of adventure, qualities celebrated in his works

2.3 Philosophical Views of Jack London's Time

Literary development is often linked to the social and political progress of a country in a particular period and such changes could also reflect the philosophical views of each period. In Jack London's case it is necessary to trace the principal points in the philosophical outlooks of that time as they played an irreplaceable role in the creation of the writer.

2.3.1 Darwinism

The philosophy of the second half of the nineteenth century was based on biology and history, in science, politics and sociology. Particularly intentional was the theory of evolution through natural selection announced in 1858 by Charles Darwin. His book *On the Origin of the Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life* inspired conceptions of nature and humanity that emphasized conflict and change, against unity and substantial permanence.

According to Darwin, there was a natural variability among members of a given species. As a result of competition between individuals both of the same species and others, the less able died at earlier ages and so reproduced less often than those who were successful. These successful members passed on their genes to future generations causing the species to drift into new forms.

Darwin's concept of the struggle for survival with the survivors representing the winners was widely applied to human social relationships. Nevertheless, Darwin's notion supported the idea of the competitive outlook of classical economics and led to the appearance of the new theory known as Social Darwinism, which played a very important role in the philosophy of the second half of the nineteenth century.

2.3.2 Spencer's Social Views

Social Darwinism refers to the attempts to utilize Darwin's evolutionary theory to give descriptions of society or prescriptions to improve its organization. According to this theory, there is a struggle for existence among animals and plants, which results in evolutionary change. This change is not neutral; it entails 'development', which may be regarded as 'progress'. The implied value in 'progress' was the cue for some thinkers to argue that evolutionary change should be deliberately nurtured by the more intense prosecution of the struggle for existence, which would bring the 'best' out of individuals and societies.

Social Darwinists argued that governments should not interfere with human competition by attempting to regulate the economy or cure social ills such as poverty. They advocated, instead, a sort of political and economic laissez-faire system that would favour competition and self-interest in social and business affairs.

Social Darwinists justified imbalances of power between individuals, races, and nations by arguing that some peoples were fitter to survive than others. The label 'social Darwinist' was applied loosely to anyone who interpreted human society primarily in terms of biology, struggle, competition, or natural law.

The influence of Darwinism on philosophical ideas was considerable and many-sided, but the precise way this influence worked is by no means easy to state in simple terms. Generally, Darwinian theory promoted or assisted the decline of Essentialism, the belief and practice concentrated around a philosophical claim that for any specific kind of entity it is at least theoretically possible to specify a finite list of characteristics, all of which any entity must have to belong to the group defined, and the concomitant rise of relativism, the view that the meaning and value of human beliefs and

behaviours have no absolute reference to many branches of philosophy. The doctrine of essences, all allegedly 'ultimate explanations', was driven out of philosophy. The American school of philosophy called 'Pragmatism' called for ideas and theories to be tested in practice, assessing whether they produced desirable or understandable results, developed in the 1870s, and was self-consciously influenced by Darwinism.

Darwin himself was one of the first to consider the relationship between ethical theory and evolutionary doctrines, as when he argued that altruism might have had an evolutionary origin. He tried to show how ethical behaviour would have survival value, and thus might become established in human societies. But Darwin did not take the further step and say that one might distinguish between what is right and what is wrong by considering what had happened during the course of evolution, or where it was going in future. Evolution in itself did not provide an ethical code.

However, Herbert Spencer went beyond Darwin. He hinted that this would be a possibility, as he said, "The conduct to which we apply the name "good", is the relatively more evolved conduct, and "bad" is the name we apply to conduct which is relatively less evolved." (Spencer, 1879: 25)

Such opinions were countered by a great defender of Darwin, T.H. Huxley, in his essay *Evolution and Ethics*, published in 1893. It said that one couldn't possibly draw any moral or ethical conclusions from the consideration of the course of evolution; evolution and ethics are quite distinct. Although his arguments were very persuasive, others went on attempting to derive ethical norms from the evolutionary process. They declared that Darwin's theory of physical evolution held no lessons on how human beings should behave.

Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) was a British social philosopher and sociologist, and his name is most often associated with early social Darwinism. He was one of the most famous advocates of evolutionary ethics. Spencer believed that human society progressed through competition. Therefore, providing the weak with too much protection represented a

loss to society as a whole. Spencer urged aggressively in favour of competitive relationships and justified not aiding the poor either at home or abroad. This view became known as 'social Darwinism' and led to furious debates between leftists and rightists.

Spencer based philosophy on sociology and history, which he considered the most advanced of sciences. He developed an evolutionary philosophy explaining all elements of nature and society as adaptations in the cosmic struggle for survival; it was he who later coined the expression "survival of the fittest."

After Darwin had published *On the Origin of Species* (1859), Spencer embraced Darwin's theory of natural selection and became an influential proponent of social Darwinism. He argued that human progress resulted from the triumph of more advanced individuals and cultures over their inferior competitors.

2.3.3 Concept of Superman

Also drawing on biological evolution, although less directly, was the philologist and nihilist professor, Friedrich (Wilhelm) Nietzsche (1844-1900), German philosopher, poet, classical philologist, and one of the most provocative and influential thinkers of the 19th century.

Nietzsche was particularly influenced by Schopenhauer's theories on irrational will, and Darwin's theory of evolution through natural selection. Three themes dominate his work:

- rejection of traditional religious and philosophical ethics
- concept of Übermensch (superman)
- will to power

Nietzsche rejected both the traditional religious values of bourgeois morality and the prevailing idealism of German philosophy. He concluded that traditional philosophy and

religion are both erroneous and harmful. One of Nietzsche's fundamental contentions was that traditional values (represented primarily by Christianity) had lost their power in the lives of individuals. He expressed this in his proclamation "God is dead." In Nietzsche's view, the fundamental self-betrayal of the human race was its submission to the fictitious demands of an imaginary god. He stressed, instead, the values of individual self-assertion, biological instinct, and passion, and called for a return to the more primitive and natural virtues of courage and strength.

He was convinced that the "slave morality" of traditional ethics was created by weak and resentful individuals who encouraged such behaviour as gentleness and kindness because these behaviours served their interests. He bitterly decried the slave morality (enforced by social punishment and religious guilt) and advocated freedom from all external constraints on one's behaviour. In Nietzsche's "natural" state of existence, each individual would live a life without the artificial limits of moral obligation.

This idea of natural ethics led to his concept of the *Übermensch* (superman). Nietzsche's poetic vision of the superman as the dominant figure of a radically transformed society is presented in the prose poem *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1883-1885).

Nietzsche insisted there are no rules for human life, no absolute values, no certainties on which to rely. Freedom can only come from an individual who purposefully disregards traditional morals.

According to Nietzsche, the superman is secure, independent, and highly individualistic; the superman feels deeply, but his passions are rationally controlled. The superman is a creator of values, a creator of a "master morality" which reflects the strength and independence of one who is liberated from all values, except those that he deems valid. The superman affirms life, including the suffering and pain that accompany human existence.

The concept of the superman has often been interpreted as one that postulates a master-slave society and has been identified with totalitarian philosophies. Many scholars deny the connection, and attribute it to misinterpretation of his work.

As an acclaimed poet, Nietzsche exerted much influence on German literature and on English and American literature too, as well as on French literature and theology. He was particularly influential in 20th century existentialism. His concern with the inner forces of the human personality profoundly influenced the course of early 20th century thought.

2.3.4 Marx and Engels's Doctrines

Darwin's theory of evolution also had an important influence on political ideology. During the 19th and early 20th centuries, various political and philosophical ideologies were inspired to some degree by Social Darwinism – militarism, colonialism, racism and Nazism. Even socialism and anarchism were influenced by this doctrine. Marx and Engels were keenly interested in Darwin's work, and used his theory to back up their notion of historical evolution of class struggle.

Karl Marx (1818 – 1883) and Friedrich Engels (1820 – 1895), German political philosophers, revolutionists, and co-founders of scientific socialism (modern Marxism, communism), were two of the most influential thinkers of modern time. Together they developed the philosophy of dialectal materialism based on the logic of Hegel. They derived from Hegel the belief that history unfolds according to dialectical laws and that social institutions are more concretely real than physical nature or individual mind.

As Darwin emphasized competitive survival as the key advancement, communism focused on the value of labour rather than on the labourer. Like Darwin, Marx thought that he had discovered the law of development. He saw history in stages, as the Darwinists saw geological strata and

successive forms of life. Jack London was deeply interested in Marxism and the socialist movement. Some of the class ideas are reflected in his books, especially in the novel *Iron Heel*.

2.4 The Influence of Philosophical Views on Literature at the Threshold of the 20th Century

As has been stated, the theory of evolution had a great influence on literature. In most American people's minds, the years following the Civil War symbolized a time of healing and rebuilding. For those engaged in serious literary circles, however, that period was full of upheaval. A literary Civil War raged on between the camps of the romantics and the realists and later, the naturalists. People waged verbal battles over the ways that fictional characters were presented in relation to their external world.

2.4.1 Romanticism

Romanticism was a movement in literature that celebrated the individual. Romantics believed in humankind's innate goodness and eventual perfectibility. The genre accepted experimentation as an expression of an artist's individuality. For example, Romantic literature discarded the formality of the closed heroic couplet and embraced a lyrical openness of style. In essence, the Romantic view was equalizing. Equal at birth, inherently good, valued as individuals, all people were encouraged toward self-development. Romanticism stressed the value of expressing human abilities that were common to all from birth rather than from training. Romanticism embraced nature as a model for harmony in society and art.

Using plot and character development, a writer stated his or her philosophy about how much control mankind had over his own destiny. For example, Romantic writers celebrated the ability of human will to triumph over adversity.

2.4.2 Realism

On the other hand, at that time there were very prominent writers, like Mark Twain and Henry James, who were influenced by the works of early European realism, such as Balzac and his *La Comedie Humane*, Turgenev's *Sportsman's sketches* and Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*. It is common knowledge that realism tends to depict contemporary life and society as it is, so that the realists tend to depict the everyday activities in their real, banal way. American realists took away the fantasy and focused on the "now" in order to depict the real life of Americans. They wanted to show what it meant to be in the present. They believed that humanity's freedom of choice was limited by the power of outside forces. At another extreme were the naturalists who argued that individuals have no choice because a person's life is dictated by heredity and the external environment.

2.4.3 Naturalism and Determinism

Speaking about the literary development of the United States I cannot but remember that the naturalists who supported the ideas of Émile Zola and the determinism movement. The proponents of Naturalism called upon literature to come down from the heights of romanticism to the muck and dirt of the industrial cities, to travel the main highways of life.

Naturalism is essentially a literary expression of determinism. Associated with the bleak, realistic depictions of lower-class life, determinism denies religion as a motivating force in the world and instead perceives the universe as a machine. Naturalists imagined society as a blind machine, godless and out of control. Darwinism was especially important to the genre, as the naturalists perceived a person's fate as the

product of blind external or biological forces. But in the typical naturalistic novel, change played a large part as well.

Like Romanticism, Naturalism first appeared in Europe. Naturalism flourished as Americans became urbanized and aware of the importance of large economic and social forces. Naturalism in American literature was only a transitional phase between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It played its role: sociology found its way into literature via the works of the Naturalists; the world of their heroes was alive with echoes of social conflict. Their books were genuine artistic achievements; but the aesthetics of Naturalism also had certain inherent defects: the complex psychological life of man and his social relations were over-simplified and artificially “straightened out.”

2.5 The Impact of Aesthetic and Philosophical Ideas on Jack London’s Development as a Writer

It is only natural that the philosophic and literary environment had an important impact on the views and creative orientation of the writer, which changed drastically with his personal growth, professional evolution and the transformation of society.

2.5.1 Literary Influence

Literary historians frequently remark that the style of the young London is close to Romanticism, pointing out that many of the heroes of the Klondike stories have a romantic aura and that the whole world of the Klondike as created by London is full of romance.

Such statements require careful definition. The two concepts of “romance” and “romanticism” are far from being synonymous. Romance is a particular mode of perception,

the capacity for a piercing awareness of the beauty of the world, a striving toward the heroic, the thrilling, and the sublime. Romance is always inherent in art; it is to be found in the culture of remotest antiquity and in the masterworks of modern art. Romance was undoubtedly one of the most marked distinguishing features of Jack London's perception of the world, and it is fully reflected in his books and indeed in his biography as well.

On the other hand, Romanticism, as has already been mentioned, was an artistic and literary movement that flourished within a distinct historical period (the first half of the 19th century) and which created its own artistic idiom – an idiom, which was already outworn by the time that London made his debut as a writer. By the end of the century, the literary aesthetics of romanticism had degenerated into a set of clichés. London's romantic approach had little or nothing in common with romanticism of this sort. He was admittedly inclined to lapse into melodrama now and again, and even he occasionally produced some 'angelic' heroines and improbable passions, but these were simply a part of the 'spin-off' from the process of his development as a writer. His striving was aimed in quite a different direction. What is attractive about the Northern stories is the strict verisimilitude of the narrative, achieved by attention to everyday details, which London knew at first hand, and to which the Romantics of his day would never have deigned to stoop. London's Northland is not some imaginary country dreamed up as an exotic background to the flights of the author's imagination, but the Klondike of the winter of 1897-1898, with all its hardships, its contrasts, its disasters and tragedies, with all its poetry, and with all the impossible demands on human beings. London, however, was not satisfied with just descriptive realism, i.e. the journalistic realism of his contemporaries called 'muckrakers'. The world revealed to him in the Klondike – not that of the gold rush, but of the North itself, subject to its own mysterious and immutable laws – was too grandiose to fit into the narrow framework of a strictly realistic, almost documentary narrative style. Such a framework would have left out the magnificent natural beauty of the North; no purely documentary approach could have

conveyed the epic scale of the dramas that were played out in the North, the violence of conflict, the intensity of experience.

In his most mature stories London was feeling his way toward a type of realism that was completely new for his time – one which combined an irreproachable fidelity of detail with a poetic imagination, with lyrical digressions which interrupted the urgent unfolding of the plot to lend the narrative an epic sweep and profundity, where the philosophical view of his time can also be found.

2.5.2 Social and Philosophical Influence

In the following chapters I am going to analyse the meaning constructed in the short stories that I have chosen. I am going to see what ideas appear in the narrator's digressions and what can be concluded from the adventures and thoughts of London's characters.

There is evidence to indicate that industrialization brought about alienation. Characteristic American novels of the period such as Jack London's *Martin Eden*, and later Theodore Dreiser's *An American Tragedy* depict the damage of economic forces and alienation on weak or vulnerable individuals.

It seems that Jack London had much in common with Naturalistic writers. He absorbed the progressive, innovative essence of their aspirations, and above all the clarity of social insight, which they had won for literature. Like them, he was sincerely interested in Darwin. Charles Darwin had a great impact on the writer. His idea of a struggle for survival among hostile or unknown forces is one of the dominant concepts found in many of London's works. The ability of the *animal* or a *person* to adapt to new and different surroundings constitutes the essential plot of such novels. Darwin in *On the Origin of Species* (1859) wrote that the expression often used by Spencer of the "Survival of the Fittest" is more accurate than "Struggle for Existence," and is sometimes equally

convenient. London reasserted much the same idea in *White Fang*.

[...] This was living, though he did not know it. He was realizing his own meaning in the world; he was doing that for which he was made – killing meat and battling to kill it. He was justifying his existence, than which life can do no greater; for life achieves its summit when it does to the uttermost that which it was equipped to do. [...] (*White Fang*, 1906: 153)

There is evidence to indicate that London also felt the powerful influence of the then highly authoritative “social Darwinist,” Spencer, whom he had thoroughly studied. But his artistic sensibility prompted him to realize that the Naturalistic approach to man involved the denial of his personality and serious imbalance in the depiction of man’s inner, psychological world.

One might wonder if, taking a different path, London liberated the personality from the cruel grip of determinism. He left man alone with himself and enabled him to test himself in the fiercest of all struggles – against circumstances, which threatened his existence. He gave back real meaning to concepts which to the Naturalists were little more than hollow sounds – concepts such as responsibility, comradeship, courage, will-power, honour.

I am going to see whether it is true that in his books he showed that even in the grimmest situations man is not helpless – that the decisive factors are his spiritual qualities, his moral attributes; his will-power or lack of it, his humanity or selfishness, sense of moral duty or desire to get rich at any price.

In this study, I shall try to describe how and to what extent such social views are expressed in London’s stories, since other writers’ theories seem to enhance the world of his novels and short stories.

Take for instance one of his books, which is of major importance, *The Sea Wolf*. Critics believe that part of its appeal lies in the mixture of social Darwinism and Nietzschean lauding of the superman that is to be found in the words and behaviour of Wolf Larsen, the ruthless skipper who shanghaied the bookish protagonist and took him on a voyage of Siberia to capture seals. Larsen is not only a reflection of ideas taken from books; here is a belief shared by many that he is also the incarnation of London's persistent idea that strong men should run the earth. Larsen fails, not because his ideas are faulty but because his brain goes to pieces.

It is also said that London could provide an enthusiastic mix of Ernest Haeckel's materialism, Herbert Spencer's social Darwinism, Marx's economic determinism, and Nietzsche's rugged individualism. When his books are coloured only peripherally by theory, as in *The Call of the Wild*, the writer is considered to be effective, but when his books are dominated by theory, as in *The Iron Heel*, London is said to be lost.

Many critics emphasize that with the exception of one or two short stories, like *The Mexican* (1911) and a handful of essays, *The Iron Heel* is the only work by London to reflect in any detail his enthusiasm for socialism, particularly Marxism.

Jack London is believed to first have become acquainted with the ideas of socialism through the works of Karl Marx. For Marx, socialism was just a stage between the age of capitalism and communism. Even though Marx himself did not see socialism as a goal, many Americans are said to believe in socialism as a cure for economic, political, and social ills plaguing the industrialized West.

Marx's influence on London seems to be most apparent in his collection of essays, *The War of the Classes* (1905). Much of *The War of the Classes* also stems from London's own experiences during the years of economic and political discontent in the 1890's. Marx, and Friedrich Engels, pushed for the overthrow of the capitalist system by the workers of the world. London's time in the canneries and jute mills, his

knowledge of child labour, and the horrendous working conditions in most factories, made Marx's theories a viable alternative, – it seems that all these facts and circumstances led him to advocate socialism. In *The War of the Classes*, he wrote

[...] The community branded me a "red shirt" because I stood for municipal ownership...And far be it from me to deny that socialism is a menace. It is its purpose to wipe out, root and branch, all capitalistic institutions of present day society. It is distinctively revolutionary, and in scope and depth is vastly more tremendous than any revolution that has ever occurred in the history of the world. [...] (London, 1905: 4)

London's desire for a socialist revolution came to fruition in the *Iron Heel* (1908). *The Iron Heel* is a fictionalized account about the masses overthrowing the capitalist oligarchy in America. The book has often been confused with the Bolshevik Revolution though London was writing specifically about America, not Russia.

The works of Jack London cannot be referred to a particular literary direction, because they depended on the period in which he worked and on the themes which enlightened his writings.

In the following chapters I am going to see whether it is true that under the influence of the writings of Charles Darwin and Friedrich Nietzsche London viewed life as a struggle for survival in which scientific laws govern all events, and whether he really considered religious faith and moral standards to be meaningless.

London's life and writing played a major role in reshaping the ideas of authorship and literary expression of early twentieth-century America. The best of the wide artistic heritage of Jack London has enriched and generously complemented American writing as a whole.

2.6 London's Project for His Writing

As I will see below (chapter 4), writers, as any user of language, produces his/her texts in the frame of a situation (an epoch, a literary trend, a particular circumstance) and conceives a project of writing (Charaudeau, 1982); in such a project they not only follow the tendencies of their time, but also develop their own creativity. They situate themselves opposite the models of his/her time, following them or transgressing them. In order to correctly understand Jack London's writing project, first of all it is necessary to speak not only about the literary current it belongs to, but also about the socio-cultural framework within which the writer created.

The writer tried himself in most kinds of literary genres; during his life he created plays, poetry, articles, novels, and, of course, short stories. The audience especially appreciated the latter two genres.

An analysis of the criticism written in the last 60-70 years shows that London's creative works cannot be ascribed completely to one peculiar literary stream from among those that prevailed, in his day, romanticism, realism and naturalism (although in what refers to Northern Stories, as a rule critics are divided between romanticism and realism). Here I cannot but note that London was a self-taught writer, who did not aim to fit himself to any peculiar literary current.

In what refers to his ideological views, they developed during his lifetime depending on the one hand on the moods that prevailed in the world that surrounded him and on the other on the development of his own life.

London considered that the most important term for any writing was to create on the basis of experience. He thought that books and studies were necessary only to comprehend what has been lived. He thought that if anyone studied theory without practice, they would never add anything new to it. As he claimed himself in his later article *How I Became a*

Socialist.

“[...] I was already It, whatever It was, and by aid of the books I discovered that It was a Socialist. [...]” (1905)

He was a socialist from the very beginning, hence he wrote his first stories from this position; his stories clearly reflect his attitude towards the sick influence of the bourgeois world on the clear minds of the North.

When speaking about the imaginary reader, who is an indispensable part of the speech project of any writer, I need to say that London's creation was of wide coverage, as it basically described completely new circumstances, very relevant at the moment of writing. Jack London appears to belong to the type of writers who considered personal experience to be an indispensable condition for his creative works, and one might wonder if, when writing, London did not concentrate on potential readers of his work, but on how to deliver to anyone of any sort what he had lived through.

The Northern Stories were the first works of Jack London to be greatly successful among his readers. The material for these stories was based on his trip to Alaska, where in 1897 great gold deposits were found. This journey became the starting point of his writing career as the first books that he wrote were completely based on his Alaskan experience. He considered that developing the physique and skill for survival in the Northland is directly tied to developing one's imagination and putting it into writing.

This is why in his works he gives detailed descriptions of the territory that presupposes the reader's understanding of the Klondike geography. Moreover, he reflects the conditions in which people lived there accurately and hence – the feelings created by these conditions. Besides, the characters of his stories are based on real prototypes that he had met during his journey. Take for instance the fact that in Alaska he got to know Emil Jensen who became a prototype for one of his most famous characters – Malemute Kid. Due to the fact that

people in Klondike were of different origin, the characters' speech is very natural, colourful, and understandable for any kind of reader. By using this type of speech he manages to reflect the simple colloquial language used by common people, which definitely was one of his objectives, as he wanted to make the reader relive the Klondike experience. Here I should add that London's Klondike characters didn't belong to any class, so that in the real world they could be anyone and in the North the absence of a class underlined that everyone was equal.

London, therefore, uses different strategies in his stories, so that his narrators become witnesses of a certain reality seen or lived through. These stories are presented as if the author gives a first-hand account, but whose story is actually a construct of his imagination. Then, he suggests an imaginary reader living through the "authenticity contract." In order to discover how London realizes such a program, and in order to describe his narrative strategies, it seems necessary to turn to the theoretical basis of discourse analysis as presented in the next chapter.

PART II THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3 DISCOURSE LINGUISTICS

3.1 The Notion of Discourse

The notion of discourse already existed in classical philosophy where discursive knowledge was opposed to intuitional knowledge. Discourse means either "written or spoken communication or debate" or "a formal discussion or debate."

Nowadays there are different classic oppositions in the definition of discourse. Among them are the following:

Discourse versus sentence (or clause); from this point of view discourse is the linguistic unit formed by a succession of clauses. This approach was proposed by Zellig Harris (1951, 1952), who was one of the first linguists to propose the examination of the trans-phrasal studies of language in the framework of discourse analysis. Actually he is considered to be the first linguist to use the term *discourse analysis*. He was a formalist and this is why he viewed discourse as the next level in a hierarchy of morphemes, clauses and sentences. In the sense 'discourse versus sentence' Harris speaks about *discourse analysis* while others speak about *discourse grammar*, which nowadays is normally referred to as *textual linguistics*. Harris chose the term discourse analysis as the name for "the method for the analysis of connected speech (or writing)," for "continuing descriptive linguistics beyond the limits of a single sentence at a time" and for "correlating "culture" and "language"" (in Cook, 1989: 13).

Another opposition is discourse versus language. In this case there are two different perspectives on language. In one of them, language is the system of virtual values and it is opposed to discourse, which is the use of language in the particular context that filters these values and may give rise to new ones. Such linguists supported this point of view as A.H. Gardiner (1935/1989:285) and G. Guillaume (1973:71).

Language defined as the system shared by the members of the same linguistic community is opposed to *discourse*, which is understood as the limited usage of the present system.

The next opposition is discourse versus text, promoted by J. M. Adam (1999:39); from this perspective, discourse is conceived as the inclusion of a text into its context, i.e. the conditions of production and reception, which makes it similar to the opposition discourse versus utterance (Guespin, 1971:39). This distinction opposes two modes of apprehension of the trans-phrasal units, such as linguistic unit (utterance), on the one hand, and the socio-historical determination of communication acts on the other hand.

Since the 1980s language conception has been modified due to the influence of different pragmatic approaches, which favoured a certain number of basic ideas. First of all, discourse presupposes trans-phrasal organization, which means that discourse is presented as series of words in a dimension that is necessarily higher than the phrase, and it mobilizes structures with a different order than those of the phrase. Moreover, discourse is oriented, not only because it conceives the function of an intention of the speaker, but also because it develops over time. There are several more characteristics of discourse that are considered to be important, like discourse as a form of action, it is interactive and contextualized. Language is discourse only when it refers to an instance that arises as a source of personal, temporal, space localizations and indicates which attitude is adopted depending on what is said and with regard to a given interlocutor. Discourse is controlled by general social norms and also by certain specific norms (Charaudeau-Mainguenau, 2005: 183). Discourse is dialogic and is captured in the inter-discourse (Charaudeau-Mainguenau, 2005: 183) It only acquires full meaning in relation to other discourses. For the interpretation of a minimal utterance it is necessary to relate it to the whole class of the others.

Considering discourse from these points of view I may say that it does not restrict the domain that can be studied by consistent discipline. It is more likely to be a manner of

apprehending language. But it is also related to diverse interdisciplinary fields.

Studies of discourse have been carried out within a variety of traditions that investigate the relations between language, structure and agency, and society; within the scope of discourse, feminist studies, anthropology, ethnography, cultural studies, literary theory and the history of ideas can also be included. Within these fields, the notion of *discourse* is itself being debated on the basis of specialized knowledge. Discourse can be observed in the use of spoken, written and sign language and multimedia forms of communication, and is not found only in everyday oral communication, as some linguists argue (cf. 3.3).

3.2 The Origins of the New Perspective

The origins of discourse studies are to be found not only in linguistics and in the philosophy of language, but also in social anthropology and theoretical sociology. Discourse analysis may be considered the multi-layer attempt to observe, unravel and critique the acts of construction from the social interchanges of every day talk to beliefs and principles that structure our life.

It is said that discourse analysis is, necessarily, the analysis of language in use, so that by analysing discourse one is committed to researching what language is used for and on how cultures and representations are constructed.

The objects of discourse analysis – writing, talk, conversation, communicative event, institutional speeches, literary writings and others – are variously defined in terms of coherent sequences of sentences, propositions, speech acts or turns-at-talk. Many traditional linguists and discourse analysts not only study language use beyond the sentence boundary, but also prefer to analyse naturally occurring language use, and not invented examples.

It is necessary to notice that discourse analysis is a relatively recent discipline. It has a great number of very different definitions, from the very broad ones, to others more restricted. Among the former Charaudeau's semio-discursive approach (1982, 1984, 2005), and text linguistics (Adam (1999, 2002, 2005) can be included, both constituting a fundamental source of this thesis; others study particular manifestations of discourse, as Conversational Analysis (Sacks and Shegloff, 1974), enunciative proposals, and so on. All of them are considered to be discourse analysis. If one tries to trace the history of discourse analysis, it seems clear that there is no single foundation factor. It emerged by a coincidence of various streams and practices, some of them being linked with the Classics or authors from the beginning of the twentieth century, such as Bally or Bakhtin. The Russian linguist wrote especially important works on discourse genres and the dialogical dimension of discursive activity, and Bakhtin's works constitute one of the bases of this study.

Some early studies approached well-defined speech events, such as classroom interaction and doctor-patient interviews with particular grammatical models in mind. For example, Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) used a system of analysis based on the 1961 version of Halliday's grammar (systemic-functional grammar) to analyse teacher-pupil interaction in order to begin to answer such questions as (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975): how successive utterances are related; who controls the discourse; how he does it.

Related to studies of discourse are diverse disciplines such as the ethnography of communication (Gumpers and Hymes, 1964), ethnomethodology (Garnfinkel, 1967).

Since the general theory for my investigation is Charaudeau's proposals, it is necessary to emphasize that his works are framed in the French school of discourse analysis. The root cause of such a trend is to be found in the work of Michel Foucault and his book *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969). Many scientists admit that discourse analysis became scientifically accepted in Europe through his writings. In a

more ideologically oriented tradition of discourse analysis, following Foucault's investigation (1989), Pêcheux's theoretical work (1982) has been influential in introducing a link between discourse and ideology. Pêcheux stresses how any one particular discourse or *discourse formation* stands, at the level of social organization, in conflict with other discourses. He gives a theory of how societies are organized through their ideological struggles, and how particular groups will be either more or less privileged in their access to particular discourse networks.

Modern language theories diversify rapidly due to the fact that at some point they all postulate the inevitable necessity of including the subject of language into the analysis. The inclusion of the subject was brilliantly theorised by Benveniste (1974), who opened the large and fruitful explorations about enunciation, which are also decisive in the theoretical background supporting this research.

The dominant point of view on the subject is a determining factor of the diversity that has been mentioned before, and it is also clear in different tendencies of discourse analysis, tendencies that may be grouped into various approaches.

3.3 Approaches to Discourse Analysis

Situated at the crossroads of Humanities, discourse analysis is very unstable. There are some linguists who tend to be more sociological, others who are more concentrated on linguistics and those who are more psychological, so that is how the divergence between multiple sources is being summed up, – “Estudio del uso real del lenguaje por locutores reales en situaciones reales” (Van Dijk, 1985: 1-2)

Discourse analysis is also looked upon as the discipline that studies language as an activity inside a context that produces trans-phrasal units of “use of language for the social, expressive and referential objectives” (Shiffrin, 1994: 339). Under these conditions discourse analysis may coexist with

different kinds of approaches: conversation analysis, communication ethnography, etc.

On the other hand, discourse analysis is considered by some linguists as conversation study. Others consider discourse to be interactive, intent to distinguish discourse analysis and conversation analysis. Moreover, in the field of conversation analysis, S.C. Levinson (1983) opposes two sources: *discourse analysis* that is based on the hierarchic linguistic analysis of conversations (texts) and *conversation analysis*. Some linguists such as J. Mc. H. Sinclair y R.M. Coulthard (1975) also take this opposition into consideration.

The approach to discourse analysis inspired by the works of the British linguist M.A.K. Halliday may be interpreted as a special view on discourse, which is reflected in many other works, such as Nunan's, affected by Halliday's works, continues the idea of this prominent linguist:

[...] All linguists [...] are concerned with identifying regularities and patterns in language. However, in the discourse analyst's case, the ultimate aim of this analytical work is to both show and interpret the relationship between these regularities and the meanings and purposes expressed through discourse. [...] (Nunan, 1993: 7)

As several linguists have already pointed out, text is inseparable from its context, for instance, Coseriu (2007: 85-86). This discipline cannot be reduced to linguistic text analysis or to the sociological or psychological analysis of the *context*.

[...] El análisis del discurso no tiene por objeto 'ni la organización textual en si misma ni la situación de comunicación' sino que debe 'pensar el dispositivo de enunciación que enlaza una organización textual y un lugar social determinados'. [...] (Charaudeau, P.; Maingueneau, D., 2005: 33).

From this point of view, discourse analysis mostly deals with discourse genres and it may be occupied by the same corpus as sociolinguistics or conversation analysis, but from a different and larger point of view. I present this perspective in the next chapter.

4 SEMIODISCURSIVE APPROACH

4.1 The Speech Contract

As far as the theory of genre is concerned, I have to consider that discourse includes various semiotic codes and differs from text. The text constitutes the materialization of the discursive process according to the model of P. Charaudeau, for whom:

[...] el objeto del análisis del discurso es el estudio entre lengua, sentido y vínculo social [...] dar cuenta del funcionamiento de la relación de los fenómenos lingüísticos en su uso y de lo que éstos evidencian en cuanto a la forma como los individuos que viven en sociedad construyen el sentido social. [...] (Charaudeau, 1986)

Charaudeau bases his methodology of discourse analysis on the construction of a general theoretical point of view. This point of view should be able to reason and explain every language act. He proposes the concept of *contract of speech* that helps the speaker and the addressee, committed in a communication act, to understand each other. It is of great value as it plays the role of a connection between the external (situational) and internal (enunciative) acts of language. It works as a constraint for the operating processes of production and interpretation of the communication act, and at the same time it is what allows the partners of the exchange to create sense.

The model implies three levels upon which discourses occur: situational, discursive and semiolinguistic. For Charaudeau, each of these levels corresponds to one of the subject's 'competences'. Situational level, that is the conditions of the verbal exchange, corresponds to communicational competence (the identity of the exchange partners, the purpose of the exchange, the content at stake and the

material circumstances that surround it); discursive level or the place where the discursive strategies occur corresponds to discursive and semantic competences, where

[...] one deals with modes of organisation, the setting up of the discourse, and the other with the content, the types of information and value-systems, in relation to which the subjects define their proper positions. [...] (Charaudeau, 2002)

Therefore, the subject creates his/her discursive strategies for realising his/her communication project. Finally, the semiolinguistic level corresponds to semiolinguistic competence

[...] that consists in the ability to recognise and use words according to their rules of combination, their identity value and their power of truth (Charaudeau, 2002)

These three levels of analysis permit the inclusion of the subject of language and its psychosocial and cognitive conditions; in addition, this model allows us to articulate this situational mixture with the linguistic components of the verbal exchange. The redefinition of the sign as a bearer of 'semiological' marks, of the meaning instructions is the condition that promotes the study of the meaning that appears in the verbal interaction. According to this theoretical model,

[...] El análisis del discurso es una disciplina de corpus que permite categorizar los discursos por tipos, compararlos e identificar lo que es común a distintos corpus y lo propio de cada uno de ellos. [...] (Charaudeau, 2009).

The determination of the constants and the variables of the texts set leads to the crystallization of possible interpretations. The final objective of discourse analysis is to produce an interpretation of the worlds of meaning, which are built through discourse.

The analyst, relying on the explicative hypothesis mentioned above and pondering on his/her own interdiscursive experience, observes and interprets the semiolinguistic marks of the resultant behaviour in a form in which the interlocutor serves for the modes of the organization of the discourse.

Basing my study of Jack London's short stories on the semiodiscursive theory, the work is detached from traditional literary approaches. This is why I consider that London's narrative discourse is the result of the strategies put into practice by his writing project.

4.2 Discourse Genres

In what follows I shall focus on the term *genre*, one of the most important notions pertaining to discourse analysis.

In general terms, a *genre*, from the French *kind* or *sort*, from the Latin: *genus* (stem *gener-*) is a loose set of criteria for a category of composition; the term was used by the Classics to categorize literature, but nowadays it is also used for any other form of art or utterance.

The notion of genre, therefore, goes back to ancient times and may be found in the tradition of literary criticism. In the antiquity we can single out two types of discursive activity. The first one appeared in the Classic Greece and flourished in Cicero's Rome. It appeared due to the necessity to manipulate life in the city and the commercial conflicts, so that public speaking became the instrument of political and juridical deliberation and persuasion.

Another type of discursive activity, the creative works of the ancient poets, comes from pre-archaic Greece. These poets played the special role of mediators between gods and mortal men. Since they had that special role, they were praising the heroes and, they were interpreting various mysteries sent by the gods. This is how there appeared the first genres, such as the epic, the lyric, the epidictic and drama.

In ancient literature genre was seen as an ideal literary norm. Here it is necessary say that in ancient literature, imitation was not treated with contempt as it was perceived as a competition, i.e. the imitator in a way started to compete with his predecessor and had a chance to become as good as his predecessor or even better. Every genre had an authorized initiator. Homer is considered to be the founder of the epic (the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, the founder of drama is Aeschylus (a cycle of tragedies *Oresteia*). Arion is the founder of lyricism.

The literature of ancient Rome saw its objective in the imitation of the Greek examples. Vergilius created his *Aeneis* competing with Homer. Horace was writing his odes competing with Arion and Pindar, Seneca renewed tragedy with Aeschylus's and Euripides' plays in mind.

In the history of European aesthetical thought, the notion of genre becomes a special theme from the very beginning of its existence. The most famous work concerning this issue is Aristotle's *Poetics*, which is dedicated to tragedy. He sees genre as the totality of art norms. Practically all the ancient thoughts about the notion of genre presupposed lyrical genres. *Poetics* never dealt with prosaic genres as they were considered too trivial, as pulp fiction.

Nevertheless, it was Aristotle who formulated the classification systems; he divided literature into the three classic genres accepted in Ancient Greece poetry, drama, and prose. Poetry was further subdivided into the epic, the lyric, and drama. Many genre theorists contributed to these universally accepted forms of poetry. Similarly, many theorists continued to philosophize about genre and its uses, thus helping the genres that Aristotle knew, evolve and further expand.

The renovation of the genre system in Europe happened in the period of the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance. The troubadours renewed the genre of the lyric by creating the serenade. At the end of the Middle Ages there appeared the

novel, then in the 14th century Dante created the genre of the epic poem by writing his *The Divine Comedy*, whilst Petrarch canonized the sonnet genre and Boccaccio did the same thing with the genre of the short story by writing *The Decameron*. On the border of the 16th and 17th centuries William Shakespeare wrote creative works that dialectically united the genre elements of comedy and tragedy (*Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *King Lear*).

Neither in ancient times nor in the times of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance was there a systemic and exhaustive code of genre norms. It only appeared in the 17th century when the French poet Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux in his *L'Art poétique* (1674) delimited the genres according to their generic signs. He singled out the epic, which included the heroic genre and the heroic-comic poems, the dramatic genre, which consisted of tragedy and comedy, and the lyric genre; there belonged the ode, the elegy, the ballad, the fable, the pastoral, satire and the epigram. The genre system of the Classicism also defined the main principle of this literary school – imitation of the ancient standards.

In the 20th century the research into the notion of genre reaches another level. Here, first of all, it is indispensable to speak about the views of the famous Russian linguist Michail Bakhtin (1979) who created his own framework for the given notion. Bakhtin's idea is that besides the fact that every single expression is unique, every area of language use creates its more or less stable types of such expressions, which are called genres. He underlines that genres are extremely heterogeneous. He also points out the fact that literary genres and discursive genres have different origins and must be studied separately. This is why he underlined the idea that speech always has to do with discursive genres.

Bakhtin singles out two groups of genres, the primary (or simple) genres and the secondary (complex) genres. There is a great difference between them. By the secondary genres he understands novels, dramas, scientific investigations, and other types of creative works. They appear in highly organized and developed cultural communication, which is

normally written. During the period of their formation they absorb and convert the primary genres, which were created in the process of the simple verbal communication, such as simple dialogues, greetings, and other types of everyday speech. When these primary genres form a part of the secondary ones they lose their relation to reality, they transform and deal with this reality only through the prism of secondary genres that they form a part of.

[...] Особенно важно обратить здесь внимание на очень существенное различие между первичными (простыми) и вторичными (сложными) речевыми жанрами (это не функциональное различие). Вторичные (сложные) речевые жанры — романы, драмы, научные исследования всякого рода, большие публицистические жанры и т. п. — возникают в условиях более сложного и относительно высокоразвитого и организованного культурного общения (преимущественно письменного): художественного, научного, общественно-политического и т. п. В процессе своего формирования они вбирают в себя и перерабатывают различные первичные (простые) жанры, сложившиеся в условиях непосредственного речевого общения. Эти первичные жанры, входящие в состав сложных, трансформируются в них и приобретают особый характер: утрачивают непосредственное отношение к реальной действительности и к реальным чужим высказываниям; например, реплики бытового диалога или письма в романе, сохраняя свою форму и бытовое значение только в плоскости содержания романа, входят в реальную действительность лишь через роман в его целом, то есть как событие литературно-художественной, а не бытовой жизни. Роман в его целом является высказыванием, как и реплика бытового диалога или частное письмо (он имеет с ними общую природу), но в отличие от них это высказывание вторичное (сложное). [...] (Бахтин, 1979b: 168)

[...] It is especially important here to draw attention to the very significant difference between primary (simple) and secondary (complex) speech genres (understood not as a functional difference). Secondary (complex) speech genres – novels, dramas, all kinds of scientific research, major genres of commentary, and so forth – arise in more complex and comparatively highly developed and organized cultural communication (primarily written) that is artistic, scientific, socio-political, and so on. During the process of their transformation, they absorb and digest various primary (simple) genres that have taken form in unmediated speech communion. These primary genres are altered and assume a special character when they enter into complex ones. They lose immediate relation to actual reality and to the real utterances of others. For example, rejoinders of everyday dialogue or letters found in a novel retain their form and their everyday significance only on the plane of the novel's content. They enter into actual reality only via the novel as a whole, that is, as a literary-artistic event and not as everyday life. The novel as a whole is an utterance list as rejoinders in everyday dialogue or private letter are (they do have a common nature), but unlike these, the novel is a secondary (complex) utterance. [...] (Bakhtin, 1986: 61-62)

Bakhtin considered that it was very important for linguistics to study both groups of discursive genres together in different spheres of human activity. The unclear view of the nature of enunciation makes any investigation imprecise. Life and discursive enunciation interconnect so that enunciation and its study become a problem of great importance in contact with life. This problem is topical for many areas of language studies, especially stylistics, as style and genre have much in common and ought to be studied together.

For Bakhtin, genres depend on the 'communicational nature' of the verbal exchange, which permits the singling out of two basic categories: "natural" production (spontaneous,

belonging to the kind of genres connected with daily life) and the so-called "constructed" productions, which belong to other kinds of genres that cover literary, scientific, etc. constructions. Bakhtin's basic observations suggest that there are *speech genres*, i.e. modes of speaking or writing that people learn to mimic, to weave together, and to manipulate (such as "formal letter" and "grocery list," or "university lecture" and "personal anecdote"). In this sense, genres are socially specified: recognized and defined (often informally) by a particular culture or community. Bakhtin considered that in every historical period different discursive genres prevailed. The set of these genres depended on the enlargement of literary language by the change of the so-called non-literary layers of the language. But there is also another reason for that; the set of discourse genres in every period changes because of the changes in non-literary language and secondary (literary) genres change because of the primary ones that set the tone for the period.

In the current approaches to the linguistics of discourse genres there are vague categories with no fixed boundaries, they are formed by sets of conventions, and many studies cross into multiple genres by way of borrowing and recombining these conventions. The word "genre" has been confined to art and culture, particularly literature, and it has a long history in rhetoric as well. Currently, as it has been shown, in discourse studies genre is not associated to originality, but rather reflects on or participates in conventions. However, a speaker can transgress the rules of a genre and modify it. This is specially the case of literary genres. My hypothesis is that Jack London constitutes an example of innovation in the narrative field. Genre can be regarded as "a class of communicative events in which language (and/or paralinguage) plays both a significant and indispensable role and the members of which share some set of communicative purposes" (Swales 1998/1990: 45). Furthermore, "these purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre" (1998: 58).

In discourse analysis this notion is used when applied to non-literary texts. Here it should be mentioned the existence of different viewpoints, depending on the kind of theory adopted. The most outstanding of these theories are listed below.

The functional approach was elaborated by the analysts in an attempt to determine the functions of the linguistic activity base that establishes the classifications of textual productions depending on the pole of the communication act towards which they are oriented. According to Halliday (1973), there are the following functions: instrumental, interactional, personal, heuristic, imaginative, ideational, interpersonal, and others. On the other hand, according to G. Brown and G. Yule's classification (1983), the main functions are transactional and interactional.

The textual approach is mostly oriented towards the organization of texts and attempts to define their compositional regularity by means of suggesting. For instance, some intermediate level between the phrase and the so-called sequential text, which has the prototypical value of description, argumentation, and others, as did J. M. Adam.

The communicational approach has a rather broad meaning but with different orientations. Take for instance the fact that the term *genre* figures very prominently in the works of the Russian philosopher and literary scholar M. Bakhtin who has already been mentioned. He considered that genres depend on the communicational nature. For D. Maingueneau and F. Cosutta the point is the localization and description of so-called 'constituent' discourse types, whose final objective is to determine the values of a certain domain of discourse production. For P. Charaudeau, who is interested in anchoring discourse to a psycho-sociological point of view, the main issue is to establish the genres at some point of the articulation of the *situational imperatives determined by the global contracts of communication, the imperatives for the discourse organization and the text form characteristics* that can be localized by the formal mark recurrence. For this author discourse characteristics depend on the situational conditions of production, which determine the imperatives

managing the characteristics of discourse and formal organization, the discourse genres are “situational genres.” According to P. Charaudeau (Charaudeau and Maingueneau, 2005), besides the *purpose* of interaction, a particular genre is also determined by the *identity* of the speakers and the *communication devices* (including the norms of interaction).

For Charaudeau (2005), a theory of genres is indispensable for discourse analysis. Genres condition the modes of production as well as the modes of reception. Charaudeau thinks that genre theory might bring to the fore different types of discourse that are used in the field of social practice. Genre approach allows us to have an open, complex and dynamic view on texts (Bernárdez, 1995: 139).

Hence, genre theory may be very useful for characterizing discourse types opposed to other types supported in other parts of the enunciation. It is also of great use in the subsequent analysis of the various discursive strategies that are used in any of the established genres. For, as Bernárdez pointed out, the text is “una configuración de estrategias” (1995: 192).

This can also be applied to narrative discourse in which I can distinguish several genres such as the short story – my object of study – which needs a presentation of narrative genres.

5 NARRATIVE GENRES

Some genres are characterized by including narrative. First of all, it is necessary to explain what a narrative is. Broadly, a narrative is a pattern, which is created in a certain form that describes a sequence of events. It may be spoken, written or imagined, and it will have one or more points of view, representing some or all of the participants and observers. In oral form, the reader 'hears' the narrator's voice through the peculiarities of content and style, and also through the clues that reveal the values, beliefs and ideological views of the narrator as well as the attitude towards people, events and things. I need to add here that narrative theories in general have to be completed by micro-linguistic approaches that can be found in the theory of text.

It may not be possible to offer an absolutely satisfactory definition of narrative, because the theories to be discussed have objects of enquiry that differ from each other in significant respects. Nevertheless, it may be characterized as a perceived sequence of events, which are connected, motivated and significant and consists of described states or conditions, which transform into other states and conditions.

5.1 Russian Predecessors

Different paths of research into narrative have tended to divide the issue into two main fields, this is why the early twentieth-century Russian linguists like V. Propp and B. Tomashevsky distinguished *fabula* from *sjuzhet*, which are by-turn equivalent to the English *story* and *plot*. The first term in each of these pairs deals with a basic chronological description of the main events of the story and the basic list of the main characters.

Фабулой является совокупность мотивов в их логической причинно-временной

последовательности и связи, в какой они даны в произведении. Для фабулы неважно, в какой части произведения читатель узнает о событии и дается ли оно ему в непосредственном сообщении от автора, или в рассказе персонажа, или системой боковых намеков. (Томашевский, 1927)

[Fabula is the totality of motifs, their logical causal-temporal chain in which they are represented in a literary work. For fabula it is not important in what part of a creative work the reader finds out about the event and whether it is given to him by the narrator or by a character or by a system of secondary hints.] (Tomashevsky, 1927)¹

Sjuzhet or *discours* of the narrative is the version of the story as it is presented in an actual creative work. Both the process of realizing and the realized product are referred to by this term. The terms *sjuzhet* and *discourse* are also used to mark all the peculiarities used by the author in the presentation of the story.

Художественно построенное распределение событий в произведении именуется сюжетом произведения [...] В сюжете играет роль именно ввод мотивов в поле понимания читателя. Фабулой может служить и действительно происшествие, невыдуманное автором. Сюжет есть всецело художественная конструкция [...] (Томашевский, 1927).

[...] It is not enough to create an entertaining chain of events and limit them with the beginning and the end. These events must be arranged, put to a certain order, be portrayed by making of this fabula material a literary combination. The artistically organized arrangement of events in a

¹ My translation

work is what we call *sjuzhet*. [...] (Tomashevsky, 1928a: 134)²

Normally in literary studies *discourse* is viewed as a more interesting area of narrative, while *fabula* is considered a basic sequence of events and characters. This pair of terms remains relevant.

Let us concentrate on the theoretical basis that concerns the subject of the present chapter. The narrative theories are said to have two principal defects if compared to discourse analysis: they are either exclusively literary or too general (Charaudeau and Maingueneau, 2005: 498). Nevertheless, in the present research it is necessary need to comment on various types of these theories in order to carry out the analysis. I will start by tracing their appearance and development.

The outstanding Russian folklorist Vladimir Propp is considered to be the founder of the modern theory of text and his *Morphology of the Folktale* (1928) is the introductory publication to narratology. This formalist studied the Russian folktales edited by A. N. Afanasiev, analysed their basic plot components in order to identify their simplest narrative elements.

Propp established the constants that account for the actions of the characters according to their significance in the development of the storyline. He singled out the repeated constant elements – the functions of the characters, a total of 31 functions. All these functions are divided into groups according to determined spheres that correspond to the characters that carry out the functions. Propp noted some internal patterning within the 31-function sequence, so that he put certain functions together as pairs. Groups of functions also go together under general headings. Thus, functions from one to seven are potential realizations of the ‘preparation’, 8-10 are the ‘complication’, and the rest of the

² The only translation I could find is dated 1928, while the original definition (in Russian) is dated 1927

general groupings include 'transference', 'struggle', 'return', 'recognition'.

Likewise he also reduced the number of the character types or roles to seven: villain, donor/provider, helper, princess (and father), dispatcher, hero (seeker or hero), false hero.

An actual character may perform more than one role (for instance the character may be both villain and false-hero) and one role may be performed by several characters (for example several characters may function as helper).

Propp's research on fairy-tales influenced the development of the structuralistic investigations of mythic, folkloristic and literary texts; he achieved world recognition as the first application of structuralism to humanities and created the foundation for new disciplines, such as narratology, semiology and structural anthropology.

5.2 The Structural Approach

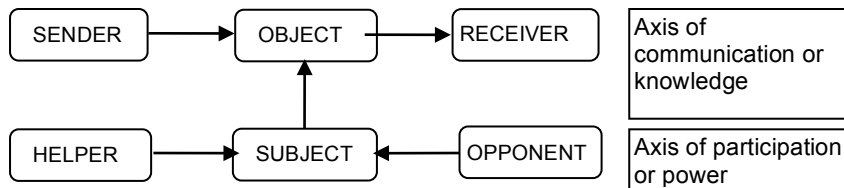
Propp's successors, such as Roland Barthes, A. J. Greimas and Claude Lévi-Strauss tried to disseminate this method and resolve similar tasks as they were seeking narrative elements in all contemporary culture. Lévi-Strauss focused on the roles of narrative changes. He followed Propp's idea in his method of the reconstruction of the mythological 'rows'; that is, couples of repeated elements of the tale. At the same time he shared Propp's narrative analysis of the text, but doubted the opposition between form and content. He argued that such a contradiction in the analysis of fairy-tales was Propp's illusion. According to Levi-Strauss the form and the content have one and the same nature and therefore they both undergo the analysis. For him, form is defined through its content, but there is no form of structure. This means that structure is not something that could be reduced to a definite quantity of constant elements, while according to Propp the quantity of functions is limited. The combination of 31 functions and 7 heroes can be considered to be archetypes; Propp said that

all the functions of the fairy-tale belong to one and the same narration. Levi-Strauss wanted to deal with real narration, not with archetypes, while Propp ignored the elements that didn't correspond to his model.

J. Greimas (1966) modified the classification of the characters and their functions. He created a scheme or actantial model by which any text is based. According to his model an action is divided into six facets, called *actants*. The actantial model reveals the structural roles typically performed in story telling; such as hero, villain (opponent of hero), object (of quest), helper (of hero) and sender (who initiates the quest). Each of these roles fulfils an integral component of the story. Without the contribution of each actant, the story may be incomplete. This is why an "actant" is not simply a character in a story, but an integral structural element upon which the narrative revolves. More than that, according to Greimas, the actants form three pairs of binary oppositions: subject/object, sender/receiver, helper/opponent, such as a hero paired with a villain, a dragon paired with a dragon slaying sword, and others. People, animals, places, objects and abstract notions may perform all these actantial roles. Actantial relationships are therefore incredibly useful in generating problems within a narrative that have to be overcome, providing contrast, or in defining an antagonistic force within the narrative. However, the same character can simultaneously have a different actant (or way of concern) in regard to a different sequence of action, event or episode in the story. Therefore, it should be distinguished from a character's consistent role in the story like the archetype of a character.

The scheme below illustrates the indispensable relation between the sender and the receiver, which is based on the desire to receive an object or responsibility; this desire is sent to the receiver and after that the latter starts to look for the object. So that the function of the sender is to prompt the receiver to do something; this means that the receiver will turn from the receiver into the subject. On the other hand, the relation between the subject and the object, also based on desire or necessity, is connected with the change of the statement; its function consists in the change of lack and

desire situation into a situation of sufficiency by combination or division with it. Thus, the desire to obtain the object becomes the main link of the scheme.



Axis of the desire. There could be two kinds of situations or relationships in this axis: 1) disjunction (if the desire could not be satisfied), and 2) conjunction (if the object is obtained because of some transformation)

Fig. 1 Greimas's actant network (*Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*, vol. 8, 2006: 465)

In Greimas's narrative semiotics the irruption of the discontinuous in the discourse of a life, a story or a culture produces a succession of states and transformations that constitute the base of the narrative.

Another of Propp's disciple Roland Barthes, proposed three levels of narrative structure: functions (as in Propp), actions (compare Greimas's actants), narration (equivalent to the notion of *sjuzhet/discours* described above).

Actually Barthes focused most of all on the level of functions or narrative events. He considered that every function had the effect of starting or developing a story line that would have consequences at a later point in the narrative. There are two types of functions according to Barthes: *functions* (as in Propp) and *indices*. Indices include pointers to the character's psychological states, notations of atmosphere, and others. The functions proper are distributional, sequential; they are completed further on in a story, and they always have a logical explanation. The indices are integrational, logically oriented, empowered by the reader's relating of them to some higher, integrated level. Barthes also subcategorized both functions and indices. Thus, the former are of two types,

nuclei (cardinal functions) and *catalyzers*. Nuclei are moments of risk, the parts in story development where events could proceed in two radically different directions. Nuclei are consecutive and consequential. Catalyzers fill in between nuclei and are parasitic on them.

Barthes also introduced the idea of the 'death of the author', "i.e. "death" as a psychological type and a historical personality, not as a textual function" (Barthes, 1984: 18). Barthes considered that the text did not belong to the author, but rather that the author belonged to the text. This means that the author is only present in the text as its function but he was dead as a person. Interesting that at the same time Foucault formulated another important question: "what is the author" (1989). He suggested that the author was a function that helped organize the universe of discourses.

It is worth mentioning that all of the listed studies come from the analysis of creative works whose authors are a priori unknown: fairy tales, myths and others. These models do not take into consideration the reader; the micro-universe of the creative work is enough itself.

Structuralist narratology was applied to all kinds of literary stories. In 1969 T. Todorov produced an important study of the *Decameron*. He suggested that all stories were based on the following: they begin with an equilibrium or status quo where any potentially opposing forces are in balance. This is disrupted by some incident that sets in chain a series of events. Then comes recognition of the fact that there has been a disruption and an attempt to repair it. In the end all problems are solved so that the equilibrium can be restored to the world of fiction.

Todorov was the first to use the term *narratology* in English (which he borrowed from the French *narratologie*) for the structuralist analysis of any kind of narrative and its components in order to determine their functions and relationships. For these purposes, the story is what is narrated, a chronological sequence of themes, motifs and plot lines. Thus, the plot represents the logical and causal

structure of a story, explaining why its events occur. The term discourse is used here to describe the stylistic choices that determine how the narrative text finally appears to the audience.

More than that, in one of his late works Todorov also questions Propp's approach to the analysis of fairy-tale and his idea that the functions develop one out of another in their necessity, they do not exclude one another, always appear sequentially and are not alike. Todorov claims that the elements of the story are not only related by succession, as Propp said, but also by transformation, which means that while trying to restore the equilibrium the characters or the situations are transformed through the progress of the disruption.

[...] But if the elementary actions are arranged hierarchically, it is apparent that new relations prevail among them: sequence and consequence no longer suffice. The fifth element obviously echoes the first (the state of equilibrium), while the third is an inversion of the first. Moreover, the second and the fourth elements are symmetrically opposed [...] Thus it is incorrect to maintain that the elements are related only by succession; we can say that they are also related by transformation [...]. (1990: 30)

He had explained the nature of transformation in his previous works.

[...] The simple relation of successive facts does not constitute a narrative: these facts must be organized, which is to say, ultimately, that they must have elements in common. But if all the elements are in common, there is no longer a narrative, for there is no longer anything to recount. Now, transformation represents precisely a synthesis of differences and resemblance; it links two facts without their being able to be identified. [...] (in *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*, vol. 8, 2006: 460).

By the end of the seventies the studies of the short story developed side by side with the studies of general linguistics. This is when Gérard Genette presented his ideas of narrative discourse. In his view 'story' belongs to the verbal layer, which is in charge of the process of putting the story into the text.

For this text level Genette specified the chief dimensions of the temporal articulation of story in discourse – order, frequency and duration, which can be described as the order; that is, the relations between the assumed sequence of events in the story and their actual order of presentation in the narrative.

Another important dimension is frequency, the main idea of which is correspondence and the means of divergence between the frequency of some event happening in the story, and the frequency of its narration in the text. And finally, duration, which is based on the relations between the supposed temporal extent of events in the imagined world of the story, and the textual extent of treatment in the narrative: duration is both the most problematic and the most creative of the dimensions of temporal formulation.

It is worth pointing out that this French linguist used the term *diegesis* (opposed to *mimesis*) as a synonym of story and later to designate the universe of space and time in the story. In general narratology the term *diegesis* implies a story as content; and in more general terms the world proposed and constructed by each story: space and time, events, acts, words and thoughts of the characters. The diegetic world of a story is constructed by the reader-listener on the basis of what is told and what is presupposed by the text.

Diegesis is multi-levelled in narrative fiction. Genette distinguishes three "diegetic levels." The *extradiegetic* level (the level of the narrative's telling) is the level at which there is a narrator who is not part of the story he tells. The *diegetic* level is understood as the level of the characters, their thoughts and actions. The *metadiegetic* level or *hypodiegetic* level is that part of a diegesis that is embedded in another

one and is often understood as a story within a story, as when a diegetic narrator himself tells a story. These characteristics in detail will be spoken about later.

Certain criteria allow for the recognition of some qualities, which are common to very different narrative forms such as stories, novels, fables, parables and so on. I agree with Adam (1997) that narrative is gradual and that to construct a story, there should first of all be a representation of a temporal succession of actions, then there will be a transformation of certain properties of the action-performers; and finally it is necessary to structure and to give meaning to the succession of actions and events in time. When this condition is implied, the well-told story cannot be confused with a simple description of actions or some portrait of a character created by description of his actions. Adam has elaborated his own sequential model of description of texts. According to this model, a text may be considered a story, a description or an argumentation of a more or less typical character according to its distance from the prototype of reference. As long as the prototype and the text cannot be confused, a text, or a sequence of a text is just a typical exemplification. In his works Adam also underlines the fact that texts are heterogeneous since they can contain heterogeneous sequences.

The prototypical character of texts has also been underlined by Bernárdez (1995: 158), in a different sense. In his view, some texts are closer to one prototype than others; for example, certain kinds of letters. On the contrary, literary texts, like Jack London's, are the result of a creative work, hence they show considerable individual variability, and require discourse analysis for interpretation.

In order to be able to analyse texts and understand how they function, it is necessary to distinguish various plans of textual organization. This is the only possible way of capturing the heterogenic but irreducible character of a text, which is at the same time complex and coherent.

5.3 Composition of Textual Sequences

For this research it is necessary to study the stories taking into consideration their complexity and heterogeneity. This is why these texts are going to be analysed as sequential structures.

In ancient rhetoric there were three general types of contents that had certain types of patterning, these were *description*, *narration* and *argumentation*. Later on this definition developed and changed in many ways. Many scholars have suggested various names for these sequences, such as discourse types, narrative modes, contexts. One of the outstanding Soviet linguists, V.V. Vinogradov, suggested the term that is still largely used in Russia, composition-speech forms (1980).

There is a more modern model suggested by J.M. Adam that coincides with the nomenclature that Charaudeau (1992) calls *modes of discourse organization*. These are the schemes of sequences of the basic modes of discourse construction. However, it should be stressed that, as a rule, there is more than one type of compositional patterns in most texts. It is necessary to speak about the characteristics of the various types of these patterns in order to be able to perform the analysis that is the aim of this research. Unlike the traditional division of the modes of discourse organization, Adam not only distinguishes narration, description and argumentation, but also explanation and dialogue.

It is worth noting that short stories (as well as other narrative genres) generally contain more than one mode of textual organization. Each mode is going to be dealt with separately in order to show the peculiar characteristics of each sequence (or mode) and underline their differences, while in actual discourse they appear combined or supplementary.

I am going to present first the three classic modes of discourse organization and further on speak of the two more types suggested by Adam. Narration is one of the frequently

used forms of expression. It is in charge of the main subject load: it informs about the development of the actions and states that make the text dynamic, while description fixes the characteristics of the objects and subjects of the actions and states and this is why it is mostly static. In what refers to argumentation, it contains information about the cause-effect relations between objects and actions that take place in the pre and post-context. It is static as well; besides, sometimes the narrator of a story explains his/her points of view adopting an argumentation perspective.

5.3.1 Argumentation

Argumentation was a central concept in ancient rhetoric, when the principles and techniques of persuasion in proper public discourses were formulated, and it has been studied anew since the mid twentieth century more profoundly, applied not only to institutional discourses but to all kinds of discourses that aim to persuade. For any author, argumentation is the most immediate and ingenious way of claiming his/her attitude.

Argumentation as a textual sequence takes place in various discursive activities common to public and private social life. It can be formed by an individual or by various interlocutors.

[...] Hablar es tratar de hacer compartir a un interlocutor opiniones o representaciones relativas a un tema dado, es querer provocar o aumentar la adhesión de un público más amplio a las tesis que se presenta. En otras palabras [...] la mayoría de las veces se toma la palabra para argumentar. [...] (Adam, 2000: 141)

Generally speaking, argumentation is a discursive practice that responds to a communicative function oriented towards the receiver in order to achieve his/her consent.

R. Jakobson believed that argumentation corresponded to appellative or conative functions, while according to Adam the argumentative function can be established as autonomous, added to other functions and oriented towards such objectives like convincing and to persuading (or both) the interlocutor or the public.

The basic characteristics of argumentation, according to Calsamiglia, (1999) are an *object* (controversial topic), an *interlocutor* (the one who expresses the opinion through modal and axiologic expressions), a *character* (polemic, dialogical, the one who provokes, manifests the opposition, contrast, etc.) and an *aim* (to convince, persuade the interlocutor or public).

A text, as a global, argumentative unit, is constructed on the idea of thesis and antithesis supported by the confrontation parts. The text is built on a problem that has at least two possible solutions. These kinds of texts usually take place in dialogical situations, where there is a *proponent* and an *opponent*, a *question raised*, a *proposition* and a *contra-proposition*, the *arguments* that constitute the *warrant* that leads to the *conclusion* (Plantin, 1990). In order to justify, defend and support a position, there is the following scheme. It proceeds from the set of *assumptions* or *premises* and is followed by the *arguments*, which are used to defend a *new idea (enunciation)*, derived from the assumptions, and come to some *conclusion*. So that, again, the simplest structure that lies at the basis of any argumentative discourse is the *premise – arguments – conclusion*.

This structure in its pure form is applied to a monologue (even if dialogic, in Bakhtin's sense), but, as it has just been said, it is actually a basis of any kind of argumentation and can be presented both in progressive and regressive sequence. The progressive order is the one based on the premises that lead to a conclusion. The regressive order means that out of the conclusion the grounds are being provided. The steps included in the scheme can be either explicit or implicit (which is more common, so that the speakers have to reason in order to produce enunciations corresponding to each phrase).

The actual author of the structure that has been just described was J.M. Adam, who suggested the minimum scheme for the argumentative sequence, which is the following:

– orden progresivo: datos – [inferencia] – conclusion

– orden regresivo: conclusion – [inferencia/justificación] – datos

En el orden progresivo [...], el enunciado lingüístico es paralelo al movimiento del razonamiento [...]. En el orden regresivo [...] la linealidad del enunciado lingüístico invierte el movimiento [...] Mientras que el orden progresivo busca concluir, el orden regresivo es más bien el de la prueba y la explicación. [...] (Adam, 2000: 155)

The structure suggested by Adam can be recurrent as long as a conclusion transforms into a new premise or in case various arguments leading to a conclusion are presented that serve to strengthen a point of view.

S. Toulmin (1958) suggested another important scheme. According to this scheme there are five vital elements of argumentation: data, claim/conclusion, warrant, backing and qualifier that refers to the rebuttal.

An argumentative text may contain narrations, descriptions and explanations that strengthen its convincingness or/and work as arguments. Arguments may be of a different nature, such as examples, reasons (causes), consequences, analogues, and others.

In literary texts argumentation appears in different forms. Appreciation or opinions expressed by the narrator; characters' conversations; indirect forms coming from the facts. Due to the fact that it is always a generalized representation of the author's point of view, it is autonomic and may be applied to various similar situations and not only to the one due to which it appeared. Here we deal with the

logical and semantic universality of argumentation, its generalizing force separates it from the precise plot; and this is why the author strengthens the cohesion with the previous text by starting the argumentation by specific lexical markers, which send the reader to the situation explained before.

Argumentation in a literary text is generally a mouthpiece of the author's ideas, the declaratory form of the author's speech, with the help of which the author comes into contact with the reader. As a rule, argumentation in literary prose (in contrast with scientific writings) proceeds not from abstract postulates but from something specific (like a given emotional life, given situation, etc.). It is often represented in the form of sketches, diaries and autobiographies, as in this case it hides the rationalistic peculiarities of argumentation behind the authenticity of the theme, and serves as a special device "authorized" by the form of the literary work. Argumentation may also be found in other types of literary art. As it will be seen in the following chapters, Jack London resorts to it in his stories by using it in digressions, dialogues or reflecting the internal psychological world of his characters (c.f. 9.1.4, 9.1.5, 9.1.6).

5.3.2 Description

As it has been said, description is a static composition speech form. It is the linguistic means of world representation. It is used to express the manner of perception of the world through the senses and the mind. Description may be applied both to states and processes and it is carried out under a given perspective or point of view. Description is always conditioned by a context of communication. The contents of description is meant to answer explicit or implicit questions of the following type: "who/what is it?", "what is it like?", "what does it look like?", "what parts does it have?", "what is it for?" and others.

Traditionally description was associated with landscape and portrait. These notions play a very important role in the stories under analysis.

5.3.2.1 Character Portrayal

The portrait is considered to be one of the main means of individualization of a character. Besides the external characteristics of the character's physical state, it also includes information about the character's hair, clothes, manners, accessories, and other characteristics that reflect the character's taste, likings, habits, every component of his individuality. In conjunction with landscape, portrait can also reflect to which social strata the character belongs and in what temporal continuum he lives, as the costume may reflect the epoch, the season and the time of the day.

During their development both portrait and landscape have undergone various changes in their volume, by which the length of the text and the qualitative volume (the completeness of the signs) are understood and also the intrusion in the text. Take for instance the fact that a shortened description and a portrait speck may substitute the traditional portrait description. This means that instead of extensive detailed characteristic of appearance certain portrait traits like characterizing details or the author's commentaries to dialogues or actions may be used. These character portrayal traits appear in different parts of the text and the reader does not perceive them as static elements, they are "implanted" in the narration and create the dynamic picture of the changing appearance of the character. As in many cases the portraits reflect the internal world of the characters; the portrait description or the portrait traits are included in the psychological qualification of the character. The portrait is always nominative and evaluative; this is why the portrait always bears the author's attitude to the characters.

I ought to mention that there is one more peculiarity of the portrait, its so-called semiotic function. It develops due to the constant repetition of some portrait trait that turns into a kind of characterizing detail.

5.3.2.2 Setting

Traditionally landscape is viewed as the meaning of the static background of the events. Nevertheless the image of nature, which is represented by landscape in fiction, may also reflect some dynamic processes that happen in nature: hurricanes, earthquakes, storms, and other natural calamities or just some particular actions that happen during the narration. In these cases the image of nature does not serve as objective but as means of profound explanation of the character's image and his state.

The calm and peaceful pictures of nature have sedative influence on the reader. Frequently the author uses these associations and puts such a calming image just before some dynamic and tense developments. The unexpectedness of dramatic conflict takes the reader by surprise and produces the strongest effect.

Regardless of the straight or inversely directed development of landscape description and the emotional statement of the character, landscape always intensifies the latter.

It should also be added that the dynamic landscape could also signal a change in plot development. The riot of Nature described in dynamic landscape always precedes the important changes in the characters' destinies.

Another important function of landscape is semiotic. Just as the same function of the portrait develops as a sign of a very individualized object, the semiotic function of landscape is connected to the community of sensations of various people while perceiving similar pictures of nature. As Nature in its

different embodiments surrounds a person since birth and it is also the constant object of cognition and the source of emotions that are always present during the perception of the nature. The repetition of a precise perception fixes the feelings that the person has during this process. This fixation may take place with the singular impression of some particular picture or natural phenomenon. In both cases it is enough just to think of the phenomenon in order to experience a similar emotional state. This is why landscape in art has such a strong emotional influence: it makes the reader empathise with the narrator or the character and at the same time it touches the stratum of emotions that is saved in the memory.

Even though all emotions and associations of each person are different, there are some common nuclei for all perceptions. This is why the picture of the clear blue sea provokes the peaceful feelings and on the other hand the snowstorm or bitter frost becomes the problem messengers.

The presence of the common nucleon in the perception of the weather by different individuals is also connected to the textual functions of the landscape. The landscape does not single out any precise characteristics of character appearance (as the portrait) but it creates the emotional and psychological tone of what is happening and applies to the general experience of the character, author and reader.

5.3.3 Explanation

The explanation is based on the existence of previous information. It is the totalities of the information about some theme that have been obtained by means of either experience or reflection. As a discourse phenomenon, explanation tends to clarify some facts. This presupposes some knowledge that is taken as a starting point and cannot be questioned. The context of explanation presupposes a person who possesses the knowledge of his or her interlocutor or some public, which is supposed to interpret it

on the basis of its own previous knowledge, but needs a clarification. As one may see, the relation that has just been described is asymmetric as, on the one hand, there is the person that possesses all the information by accessing various sources and, on the other hand, one deals with the interlocutor that has no experience and no access to the sources of information.

The explicative sequence is normally represented as combined with the descriptive and argumentative sequences in theoretical texts. While in texts where dialogical sequences dominate, the explicative sequence occurs every time there is an interruption or miscomprehension and further need of clarification. In an argumentative text explanation is used to support the argumentation. But besides all the combinations of sequences, explicative discourse as it presupposes some knowledge, gives all the power to the person that possesses the knowledge and consequently creates the possibility of convincing and getting the consent.

5.3.4 Dialogue

Dialogue is the basic form of human communication. Discourse is always oriented towards the audience whether it is present or not, as the speaker intends to convince, explain or describe something. Spontaneous conversation is a dialogical genre, which is a basis of human relationship that functions by means of dialogue and becomes practically impossible without it.

In conversation studies, there is a certain agreement according to which the dialogical structure has to be described by taking into consideration the double perspective: its sequential character and its hierarchic character. The sequential character presupposes that the meaning of any fragment can only be interpreted by a complete form of what has been said and what is going to be said by the same or a different person. The hierarchic character signals the

existence of units of different ranges or level imbricated one into another from lesser to bigger in the conversational structure. From the minimal monologic unit to the maximum dialogical unit that is the interpretation. See the following scheme:

- Monologic units (a) act or movement (b) intervention (contribution of one more participant)
 - Dialogical units: (a) interchange (minimal dialogical unit), (b) sequence or episode (theme or aim) (c) interaction
- (Casamiglia, Tusón, 1999:319)

The dialogue also appears as a secondary sequence in other modes of textual organization. As it will be shown in the further analysis of the stories, the dialogue is used as a form in which the story develops.

5.3.4.5 Narration

After speaking about all kinds of modes of discourse organization, one needs to turn to the narration again as this is the mode that takes up the largest part of an author's speech in any narrative work. It is precisely here where the action part of the story is concentrated and the plot units are distributed.

According to Adam (2005), the internal structure of the narrative sequence distinguishes six basic constituents. These are: (1) temporality, which means that there is some succession of events in time that passes and moves forward; (2) thematic unit, which is guaranteed by a subject-actor of any kind (animate or not, individual or collective); transformation that means the change of the states or predicates, like for example from poverty to richness or from sadness to happiness, and others; (3) unit of action that presupposes the existence of the integrating process. From some initial situation it comes to the final situation through the process of transformation; (4) and the last constituent is

causality, which includes some plot created through the causal relations of the events.

While composition is treated in a traditional vein, as a shift of plot-units/parts of the narrative sequence and rely on the basic constituents of the narrative sequence that has just been dealt with, it is possible to carry out a detailed analysis of a narrative sequence. I am going to speak about narrative sequence in the following section.

6 LINGUISTIC ASPECTS OF NARRATIVE TEXTS

6.1 The Structure of the Narrative Sequence

As we deal with the theoretical basis for the narrative it is necessary to focus on narrative structure, as it is the structural framework that underlines the order and manner in which a narrative is presented to the reader. This notion is very close to the notion of plot, which is a literary term for the sequence of the events in the story. This is why in the following framework this term is used on several occasions.

In recent years scientists have explored text as a complex form of human communication. The multidimensionality of textual organization makes the text the centre of interest for researching within a broad spectrum of philological disciplines, such as text linguistics, stylistics, literary criticism, semiotics, cognitive linguistics and semantics. Over the last decades a theory of narration has been formed, based on the analysis of the narrative text and which, as already mentioned, is usually called *narratology*.

In the twentieth century the study of narrative has led to the appearance of a large number of various theories. Nowadays, narratology is a many-sided study, a sort of point of intersection of different humanities approaches. Literary narrative is the subject of study of a special discipline, narratology, which took shape in the 60-70s of the last century.

As pointed out in previous chapters, narrative studies' roots go back to Aristotle's *Poetics*; and its main categories are based on the studies of the first part of the twentieth century, such as Tomashevsky and Propp, on Bakhtin's dialogical theory of narrative. As it has been said, T. Todorov suggested the term narratology. The works of R. Barthes, A. Greimas, T. van Dijk, G. Genette, P. Ricœur, S. Chatman (among others)

played an outstanding role for the modern state of this scientific discipline; and in the second part of the twentieth century narratology developed to a great extent. In 1988 G. Prince published *A Dictionary of Narratology*.

The idea of the essence and functions of a narrative was formed in ancient times. The term *narration* first meant the part of the orator's speech that followed the proposition of a thesis, and later – the telling of a story. Aristotle in his *Poetics* noted that the most important characteristic of a story is its plot. A good story has a beginning, middle and end, thus forming a complete single whole.

It is interesting to note that in Russian the word *narrative* does not exist, this is why it is often translated from English and French as *story*. Although these two notions are not equivalent, G. Prince (1988) notes that every story is a narrative but not every narrative is by definition a story, hence the notion of *narrative* is broader than the notion *story*, which is just a type of a narrative.

From the very appearance of narratology, its main objective was claimed to be the revelation of invariants: structural schemes, patterns, and methods of narrative construction. It is only natural that a text is characterized by a certain organization, construction and composition, in other words – structure. Structure corresponds to the construction of a work of verbal art, its internal and external organization and the means of connection of the elements that constitute it. (КЛЭ³, 1972: 385)

The structure of a narrative may thus be defined as a totality of connections or the organization of elements, the special order of which defines narrative as a system built according to definite rules.

The construction of the structural-compositional model of any kind of text in linguistics has a long history of investigation. One of the earliest attempts to reveal the general criteria of a

³ *Brief Literary Encyclopedia*

literary work's construction was Aristotle's. He introduced the three-component model (beginning – middle – end) into the field of philological studies.

The structure of the text conforms to a certain logical formula. Aristotle insisted that the most essential component of a fictitious story is its plot, and that the best *fabula* is always unified; its parts are always interwoven and interdependent to the level where a change or correction of one would require changing everything. The structure of a narrative appears as a succession of text and plot events. This is why the temporal organization of a narrative text is defined by the manner in which the events that form the plot of the literary narration are situated on the temporal axis. As V. Kukhareenko notes,

[...] Классическая форма повествовательной стратегии основана на изложении логической последовательности описываемых событий. Композиционные схемы произведения образуют фабульный событийный ряд, организованный по логическим законам жизни – от естественного начала события к его логическому завершению. Последовательное разворачивание фабулы нашло отражение в канонической композиции прозаического произведения: зачин/ завязка – развитие действия – кульминация – развязка. [...] (Кухаренко, 1988: 142)

[The classic form of a narrative strategy is based on the account of the logical succession of the described events. The compositional schemes of a creative work form the *fabula* event-trigger row, which is organized according to the logical laws of life – from the natural beginning of an event to its logical ending. The successive unfolding of a *fabula* is reflected in the canonical composition of prose work: exposition – rising action-culmination – dénouement.] (V. Kukhareenko, 1988: 142)⁴

⁴ My translation

The unfolding of the idea into the full text should be done according to the regularities of a linear structure of a text. This means that while creating a text there should exist a certain scheme that reflects the sequence of content elements. Such a scheme constitutes the composition of a text. Composition serves as a carcass of any creative work that restrains a text. It can affect the expressiveness of a text and also to some extent conditions both the general character of a text and its peculiarities.

In the following chapter I look into various frameworks concerning this question in order to elaborate the most convenient basis for the purposes of the analysis.

6.1.1 French Textual Approach

When analysing a text one comes across various units that have particular characteristics in what is called sequences. These sequences can be formed by various *propositions*, the term suggested by J. M. Adam – C. U. Lorda (1999: 57) in order to distinguish the narrative units from the semantic-syntactic units. These sequences can be of the following types: narrative, descriptive, argumentative, explicative and dialogical.

In narrative sequence there are five narrative propositions that as a rule correspond to the simple or compound sentences or groups of sentences. The common rule for these sentences is that the following components may be found in them: *situación inicial (exposition)*, *nudo (plot)*, *acción (action)*, *desenlace (dénouement)*, *situación final (postposition)*. Sometimes there are also additional parts of the narrative sequence that serve to open and close the story and together with the evaluative propositions they form the transition elements between the verbal interaction and the story. Here the matter concerns *entrada-prefacio (preface)* and *evaluación final (epilogue)*.

Situación inicial (exposition) is the first component in the narrative sequence. This is where the spatio-temporal circumstances and the agents are defined, in other words the case in point is the time, the place, the main characters and the current events. The situation here is always presented as stable.

The next component of the narrative sequence is *nudo (plot)*, the part that establishes the development of the action and represents the set of the motives that break the immobility of the initial situation. More than that, *nudo (plot)* determines all the course of the events in the plot and the intrigue only comes to the variation of the action that establishes the main contradictions introduced by the *nudo (plot)*.

The centre of the story is the *acción/reacción (action)* provoked by the *nudo desencadenante*. The main action leads to the solution that constructs the *desenlace (dénouement)*. Here it is necessary to say that the *nudo-desenlace (plot-dénouement)* moments are two main elements in the creation of the intrigue.

Finally the set of events in the story leads to the new situation that presupposes the transformation of the initial situation, and results in what is called *situación final (exposition)*. Nevertheless this means that the new situation begins and it is represented by the new short narrative sequence, which is used to modify the end of the first story.

The closing of the story is provided by the *evaluación final (epilogue)*. This is when the narrative voice enunciates the moral of the story, where its orientation is manifested.

In other words the proper narrative sequence, as it has already been said, consists of the five main elements, *situación inicial (exposition)*, *nudo (plot)*, *acción (action)*, *desenlace (dénouement)*, *situación final (post-position)*, that may be reduced to the minimal structure consisting of the three parts: *planteamiento (situación inicial) (exposition)*, *nudo (nudo and acción) (plot)* and *desenlace (desenlace and situación final) (dénouement)*.

6.1.2 Russian Tradition

The Russian school traditionally suggests the following scheme, that reflects the main points of plot development: *exposition (situación inicial)*, *plot (nudo)* [do not confuse with the general term *plot* as a sequence of events in the story] *rising action (acción)*, *climax* or *culmination*, *falling action (desenlace)*, *postposition (evaluación)*. In some narratives the *epilogue* and the *prologue* are used. The *exposition*, *postposition* and *plot* have the same characteristics as described before, *the rising action* shows the development of the events after what has happened in *the plot*, it is the actions that come out of the plot, the conflict here worsens and the contradictions between the characters become deeper and sharper. *Climax* is the emotionally strongest moment of the tension in the story and *the falling action* describes the outcome of the events and the solution of the contradictions in the story.

6.1.3 Freytag's Model

It may seem strange that I have used the Spanish terminology in order to speak about the plot elements. This may be explained by the fact that initially this part of the research was based on the Spanish and French theoretical framework. While investigating the theoretical elements of the narrative presented by various schools I came to the conclusion that there is one more convenient scheme that may be helpful for my analysis: it is the scheme elaborated Gustav Freytag who considers that plot is a narrative structure that divided the story into five parts, like the five acts of a play. Initially Freytag elaborated his model for drama in his book *Die Technik des Dramas* (1863), the definitive study of the five-act dramatic structure, where he laid out what has come to be known as *Freytag's Pyramid* (fig. 2). As in a similar to the models mentioned before, in Freytag's Pyramid

as well, the plot of a story consists of five parts. These parts are: *exposition* (of the situation), *rising action* (through the conflict), *climax* (or turning point), *falling action* and *dénouement* (or resolution).

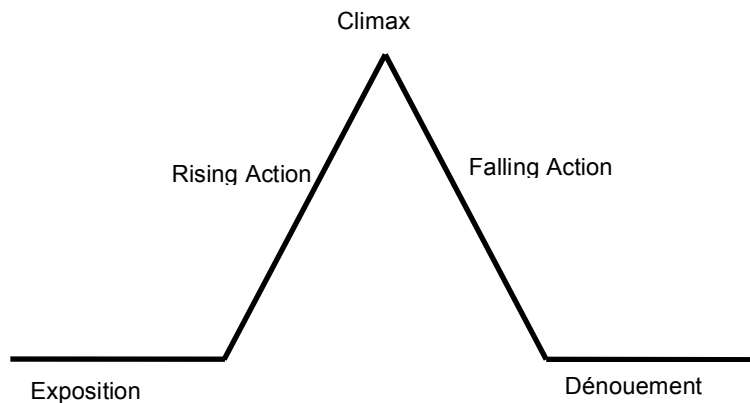


Fig. 2 Freytag's pyramid

According to Freytag, the *exposition* provides the background information needed to properly understand the story such as the setting, the basic conflict and of course here all of the main characters in the story are introduced and their relation to each other, their goals, motivations and characteristics of their personalities are shown (if a story follows the prototypical order). This phase ends with the inciting moment, which is the incident without which there would be no story.

Rising action is the second phase in Freytag's five-phase structure. It starts with the introduction of the *conflict*. In Freytag's discussion conflict is the second act in a five-act play, when all of the major characters have been introduced, most of their motives have been made clear and they begin to struggle against one another. Normally in this phase the protagonist understands his/her goal and starts working in

order to achieve it fighting and overcoming the smaller problems and the obstacles that frustrate his attempt to reach this goal. Secondary conflicts can include opponents of lesser importance than the story's antagonist. Thus, at the end of this phase and at the beginning of the next one he/she is finally in a position to go for his/her primary goal.

The point of *climax* is the turning point of the story, where the main character makes the single big decision that defines the outcome of the story for the better or for the worse. The dramatic phase that Freytag called *the climax* is the third of the five phases, which occupies the middle of the story, and that contains the point of climax, thus the notion *climax* may refer to the point of climax or to the third phase of the play.

The protagonist finally having cleared away the secondary obstacles and being ready to face the opponent marks the beginning of this part. The struggle between the protagonist and the antagonist results in neither character completely winning, nor losing, against the other. Usually, each character's plan is partially successful, and partially foiled by their opponent. What is unique about this central struggle between the two characters is that the protagonist makes a decision that shows his moral quality, and ultimately determines his fate. In a tragedy, the protagonist makes a *bad* decision, due to his/her miscalculation and the appearance of his tragic flaw. If the story is a comedy, things will have gone badly for the protagonist up to this point and after it the things begin to go well.

The falling action is the part of the story where the main part, the climax, has finished and the story is heading to the conclusion. It is the moment of reversal after the climax when the conflict between the protagonist and the antagonist is solved, with the protagonist winning or losing against the antagonist. The falling action might contain a moment of final suspense, during which the final outcome of the conflict is in doubt.

The *dénouement* includes events between the falling action and the actual ending scene of the drama or narrative and

thus serves as the conclusion of the story. Conflicts are resolved, creating normality for the characters and a sense of catharsis or release of tension and anxiety for the reader. Simply put, dénouement is solving or clarifying the complexities of a plot.

As any scheme, Freytag's triangle is conditional. In real texts the extreme points are facultative, the sides of the pyramid are often asymmetrical, the climax is close to the dénouement and may even overlap it. Further, the elements may not appear the correct order; for example, the beginning from the middle. There will be such examples in the practical part of the investigation. Very often in stories the chronological sequence of events does not coincide with the sequence of the compositional elements that fix these events. In other words the fabula (see 5.1), the totality of the events in their natural order, does not coincide with the plot (sjuzhet) that represents these precise events in the order suggested by the author for his narration. The natural course of events, the fabula, in *Brown Wolf* (1906), first describes the appearance of a new dog in the house (plot, exposition), and then comes the chronological description of events (rising action), then the discussion and the test (culmination) and what comes out of it (dénouement). But the plot of the story begins with the rising action and then goes back to the exposition.

The particular characteristics of Jack London's stories make Freytag's classification more efficient. Therefore, in this analysis Freytag's will be used, bearing in mind the prologue and epilogue that sometimes occur in Jack London's stories.

Freytag's pyramid has various points similar to the models given above. Nevertheless, I consider the pyramid to be more convenient for the analysis of the corpus due to the fact that it has such components as rising action and climax that clearly reflect the growth of tension and its highest points. Hence tension can be analysed as a part of this model.

6.2 Basic Characteristics of Narrative Enunciation

In order to understand the narrative acts, it is necessary to investigate how enunciation works. *Enunciation* is an ancient philosophic term, which is now also used in linguistics. Bally used it in 1932 and the current sense was established by Émile Benveniste (1974). Enunciation, in modern linguistics, constitutes a pivot in the relation between language and the world, as on the one hand it permits the representation of the facts in what Benveniste calls 'énoncé' and on the other hand the enunciation itself is also considered as a fact, a unique event, which is defined by time and space.

Benveniste is responsible for outlining the need to make a distinction between *énoncé* and *énonciation*, which grew out of his study on pronouns. The *énoncé* is the statement produced whereas the *énonciation* is the act of stating as tied to the context.

[...] L'énonciation est cette mise en fonctionnement de la langue par un acte individuel d'utilisation. [...] c'est l'acte même de produire un énoncé et non le texte de l'énoncé qui est notre objet. [...] (Benveniste, 1974: 80)

[Enunciation is this putting into practice of language by an individual act of usage. [...] it is the very act of producing a utterance and not the text of the utterance which is our object.]⁵

In general terms Benveniste in his theory of enunciation states that the subject of enunciation is unique. He distinguishes the referent or locutor (I, speaker/writer) and the referee interlocutor (you, listener/reader). The subject of enunciation, identified by the marks of the first person, is the producer of the utterance and is responsible for it; he performs psychophysiological activity while producing the utterance and underlines intellectual activity when he chooses

⁵ My translation

the words and applies the grammatical rules. Moreover, the subject of enunciation produces illocutionary acts (order, request, assertion) and in this way he/she manifests his/her attitude regarding himself/herself, his/ her interlocutor and what he/she says.

Benveniste makes a distinction in French between *discours* and *récit*; the former is the discourse appropriated by the speaker and is produced at the moment of speaking (now and here), while the latter is considered to be an objective narration, which implies a split from the moment of speaking (e.g. *in 1897 Jack London decided to go to Klondike*. In this *énoncé*, the narrator places the action in a past time without relation with the present).

In narrative discourse the enunciation is rather complex and there are multiple models that try to explain this complexity. For instance, in the Russian tradition such concept as the “author” is seen through the “subject-subject” relations. Bakhtin and Vinogradov made a very important contribution to the investigation of subject-subject studies.

Bakhtin considered that the presence of “another” is an indispensable condition of discourse, as long as any “I” needs “another.” This necessity is still more complex in stories and novels, as it shall be shown. For instance, there is the double instance of I-author and I-character. When treating a word-text Bakhtin singles out its double-subjectiveness. One of the subjects is the writer or the speaker that reproduces somebody else’s text and thus creates a frame text (Bakhtin, 1976, 1979). The form of appropriation of *another’s* discourse is, according to Bakhtin, its representation through reproduction. The existence of these instances in narrative texts leads to the examination of the notion of *polyphony*.

6.2.1 Polyphony in Discourse

Polyphony is basically a notion that is used in music. It was applied later to the analysis of literary texts and referred to the

fact that texts in the majority of cases transmit a great number of different points of view: the author can make different voices speak together in the same text. Polyphony is a convenient metaphor for the designation of the multidimensional, multifold and polysemantic nature of a literary work: theme, idea, plot, images, author's position, composition and discourse. The meaning of polyphony is based on the harmonic equality of the voices.

In philological studies there exist two polar points in what refers to musical-philological analogies: despite the acknowledgement of similarity between a literary work and a musical piece (M. Bakhtin, V. Vinogradov, O. Ducrot), from a discourse perspective, Benveniste, has underlined that musical and language systems are different.

[...] La musique est un système qui fonctionne sur deux axes : l'axe des simultanités et l'axe des séquences. [...] Or l'axe des simultanités en musique contre- dit le principe même du paradigmatique en langue, qui est principe de sélection, excluant toute simultanéité intrasegmental; [...] Ainsi la combinatoire musicale qui relève de l'harmonie et du contrepoint n'a pas d'équivalent dans la langue [...] (E. Benveniste, 1974: 56)

[Music is a system which functions on two axes: the axis of simultaneities and the axis of sequences. [...] Now, the axis of simultaneities in music contradicts the very principle of the paradigmatic in language, which is principle of selection, excluding all intrasegmental simultaneity; [...] So, this way, the musical combinatorial which raises harmony and counterpoint does not have any equivalent in language]⁶

⁶ My translation

The scientific examination of a literary work aiming to determine whether the “intra-segment simultaneity” is characteristic or not for a text and to show what it consists in started at the end of the 1920s. The followers of the music-literary analogies passed from rhetorical comparisons to scientific arguments. The essential sides and characteristics of a polyphonic literary text were generalized and the notion of literary polyphony was formulated.

6.2.1.1 Origins and Development of Bakhtin’s View on Polyphony

The appearance of the term polyphony in linguistic use is, first of all, connected with the name of Mikhail Bakhtin, who had studied it for more than half a century. He used this term for the first time in 1929 in his book *Problems of Dostoyevsky’s Poetics*.

[...] Множественность самостоятельных и неслиянных голосов и сознаний, подлинная полифония полноценных голосов действительно является основной особенностью романов Достоевского. [...] (Bakhtin, 1979a: 6)

[...] A plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses, a genuine polyphony of fully valid voices is in fact the chief characteristic of Dostoevsky’s novels. [...] (Bakhtin, 1984a: 6)

Bakhtin saw Dostoyevsky’s heritage from the philosophical and aesthetic point of view and drew up an entire theory covering all angles of Dostoyevsky’s creative work, including such notions as *polyphonic world* (1979: 8), *polyphonic artistic thinking* (ibid.: 270), *polyphony as an artistic method* (1979: 69) and *polyphonic novel [...] fundamentally new novelistic genre* (1979: 7).

As he developed his theory, his perspective broadened and he found signs of discourse polyphony in the works of other writers besides Dostoyevsky, hence the linguistic-poetic side of the polyphonic theory acquired independent significance; it forms an important part of the theoretical basis for the present investigation.

Although Bakhtin himself never formulated the results of his linguistic-poetic analysis clearly, the study of his heritage shows how he underscores the relation between the polyphonic sounding of a text and the peculiarities of its linguistic construction, such as the use of *another's discourse* (1979a: 185) and the presence of *dialogical relationships* (1979a: 88) between various elements of a text.

The idea of *another's discourse* is basic for Bakhtin's works. It claims the presence of a connection between a word of discourse and its bearer. Applying it to practice, Bakhtin determined whether discourse is the subject's *own* or *another's* borrowed from *another's* lexicon. In order to determine that, he opposed the peculiarities of *subjective views* and discourse of a speaker, and, also, the characteristics of the means of expression. A correspondence of these two parts would lead to the conclusion that discourse was the subject's *own*; whereas a discrepancy of the parts would mean that it was *another's discourse*. Another's discourse in a text that goes back to two subjects of discourse at the same time; the speaker and the previous bearer, transmit the sounding of two (or several) voices and serves as language sign of a polyphonic text.

Based on the idea of another's discourse, Bakhtin raises the issue of a speaker and the text associated with him, the origin of a literary work and the linguistic characteristics of the novelistic genre. As a result there appears the novel.

[...] роман [...] художественно организованное социальное разноречие, иногда разноязычие, индивидуальная разноголосица. Внутренняя расслоенность единого национального языка на социальные диалекты, групповые манеры,

профессиональные жаргоны, жанровые языки, языки поколений и возрастов, языки направлений и языки авторитетов, языки кружков и мимолетных мод, языки социально-политических дней и даже часов (у каждого дня свой лозунг, свой словарь, свои акценты), – эта внутренняя расслоенность каждого языка в каждый данный момент его исторического существования – необходимая предпосылка романного жанра: социальным разноречием и вырастающей на его почве индивидуальной разноголосицей роман оркеструет свои темы, весь свой изображаемый и выражаемый предметный мир. [...] (1975: 76)

[...] A novel can be defined as a diversity of social speech types (sometimes even diversity of languages) and a diversity of individual voices, artistically organized. The internal stratification of any single national language into social dialects, characteristic group behaviour, professional jargons, generic languages, languages of generations and age groups, tendentious languages of the authorities, of various circles and of passing fashions, languages that serve specific socio-political purposes of the day, even of the hour (each day has its own slogan, its own vocabulary, its own emphases) – this internal stratification present in every language at any given moment of its historical existence is the indispensable prerequisite for the novel as a genre. The novel orchestrates all its themes, the totality of the world of objects and ideas depicted and expressed in it, by means of the social diversity of speech types [raznorechie] and by the differing individual voices that flourish under such conditions. [...] (1981: 260-261)

In spite of the rich content of Bakhtin's thesis about *another's word*, there were several critical remarks to do with the vagueness of judgement, randomness and subjectivity of analysis and the complexity of his manner of stating ideas (in Amvrosova, 1984: 19).

His proposal on *dialogical relationships* was elaborated in a very general way. Here he investigated the functioning of another's discourse, transmitted from another's context, in a new context, that pertains to a new subject of discourse. According to the discourse intention of a speaker, there are three types of double-voiced discourses:

1. If a speaker tries to "make use of someone else's discourse for his own purposes" (1979a: 189) and then a word in a context can be compared to a dialogue-agreement where the voices (narrator's and character's) aim at closing in (but without fusing).
2. If a speaker "introduces into that discourse a semantic intention that is directly opposed to the original one" (1979a: 193), then the discourse becomes "an arena of battle between two voices" (1979a: 193), a dialogue-argument. Such double-voiced vari-directional discourses are characteristic for ironic and parody texts.
3. If a speaker chooses a way of expression being guided by an addressee, then his discourse is "a reflected discourse of another." (1979a: 199).

Bakhtin only outlines the ways of concretization of his idea of *dialogical relationships*. It would correspond to the study of semantics of dialogic discourse: "Semantics of dialogic discourse are of an utterly special sort (the extremely subtle changes in meaning that occur in the presence of intense dialogicality have unfortunately not yet been studied.)" (1979a: 197)

Important aspects of Bakhtin's theory are connected with the understanding of *heteroglossia* (1981). Bakhtin insisted on the understanding of a novel as a phenomenon based on the diversity of speech types and the diversity of voices. He considered it to be vital for the creation of the novel and insisted on the idea of the social stratification of language.

[...] В языке не остается никаких нейтральных, «ничьих» слов и форм [...] Язык для живущего в нем сознания – это не абстрактная система нормативных норм [...] Все слова пахнут профессией, жанром, направлением, партией, определенным произведением, определенным человеком, поколением, возрастом, днём и часом. Каждое слово пахнет контекстом и контекстами, в которых оно жило напряженной жизнью. [...] (1975: 106)

[...] As a result of the work done by all these stratifying forces in language, there are no “neutral” words and forms – words and forms that can belong to “no one”; language has been completely taken over, shot through with intentions and accents. For any individual consciousness living in it, language is not an abstract system of normative forms but rather a concrete heteroglot conception of the world. Every word has a “taste” of a profession, a genre, a tendency, a party, a particular work, a particular person, a generation, an age group, the day and hour. Each word tastes of the context and contexts in which it has lived its socially charged life. [...] (1981: 291)

6.2.1.2 Ducrot’s Application

In France, Oswald Ducrot reformulated and completed Bakhtin’s dialogism. He introduced the notion of polyphony into linguistic studies in 1984 and used it to analyse a series of linguistic phenomena. Literary analysts concentrated on Bakhtin’s polyphony and in later years intended to reconcile these two polyphonic interpretations in order to turn them into an effective tool for discourse analysis.

The main peculiarity of Ducrot’s idea was the distinction of the subject of enunciation on the plane of utterance. Some critics see his work as a reaction against the uniqueness of the subject of enunciation formulated by Émile Benveniste (1966)

in his theory of enunciation. As stated above, Benveniste distinguishes the referent (I, speaker/writer) and the referee (you, listener/reader). The subject of enunciation is the one who produces the utterance, operates it and is identified by the marks of the first person. Oswald Ducrot disagrees with the uniqueness of the subject of enunciation.

Like Bakhtin's idea for a text, Ducrot insisted that even in an utterance there are different voices that speak simultaneously. He distinguishes two figures of discourse: the referent (*locuteur* in French) and the enunciator (*énonciateur* in French), the concepts that were crucial in his theory of polyphony. They are the elements of fiction, and the subject is an element of experience. The referent is capable of staging the enunciators that present different points of view. He can be associated with certain enunciators and at the same time separate from the others. The referent is held responsible for the linguistic material used in the utterance and bears the marks of the first person. The enunciator is included in the utterance by the referent that organises the enunciator's point of view, which may be shared or not by the referent. In drama, the enunciator may be compared to the actor and the referent to the author. The author gives existence to the characters, which are not responsible for what they are saying. From a different point of view, considering what is happening on the scene as a different use of everyday language, the characters are assimilated to the referents and the author to the subject. It is important to underline the fact that all these discourse beings are abstract. The relation between real speakers is not the focus of Ducrot's interest.

The aim of the elaboration of the theory of polyphony was the idea that the sense of the final utterance (*énoncé*) consisted of the mutual attaching of several elementary discourses the authors of which, *énonciateurs*, do not always coincide with the author of the utterance itself – the speaker or *locuteur*. In other words even the simplest utterance can be seen as a dialogue. In this case Ducrot bases his theory on the ideas that were elaborated in linguistics for the diachronic description, but he applies them for synchrony.

It may be said that the grammatical structure of the sentence shows the schematic scenario of the dialogue, the quantity of the enunciators and their main roles. The interpretation of its concrete usage consists in the enrichment of this scheme, in adding meaning to it, in the determination of the concrete enunciators and their role in the given context. The final utterance (*énoncé*) acts as a crystallized dialogue. Its sense consists in a certain characterization of the process of enunciating, which appears as a sounding of various “voices” or “points of view,” which are attached one to another and respond to each other. Regarding the speaker (*locuteur*) the final utterance (*énoncé*) is a monologue, but the speaker inside this monologue stages the dialogue of the various basic elements that are called the enunciators. A good example of polyphony is negation.

In Ducrot’s theory different points of view are prescribed to different enunciators. As long as they do not coincide all the time, their mutual attachment makes a dialogue. In this sense Oswald Ducrot speaks of the vertical analysis, here the matter concerns stratification, not segmentation. This is how the main aim is achieved – the analysis of the utterance without taking into consideration the conditions of truth. Nevertheless, the author himself admits that this aim is achieved only partly on the theory of polyphony. It is so due to the fact that the aspect that carries the truth can appear again during the analysis of the positions of the enunciators.

In literary stories, by definition of the writing contract, there exists a more complex mode of communication where enunciation is splitting among several enunciators put on stage; therefore, it is necessary to observe the different dimensions of narrative enunciation.

6.2.2 The Complexity of Narrative Enunciation

In fact, any verbal interaction presupposes the subject splitting. The subject that observes or calculates the reactions

of its interlocutor in order to organize its discursive strategies directs the enunciator that constructs his discourse. And both subjects are alternating, as Charaudeau has formulated (1984: 42-43) through a scheme similar in some points to the more detailed one elaborated by Bernárdez (1995: 140-141).

In the case of written narrative enunciation this splitting is produced, firstly, between the author and the imaginary author (narrator); secondly, between the narrator and the characters; finally the imagined reader (narratee) and the real reader (the one who actually reads the story). Likewise, the real readers of the stories have their own image of the author of the story, which is different from the real writer.

It is necessary to add to this splitting the creation of main points in the text that have elements of both real author and real reader who appear in the act of narrative enunciation. Frequently, the authors base their stories or part of them in the real world or in their own lives; and the readers interpret the meaning by following their experience.

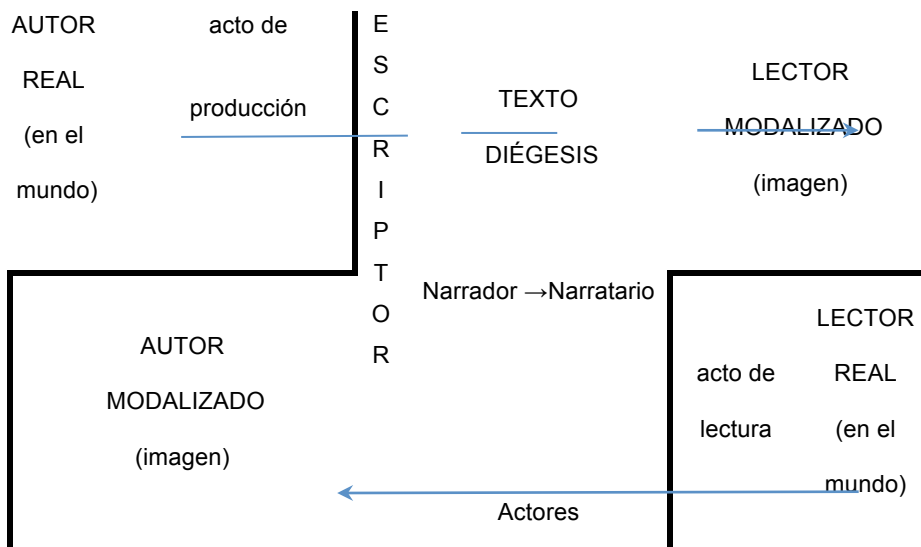


Fig. 3 Narrative communication (Adam-Lorda, 1999: 158)

Genette distinguishes the levels of insertion of the story from the relation of identity or not between the figures of the narrator and the actors in the diegesis, which he (narrator) constructed.

Vinogradov in his studies (1930, 1959, 1961, 1963, 1971) focused on the question of the characters' discourse as an object of representation and the predominant role of the author's speech, which forms part of the main corpus of texts and solves the main informative, communicative and aesthetical problems. He elaborated the notion of "the image of the author" that pierces through the system of a literary work and defines the connection of its elements. For Vinogradov the image of the author is the organizing centre of a literary work, and the diversity of forms of expression of this image unites the whole system of the speech structures of the characters in their correlation with the narrator and the storyteller or storytellers; through them he is the focus of the main ideas and stylistic concentration (Vinogradov 1971: 118). The image of the author in such interpretation is a single whole that includes the creator and his creation.

Based on the fact that there are two main speech streams, the authors/narrators and the characters, Kukharenko suggests singling out four types of narration: author's narrative, which uses different types of compositional sequences (already presented, cf. 5.3), dialogical speech, interior speech and free indirect speech (FIS). As one may see, she too uses the notion of *author* when describing the basic characteristics of narrative.

[...] A work of creative prose is never homogeneous as to the form and essence of the information it carries. Both very much depend on the viewpoint of the addresser, as the author and his personages may offer different angles of perception of the same object. As long it is the author who organizes the effect of polyphony, the readers, while reading the text, identify various views with various personages, not attributing

them directly to the writer. The latter's views and emotions are most explicitly expressed in the author's speech (or the author's narrative).

The unfolding of the plot is mainly concentrated here, personages are given characteristics, the time and the place of action are also described here, as the author sees them. The author's narrative supplies the reader with direct information about the author's preferences and objections, beliefs and contradictions, i.e. serves the major source of shaping up the *author's image*. [...] (V. Kukharenko, 2000: 55)

She also suggests the notion of *entrusted narrative* for naming the phenomenon when the writer entrusts some fictitious character (who might also participate in the narrated events) with the task of story-telling. The writer himself/herself thus hides behind the figure of the narrator, presents all the events of the story from the latter's viewpoint and only sporadically emerges in the narrative with his own considerations, which may reinforce or contradict those expressed by the narrator. This phenomenon is used by the writers in order to create the effect of authenticity of the described events. The structure of the entrusted narrative is much more complicated than that of the *author's* narrative proper, because instead of one commanding, organizing image of the author, we have the hierarchy of the narrator's image seemingly arranging the pros and cons of the related problem and, looming above the narrator's image, there stands the image of the author, the true and actual creator of it all, responsible for all the views and evaluations of the text and serving the major and predominant force of textual cohesion and unity.

Entrusted narrative can be carried out in the 1st person singular, when the narrator proceeds with his story openly and explicitly, from his own name. In some cases the narration has little deviations from the main line and, in others narrators have to supply the reader also with information about themselves and their relation with the protagonists.

Entrusted narrative may also be *anonymous*. The narrator does not openly claim responsibility for the views and evaluations but the manner of presentation, the angle of description very strongly suggests that the story is told not by the *author* himself but by some of his factotums. More than that, in her model Kukhareno even distinguishes between a “colloquial style” and a “literary style,” which could be compared to Benveniste’s distinction between *discours et récit*.

In the frame of occidental narratology these distinctions are established by separating the discourse subject that explains the story, the *narrator* and the *narratee* and the discourse subject, which is supposed to listen or to read the story (and the different forms and grades of their linguistic representation).

It is also important to remember that narratee and real recipient is not the same being, as the former is not a person represented but postulated and taken into account by the act of narration. In the same way one may distinguish between narrative voice and characters’ voice as discourse instances, different from the author.

As mentioned above, in written forms the reader perceives the narrator's voice encoded by the author so as to express different emotions and situations, and the voices can be either overt or covert, and through various types that reveal the narrator's ideologies and attitudes. It is also obvious that the one who tells a story in the works of fiction is different from the author of the written story, though this phenomenon is also produced in some way in any narrative conduct.

The complex peculiarities of the narrative voice come from the relation of the real experience and the created experience, from the poetic or pragmatic order created by the narrator. In any narration one may find some kind of transposition of the real events that inspire what is narrated in different degrees. There is also a conscious use of autobiographic appearance, which is used to authenticate the created world of fiction. These strategies are related to the

particular characteristics of narrative enunciation. These notions are particularly studied by the French narrative enunciative approach. The transformation of the actions and events is realized by means of words and one should not forget that the narrator takes the listener or the reader into consideration in this task. This reader or listener is just an image that the writer of the story supposes in order to adjust his/her words to a narratee. Just as in ancient rhetoric, in order to speak with efficacy it was necessary first to present oneself to the listeners and adapt one's discourse to the real or imaginary interlocutors, i.e. the audience.

6.2.2.1 Types of Narrator

Besides the distinction between narrator and characters (cf. *Infra*), the former does not hold the same position in all narrative texts. We deal with different kinds of narrators and different focalizations of the narration.

6.2.2.1.1 Genette's Distinctions

As pointed out *supra* (cf. 6.2.2), there are several approaches to classification of narrators. For instance, Genette distinguishes the following: The first type of narrator, the anonymous voice lacking any type of identity is *extradiegetic*. The second type of narrator has a word in the story inside the world of the story and this type of narrative is *intradiegetic*. When the narrator is a participant involved in the story, who describes his/her personal and subjective experiences, one may speak about *homodiegetic* narrative. Such a narrator cannot know anything more about what goes on in the minds of any of the other characters than is revealed through their actions; and finally when the narrator is just a peripheral reporter that describes the experiences of the characters who appear in the story the narrative is *heterodiegetic*. If the story's events are seen through the eyes of a third-person internal focaliser, this is termed a *figural narrative*. In some

stories, the author may be overtly *omniscient*, and both employ multiple points of view and comment directly on events as they occur. As it shall be seen, it is the case of most of Jack London's stories (c.f. 11.1.1, 11.1.2).

One of the strategies used to comment on what is being told is the *intervention* of the author. It is when he/she just interferes or is accompanied by addressing the reader. There can also be another kind of interference, which is not of the author but of the narrator. It is the appearance of temporal discordant organizers that indicate the superposition of times: the written story, the real story, the moment of narrating, and even other times. Take for instance the fact that *now* in the past context indicates the moment of the story and the enunciation actualized at the moment of reading. Such grammatical variations represent the rupture of the expected form but they are permitted by the complex open systems of language and they acquire their meaning in the frame of the textual unit.

Enunciative *variations* are practically inherent to narrative texts. The most generalized is the inclusion of dialogues in the story; that presupposes the change of enunciative anchorage. Also the move from the story to the comment that is to reflections about what was told constitutes an enunciative variation. Interventions, variations and alternations constitute the range of resources that permit the realization of the different functions of the narrator (narrative, control, phatic, conative, testimonial, ideological (see G. Genette, 1972).

6.2.2.1.2 Other Models and Kukharenko's Proposals

An alternative and equally effective typology of narrators was suggested by Uspensky (1973) and taken as a base by Fowler (1986) in a convenient exposition of this typology, in which there are just four basic types of narration, grouped into pairs on the basis of whether the narration internal and intrusive or rather external and limited:

[...] Internal narration is, then, narration from a point of view within a character's consciousness, manifesting his or her feelings about and evaluation of the events and characters of the story (which I shall call type A); or from the point of view of someone who is not a participating character but who has knowledge of the feelings of the characters – the called "omniscient" author (type B). 'External' point of view related the events, and describes the characters, from position outside of any of the protagonists' consciousness, with no privileged access to their private feelings and opinions (type C), and in some cases actually stressing the limitations of authorial knowledge, the inaccessibility of the characters' ideologies (type D). (Fowler, 1986: 135)

In Fowler's scheme a major emphasis is put on identifying the linguistic markers of distinct narratorial positions toward the material that is being reported.

In what refers to the French approach for general discourses, the classic forms of referred discourse are reformulated by Charaudeau, who distinguishes quoted speech, integrated speech (that has two variants, indirect speech and narrativised speech) and free indirect speech (1992: 622-625).

The description and classification of enunciative narration is the aim of a whole number of investigations. Narrative enunciation, both author's and entrusted, is not the only type of narration suggested for creative prose. For my research I cannot but turn to such notion as referred discourse as it deals with the various modes that are represented in speech. When we observe the syntactic markers of another's speech, it is quite obvious that it is possible single out direct and indirect speech or the types proposed by Charaudeau or the classic division for English language suggested by G. Leech and M. Short (1981).

These authors suggested classifying the constructions with regard to external and interior speech. All constructions are divided into two groups: Narrator's representation of speech acts (indirect speech, free indirect speech, direct speech, free direct speech) and Narrator's representation of thoughts act (indirect thought, free indirect thought, direct thought, free direct thought).

For the present theoretical framework Kukharenko's classification is also taken into consideration. She distinguishes the four types of narration that has already been mentioned before (cf. 6.2): author's narrative, dialogical speech, interior speech and free indirect speech.

6.2.2.2 Focalization

It is also necessary to distinguish the change of narrator from the change of perspective. G. Genette in his work *Figures III* (1972) suggested the term *focalization*. This term means the organization of the marked point of view in the narrative and presupposes that it will be delivered to the reader.

Genette proposed the use of the abstract term of focalization in order to avoid special visual connotations, which are very peculiar of such notions as view, field and point of view. In spite of the obvious synonymy of the concepts *point of view* and *focalization*, he never uses the first notion as it is too connected to the author, while Genette is interested in the orientation towards the recipient. Focalization is not narrative voice. "Who sees?" and "who speaks?" are two different questions, though both of them are connected with the problem of enunciation. Point of view is not equal to the means of expression; it only means the perspective in terms of which the expression is realized. Genette is interested in both the problem of narrative space in the literary work and the problem of restriction, the filtering of information that the text brings to the reader / spectator.

For the analysis of narrative space the most important aspect is the narrative form that Genette calls *mode du récit*, what is characteristic of the narration but not of the story, which is being told (compare to *fabula* and *sjuzhet*, described before). The way of telling a story presupposes the restriction of the information that is being given according to some logic. The means of its filtering is extremely important and sometimes it plays the role of determining the sign of a genre or a tradition. Take for instance the fact that everything that we know about the characters may only be represented by the point of view of only one protagonist; the information is strictly filtered, as the spectator may not know more than the character's views. Hence the narrative perspective is the means of regulating the information, which comes out of the choice of some restrictive point of view. Hence, while diegesis can be presented by choosing a restrictive point of view, the mode, following Genette, depends on neutral, external or internal focalizations.

Neutral focalization corresponds to the situation when the narrator knows everything. He/she does not adopt any concrete point of view and gives the complete information to the reader. Both the reader and the narrator are omniscient and know more than any actor of the diegesis. When the actors are being contemplated from the outside, without any access to their thoughts, as in the theatre, and the reader-viewer knows less than the actors-characters that is *external focalization*. From this external vision none of the particular points of view is favoured. In this case the author speaks less than he knows about each particular character; so that the reader cannot access the feelings and the thoughts of the character (Genette considers this type of narration to be objective – the “look from the outside”). When we deal with *internal focalization*, the author restricts the information to the point of view of just one actor, and it is a fixed internal focalization; in this case the narrator is stuck to the character and never deserts his post. Internal focalization may also be variable; it occurs when focalization moves from one character to another. There are also cases of multiple internal focalization, when the same event may be told several times from the point of view of various actors. Moreover, diegesis

can be filtered by a look or by hearing or by a word (referred discourse).

Focalization is variable and it depends on many factors. Here I speak about the process of perception, the changing of role and significance of the character during the action; the change of the author's position, the change of meaning or significance of some event, and others. This is why Genette suggests considering various types of focalization; it should be taken into account that in the same story the focus of narration may change during the process and the formula of focalization does not always refer to the whole text of a story, but more probably to some narrative segment.

As the narrator of a story puts the actions in time and place, he can occupy various positions, adopt different perspectives and indicate behaviour. This entails modalizing the story. The linguistic elements of modalization do not constitute a homogeneous category.

In a written story the paraverbal components of face-to-face communication can be transcribed. Typography, by using suspense points, exclamations, interjections and onomatopoeias, is another way of expressing the emotions of the author / narrator. In general, different manifestations of the rhythm of narrative discourse also modalize the story. By this differences of speed and the disorder of what is being told are understood. These are factors that are related to the distinct importance that the narrator gives to different episodes. It is worth remembering the importance of the forms of time and aspect chosen: telling the story in the present implies more emotive behaviour than telling the story in the past tenses. All these possibilities are taken into consideration in this research.

6.2.2.3 Characters' Speech

Another element of complexity in the narrative enunciation is the presence of other enunciators in *dialogues*. Through

them, the characters express their minds in the form of uttered speech. In their exchange of remarks the participants of a dialogue, while discussing other people and their actions, expose themselves too. So dialogue is one of the most significant forms of the character's self-characterization, which allows the narrator to seemingly eliminate himself from the process. The central element of the denotative structure of a creative work is the conflict, which is always set by the characters. These characters are the bearers or the opponents of the author's ideas or those to which the author is neutral or they may represent different worlds. More than that, they also serve as exponents of the spirit of an epoch. In order to create the characters the writer uses some real characteristics of real people, and he may also create some character-types.

The ideas expressed by characters may be considered as their references. Any phrase, regardless of its content, characterizes the speaker in various aspects. It shows his educational and cultural level, his/her social status, profession and other peculiarities. As a rule, any phrase forms part of a dialogical unit, constituted by several phrases (*énoncés*) interconnected by form and content.

The dialogical part of a literary work can easily be singled out due to punctuation and graphical marks. Its main function is to reflect the ingenious communication of the characters. This is why literary dialogue sometimes imitates oral speech. Normally it subordinates to the rules of its development. In Jack London's dialogues, as in all good lively dialogues, speech is characterized by obligatory emotional colouring, which may be traced through the analysis of morphemes, words and constructions, and by intonation (represented by punctuation). This is why the lexical content of a dialogue is normally full of colloquial units and polysemic words. This allows for the use of a rather small number of vocabulary units in order to describe various kinds of situations.

On the other hand, the character expresses his/her emotions without using the words that describe it, such as sadness, happiness, and anger, suffering etc. When characters speak,

they often manifest their subjectivity, i.e. their personal position in relation to what they say. In order to express emotion, the character reflects it in his/her speech indirectly. This is why the character's speech may be full of exclamations, interjections, repetitions and vulgarisms. The communicative type of sentence is different. There appear interrogative and exclamatory constructions; the role of punctuation increases while the length of a sentence decreases. The structure becomes simpler; the use of the ellipsis proliferates. In this way the utterance of each interlocutor begins on the next line and shortens the length of the paragraph.

Without any of the author's comments, but only from the design of speech, the social, geographical and national status of the character may be presented. In order to become a typical character sign the peculiarities of his/her speech should occur at various times, which means that in this case such peculiarities bear a semiotic function. In general the lexical fulfilment of the character's speech plays a very important role, since the composition of the speaking character's vocabulary not only depends on the contents of the dialogue but also on the speaker's personality and the situation of communication.

The composition of speaker's vocabulary is characteristic, as it qualifies the character sender, the character addressee and the situation of their dialogue. This situation is reflected in the stylistic meaning. This is why all the types of stylistically marked vocabulary (both of standard and substandard characters) may be found in a dialogue. Standard vocabulary is being used in the speech of all kinds of characters. From among the substandard type of vocabulary we may single out slang and vulgarisms as the topic of the following chapters.

In conclusion, the individual language (or idiolect) of any speaker includes three types of elements: general type – for the whole language group, the type characteristic for a certain group of speakers (united by a social, professional, age, etc. reference) and the individual type. Thus the speech of each character consists of three levels. At its basis there lie the

elements of general language, characteristic for oral speech in general; above this level there is the level of social, professional and other personalized group elements that define the social status of the character; and after that comes the third level that reflects the unique individuality of the speech system of a specific person.

To sum it all up, the main objective of dialogue in a literary work is to create the participant's self-reference. In some peculiar organization of speech, the semiotic function may be added. Besides, dialogue introduces a foreign point of view (so many characters – so many points of view), some foreign evaluative position that creates the polyphony of a creative work. Dialogue also creates the effect of objectiveness and authenticity of the events, as the author delegates the descriptive and evaluative functions to the characters. Nevertheless, character's speech is not only represented in dialogical form. It also may exist in an unpronounced form of speech.

6.2.2.3.1 Interior Speech

An author uses interior speech in order to let the character recount his/her thoughts by himself/herself, thus creating the effect of authenticity and spontaneity through narratee's participation in the emotional and psychological life of the character. Interior speech reflects it and is used in a creative work as a part of the character's speech along with the dialogical speech. In contrast to dialogue, interior speech does not play an important role in the progress of the plot events as it does not participate in the developments but it reveals the motives and the true relationships.

I should mention that, by and large, interior speech is derived from external one. All the important characteristics of interior speech result from the fact that it is self-directed, which means that it does not participate in any communicative act and it is not pointed at an external receiver. The sender and the receiver here are united in one and the same person.

When using interior speech the writer's task is not only to introduce the narratee into the character's interior world but also to make this world understandable for a stranger. Interior speech in its psychological nature is not meant for being understood by a foreign person.

As a rule, writers who use interior speech do it in two ways. They either give up authenticity and present thoughts in a common lexical and syntactic form that makes everything very clear for the reader; or they intend to transmit these thoughts in their extremely contracted literary version. In this case interior speech is more natural but it complicates the reader's perception.

The phenomenon when the narrator does not participate in the interior speech of a character is called *the stream of consciousness*. It is less dismembered and the most extensional kind of interior speech. Stream of consciousness is a rather difficult technique for both the writer and the reader. The writer must create an effect of connection between the conscious and the unconscious, the rational and the irrational, reality and fantasy whilst the reader needs to find a logical basis in these thoughts and connect it with the real events, so that reading turns into finding a solution for a problem that does not have an exhaustive answer.

Each character's individual way of thinking and the strategies used by the author lead to various means of producing the effect of the associative stream.

The main form of interior speech representation is the *interior monologue*. It is a significant segment of a text, which may be represented in a paragraph or several pages. The reason for the thoughts is some event in life. Departing from it, the character turns by association to some moment in the past or sometimes future that is similar to this event or a part of it. Interior monologue stops the development of the plot, while the character thinks the action; he/she pauses till the moment it returns to the active phase in the same point where the interior monologue was introduced. Interior monologue

affects the development of the plot, explains it, but in most cases does not participate in it.

Not all authors use this form of opening the character's internal world. But in the creative works where it occurs it is responsible for the mental and emotional deepness of the work. Interior monologue contributes to conferring an aura of authenticity to the characters by suggesting their psychological difficulties.

Another type of interior speech is what Kukhareno (1988: 168) calls *short inserts of interior speech*. This type is connected with the internal reaction of the character. It serves to express the instantaneous and emotional reaction of the character to what is happening. Due to their function these short inserts include emotionally or stylistically coloured units in their structure.

When such little inclusions as well as long monologues form part of the character's speech, they include the favourite words, phrases and the individual repetitions of the character. Nevertheless, due to the length of monologue and the fact that it is not closely connected to the action, its lexical structure is rather neutral; in comparison to little inclusions, which consist of emotionally coloured and substandard lexical units.

The last type of interior speech is *self-dialogue* (auto-dialogue), this means that the character speaks to himself/herself as he/she has two interior voices, emotional and rational. Each of these parts of the character has its arguments so that it may be said that each of them gets its own voice. This is what Bakhtin called "dialogism of self-consciousness"⁷ (1979a).

Generally speaking, interior speech is a heritage of the author's psychological prose. It is here where the author/narrator tends to reflect the internal world of the character; he/she does it not from his/her position of the all-

⁷ My translation

knowing judge but passes the word to the character. This character does not count on the listeners; he sincerely opens himself. Spoken and interior speeches complete each other and create the common speech of the character that describes him through his own consciousness and speech system. These functions are fulfilled during the whole speech part of the character independently of the distribution of the spoken and internal segments.

6.2.2.3.2 Free Indirect Speech (FIS)

In some cases an author describes the perception of life not from his/her own point of view, but from the character's position. Nevertheless, officially a character does not speak or think, as in the case of dialogical or interior speech. Here grammatical tense, the third person singular of the personal pronoun, the possessive pronouns and the basic content of the word selection stays the same as if it were in the narrator's speech. But there are several elements introduced into this speech that are characteristic for the speech of the character. Inversion and rhetorical questions appear more often; there are many short sentences, the quantity of the demonstrative pronouns increases; they are situational substitutes of the whole scene, etc. In other words, the speech is concentrated on the character's plan, but the author is always present and it is he who puts into shape the statements morphologically.

The language of the narrator absorbs the speech and thought of the characters. There is contamination of the voices of the narrator and the character. The character's point of view dominates, but the quantity of signs of his/her speech presence is always less than the author's speech and it may consist of to one or two cited words of the character or conversational phrase. Such switch to a character's position was first described at the beginning of the twentieth century; Voloshinov (1929) considered it as *improper direct speech*; that is what is called in English *free indirect speech/discourse*.

There are various disagreements in what refers to the classification of free indirect speech types and the definition of its place in prose, but all scholars agree that its main function is the depiction of a situation from the inside, from the position of the person who lives through what is going on, and its language expression is the alloy of the speech of the character and the speech of the author. As a rule the narrator marks the distance concerning the character, i.e. he/she ironizes, condemns, etc. The concrete setting and content of the free indirect speech permits the distinction of several types.

According to the prominent soviet linguist V. Kukharenko (1988: 174), there are three types of FIS: *improper-author's narration*, *indirect-direct speech* and *depicted speech* or *interior FIS*. I would like to give a brief description of each of these types.

In what refers to the *improper author's narration*, in comparison with interior speech it does not stop the development of the plot, but forms a part of it. The dynamics of the external action is not interrupted, but the visual angle and its description are different. The improper author's narration is actually the continuation of the narration itself, but it includes the subject of the action.

The second type, the *indirect-direct speech* or *pronounced FIS*, is the repeated reproduction of the speech that has been pronounced before. In this case all the signs of direct speech have been observed, except for two: (1) the phrase subordinates to the sequences of tenses; (2) the speaker is represented by the third person pronoun. Nevertheless the author's aim is achieved as he/she manages to create the impression of spontaneous sound.

This type of FIS is a very economical way of character representation. The narrator chooses, from the supposedly real dialogue that has happened, the utterances that better correspond to his objectives, giving the rest of the situation in his retelling. Then he/she provides the perception of the

following retelling as if it were from the character's point of view.

The third type of FIS, the depicted or interior FIS, has a lot in common with interior speech, but since the author does not give a word to the subject of speech, this type can be considered as the author's interpretation of the thoughts and emotions that it transmits. When the author introduces the depicted speech, he shows in a very economical way both the internal world of the character and his (author's) relation towards this character.

Sometimes it is really difficult to determine the exact border between the narrator's voice and the character's voice in free indirect speech. Nevertheless, the morphological formatting of the depicted speech and the "breakthroughs" of the author's voice create a certain distance between the interior world of the character and the reader. This unseen presence of the third person adds to this form pre-set, efficient nature, which is absent when we speak simply of interior speech. In spite of a certain distance from the character in free indirect speech, it should be united to other types of statement that declare the character's point of view, such as dialogical and interior speech. Hence, the position of character and his/her self-opening receive greater quantitative expression in the text than the author's speech, who agrees with the central place of a given character in the whole image system of the literary work.

We should also remember that descriptive fragments are a place of predilection for modalization, so that when creating a world and the actants of the story, the narrator indirectly formulates an appreciation. To this type of subjectivity indicators also refer the degrees of certainty that the narrator manifests in the story by using modalities that are related to his/her knowledge.

7 STYLISTIC ASPECTS

According to Mikhail Bakhtin, “style enters as one element into generic unity of the utterance” (1986: 64), and the study of styles of language may only be productive when their generic nature is taken into consideration. From this point of view, stylistics may be viewed as a discipline included into discourse genre studies. Therefore the object of stylistics is not only the regularity of the choice and use of language means, as Bakhtin saw it, but first of all it is the study of types of organization of speech production and its realization in a singular text or group of texts. In the present chapter of my study I am going to turn to the notions of style and stylistics as I believe that a brief acquaintance with these notions and their peculiarities will be helpful for the further analysis whose objectives were stated before.

7.1 General Notions on Style

First of all, what is style? Initially the word ‘style’ was derived from the Latin word *stylus*, which meant a short stick sharp at one end and flat at the other used by the Romans to write on wax tables. Nowadays the word ‘style’ is used in so many senses that it has become a breeding ground for ambiguity. It is applied to the teaching of writing a composition; to revealing the correspondence between thought and expression; it also denotes an individual manner of making use of language; and sometimes it refers to more general, abstract notions, thus inevitably becoming vague and obscure.

The concept of style has known many versions, being at turns considered the object of stylistics and being excluded from stylistics. Style represents a complex notion, which cannot be included within the patterns of a definition or of a discipline, although there have been attempts to define style and to include it within one discipline of language or another.

Representing a component in a series of disciplines such as aesthetics, linguistics, poetics, literary semiotics, or non-language related disciplines such as music, architecture or arts in general, style offers new perspectives for pluri- and inter-disciplinary research. This openness of the concept explains the complexity of the term. Among those who have defined style and from whom we have inherited the first considerations about style and the first classifications of style I may mention Aristotle and Demetrio. There had not been steady preoccupations for style, ancient scholars having provided the first pattern for analysis up to the beginning of the 20th century when style re-captured the attention of researchers, being conceived this time as an element of language.

There is no point in quoting definitions of style. They are too many and too heterogeneous to fall under one more or less satisfactory unified notion. All these diversities in the understanding of the word 'style' undoubtedly stem from its ambiguity. But still all these various definitions leave the impression that they share. They all point to some integral significance, namely, that style (in the literary field) is a set of characteristics by which we distinguish one author from another or members of one subclass from members of other subclasses, all of which are members of the same general class. These sets of typical characteristics of a writer or of a subclass of literary language may be seen in the analysis of the language means of the general literary standard. It is worth saying that, from a discourse linguistics perspective, style is a property of speech. It will be seen infra that Bally distinguishes among several kinds of style and insists on the affectivity of everyday speech; as for Genette he points out that "all discourses have style" (Genette, 1991)

7.2 Stylistics and Discourse Analysis

Stylistics is an old discipline concerned with language and its peculiarities. In the European philological tradition the concern with the styles of language can be traced back to the

ancient times. Ancient scholars were the first to define style, to classify style and to analyze it as norms which guide speech and help to achieve the aims of this speech. Many concepts of contemporary stylistics were also taken over from ancient times. This is the period where the roots of this discipline are found; its foundations were laid by rhetoric. Most research in stylistics indicates that ancient rhetoric was the starting point of stylistics; along the time the majority of researchers have linked stylistics with rhetoric. After a slight discontinuity in the 18th century the notions of stylistics were formulated. During the 19th century the concepts of stylistics were formed as an independent section of linguistics and they were generally accepted in the first part of the 20th century after the works of Bally and the representatives of the Prague linguistics circle. Bally defined stylistics, established its object and the main features of linguistic stylistics: the expressive value of language, especially of spoken language.

Bally also spoke about the three main kinds of stylistics but in different terms. He singled out “general linguistics”, which studies stylistic problems of speech in general; “particular stylistics,” which investigates questions of stylistics of each national language in particular; and “individual linguistics,” which deals with the expressive peculiarities of speech of concrete individuals (1944, 1951).

Unlike other linguistic disciplines that have their units (phonemes in phonetics, morphemes in morphology, lexemes in lexicology, and others) stylistics apparently does not dispose, of this kind of units. The units of language systems contain a range of instructions (Ducrot, 1980 and Charaudeau, 1992) which, thanks to the situation of discourse, may perform stylistic functions and permits underlining this or that shade of an utterance, adding to it different coloring, intensifying or weakening its emotional influence. It is necessary to stress the fact that in any historical period stylistic meanings take certain regularities. Some kinds of diachronic modulations are always possible.

Stylistics deals mainly with two interdependent tasks, following Bally’s distinctions: the study of language means,

which by their features secure the desirable effect of the utterance, and the study of certain genres of discourse, where the choice and arrangement of these language means are distinguished by pragmatic or aesthetic aspects of the communication.

These genres of discourse can be analysed if its linguistic components are presented in their interaction, thus revealing the unbreakable unity and transparency of constructions of a given type. Some of them are distinguished by their use in pragmatic communication and are called functional styles of language; others belong to the aesthetic uses of language and, following the classical approaches, they find their resources in what are called stylistic devices and expressive means.

As long as the object of my study is Jack London's short stories, which belong to the creative literature or belles-lettres style, I have to deal with this rich register of communication. As Adam points out,

[...] Du point de vue linguistique, les textes littéraires, à travers ce qu'on appelle le style, sont le lieu d'une manifestation d'une exploitation et d'une exploration, plus ou moins poussée, des potentialités d'une langue. [...] (Adam, 1997: 10)

[From a linguistic point of view, literary texts, through what is known as style, are the place for an expression, for exploitation and for an exploration, more or less extreme of a language.]⁸

Literature embraces numerous and versatile genres of imaginative writing. The unlimited possibilities of creative writing, which covers the whole universe and makes use of all language resources, led some scholars to the conviction that, because of the liability of its contours, it can be hardly qualified as a functional style.

⁸ My translation

The purpose (writing project) of the author who creates by using an elaborate style is not to prove but only to suggest a possible interpretation of the phenomena of life for forcing the reader to see the viewpoint of the writer.

The use of words in context and very often in more than one is greatly influenced by the lexical environment. Vocabulary reflects the author's personal evaluation of things or phenomena, hence it is possible to speak about a peculiar and individual selection of vocabulary and syntax and, sometimes, the introduction of typical features of colloquial language that reflect distinctive individual properties and provide aesthetic-cognitive effect.

In DA henceforth stylistic features must be seen as a systematic configuration, which allows to describe the specificity of a writer's language and manner of expressing ideas. My purpose is to search for such specificity in London's discourse. However, it is necessary to present the types of stylistic devices in order to determine their role in London's discourse, since

[...] Le style consiste donc en l'ensemble des propriétés rhématiques exemplifiées par le discours, au niveau "formel" (c'est-à-dire, en fait, physique) du matériau phonique et graphique, au niveau linguistique du rapport de dénotation directe, et au niveau figural de la dénotation indirecte. [...] (Genette, 1991: 131)

[Style then consists of the set of rhematic properties exemplified by discourse, at the "formal" (i.e. physical, in fact) of the phonic and graphic level, at the linguistic level of the relation of direct denotation, and at the figural level of indirect denotation.]⁹

⁹ My translation

7.3 Stylistic Devices and Their Types

In spite of considering that style is a property of discourse as a global configuration, this analysis requires to take into consideration the linguistic means traditionally studied as expressive means, stylistic means, stylistic markers, stylistic devices, figures of speech and so on. All these terms have traditionally been classified into two types in the study of rhetoric (the word rhetoric is still sometimes used to describe what I have up to now been calling style) – tropes and figures. In general, trope is a device that involves meaning, and a figure that involves expression, but the terms are not always clearly distinguished. Besides, the consideration of these terms as stylistic devices and expressive means seems to be very comfortable. In order to better understand their sense I shall specify some moments that concern these notions.

It is common knowledge that linguists perceive the nature of a stylistic device in different ways. Some of them consider that it belongs to language (Galperin, 1967) and others – to speech (Vinokur, 1980). The difference of opinions is quite normal from my point of view as the stylistic device is, on the one hand, a realized possibility of the effective use of language, a speech phenomenon and on the other hand it is a model materialized in utterances, a phenomenon of language. This is why the stylistic device occupies an intermediate position between language and speech. To be more precise, it is possible to say that it belongs to the level of norm, the socio-cultural forms of the speech activity, which tends to acquire necessary communicative effect.

In my view, stylistic device is a conscious and intentional intensification of some typical structural and/or semantic property of a language unit (neutral or expressive) promoted to a generalized status and thus becoming a generative model, while expressive means are those phonetic, morphological, word-building, lexical, phraseological and syntactic forms which exist in language as a system for the purpose of logical and/or emotional intensification of the utterance.

It seems much easier to make an analysis of stylistic devices and expressive means in texts when they are subdivided into more precise groups, even if they appear on a continuum; this is why I propose the following division based on the levels of language the tropes belong to. By level of language the representation of language subsystems (phonetic, lexical and syntactic) is understood. This manner of consideration of stylistic markers is based on the models suggested by I.R. Galperin (1979).

7.3.1 Lexical Devices: Connotation, Tropes, Heteroglossia

It is common knowledge that one of the main functions of the word is that of denoting. This is why *denotation* meaning is the major semantic characteristic of a word as denotation of a word refers only to the “idea” the word represents, stripped of any emotional associations the word might carry. On the other hand, to give a more or less full picture of the meaning of a word it is necessary to take into consideration “the derivative values” of the word meaning termed *connotations* (Genette, 1991: 118). The connotation of a word is not a thing or idea the word stands for, but the attitudes, feelings, and emotions aroused by the word, always in relation with the components of a communicative situation.

Not all linguists agree with such a distinction between “literal meanings” and “derivate values”. As mentioned supra (cf. 6.2.1.2), Ducrot considers that they are not a literal meaning.

[...] Pour notre part, ce que nous entendons par signification (du mot ou de la phrase) est tout autre chose que le « sens littéral » dont il vient d’être question. Car elle n’est pas un constituant du sens de l’énoncé, mais lui est au contraire complètement hétérogène. Elle contient surtout, selon nous, des instructions données à ceux qui devront interpréter un énoncé de la phrase, leur

demandant de chercher dans la situation de discours tel ou tel type d'information et de l'utiliser de telle ou telle manière pour reconstruire le sens visé par le locuteur. » [...] (1980 :12)

[As for us, what we understand as meaning (of the word or of the phrase) is completely different from the "literal sense" [...] since it is not a constituent of the sense of the utterance, but is completely heterogeneous to it. According to us, it contains, above all, instructions given to those who should interpret a utterance of the phrase, asking them to look for this or that kind of information in the discourse situation and to use it in this or that way to rebuild the sense which the speaker aimed for."]¹⁰

In the following chapter I deal with such types of meaning that create additional expressive, evaluative and subjective connotation. This process of development of new meaning is connected with the substitution of the existing names, approved by long usage and fixed in dictionaries, by the new, occasional and individual ones created by the author's subjective original view and evaluation of things. This process of substitution is traditionally called *transference*, due to the fact that the name of the object is transferred onto another, proceeding from their similarity or closeness. As has already been mentioned, each type of this intended substitution results in a stylistic device also called a trope.

7.3.1.1 Lexical Expressive Means

As it has just been stated, in the basis of the trope lies the transference of the traditional naming to some other subject area. Among the main tropes is metaphor, the trope of tropes (G. Genette, 1972: 33), which is based on the analogical relation perceived between the two objects that correspond to two meanings. The expressiveness of metaphor is promoted

¹⁰ My translation

by the implicit simultaneous presence of images of both objects, one of which is an actual name and the other one that provides its own name. Formally it is all about transference based on the similarity of one feature common to two different entities, while in fact each one enters a phrase in the complexity of other characteristics. The wider the gap between the associated objects, the more exciting is the metaphor. It should be noted that if a metaphor involves likeness between inanimate and animate objects it is called *personification*. Very close to metaphor is another stylistic device, *metonymy*, which is a transference of names based on contiguity, on extra linguistic, actually existing relations between the phenomena denoted by the words, on common grounds of existence in reality, but different semantically. What matters for metonymy is that two objects or phenomena have common grounds of existence in reality. Very similar to singling out one particular metaphor type, that of personification, is singling out a particular metonymy type, the one based on the relations between a part and the whole, which is very often viewed as an independent stylistic device – *synecdoche*.

As one will see in the following chapters, there is one more stylistic device, which is closely connected to metaphor and metonymy – *antonomasia*. This trope consists in replacement of a name by an indication of an important peculiarity of a subject; In this case the proper noun is usually used to characterize another person or thing that has one or more characteristics typical for the name bearer.

Another lexical stylistic device, the *epithet*, is as well-known as metaphor due to the fact that it is widely mentioned by all types of literary analysts. Epithet is the attributive characterization of a person, a thing or a phenomenon both existing and imaginary. Its main feature is emotiveness and subjectivity: an epithet creates an image and reveals the emotionally colored individual attitude of the author towards the object spoken of.

One more device that, like the epithet, relies on the foregrounding of emotive meaning is the *hyperbole*, a trope in

which emphasis is achieved through the deliberate exaggeration of a feature essential to the object or phenomenon. *Understatement* as it is based on the opposite, since here the emphasis is achieved through intentional underestimation. Hyperboles and understatements are used in everyday speech. Hence, in creative works they often appear in dialogues but more complex, original and profound examples of these stylistic devices are used in the narrator's speech.

7.3.1.2 Literary and Colloquial Words: Social Polyphony

As it has already been said in the previous chapters (c.f. 6.2.1.1), Bakhtin insisted that the notion of novel should be understood as a phenomenon characterised by diverse styles, speeches and voices. For him one of the main characteristics of the stylistics of a novel consisted in the peculiar connections and correlations between utterances and languages.

The language of a literary work is involved in a struggle of points of view, evaluations and accents introduced into it by the characters. This is why characters' speech is full of particular words, expressions and phrases affected by another's intentions.

[...] социальное разноречие вводится преимущественно в прямых речах героев, в диалогах. Но оно, как мы сказали, рассеяно и в авторской речи вокруг героев, создавая особые зоны героев. Эти зоны образуются из полуречей героев, из различных форм скрытой передачи чужого слова, из рассеянных слов и словечек чужой речи, из вторжений в авторскую речь чужих экспрессивных моментов (многоточий, вопросов, восклицаний). Зона — это район действия голоса героя, так или иначе

примешивающегося к авторскому голосу. [...].
(Бахтин, 1934-1935)

[...] Social heteroglossia enters the novel primarily in the direct speeches of [...] characters, in dialogues. But this heteroglossia [...] is also diffused throughout the authorial speech that surrounds the characters, creating highly particularized character zones. These zones are formed from the fragments of character speech, from various forms for hidden transmission of someone else's word, from scattered words and sayings belonging to someone else's speech, from those invasions into authorial speech of others' expressive indicators (ellipsis, questions, exclamations). Such a character zone in the field of action for a character's voice, encroaching in one way or another upon the author's voice. [...]
(Bakhtin, 1975: 314)

It is traditionally considered that the vocabulary of any language can be roughly divided into three groups of words that differ from each other according to the sphere where they are used. The biggest group consists of *neutral* words, which have no stylistic connotation and can be used in any communicative situation. Two other groups consist of stylistically marked words that are either *literary* or *colloquial*.

Literary words are used to satisfy the communicative demands of official, scientific and poetic messages whereas colloquial words are used for unofficial everyday communication. Although there is no instant correlation between written and oral forms of speech, as well as there is no correlation between literary and colloquial vocabulary, still literary words are mostly observed in written speech, as most literary messages appear in writing, while the use of colloquial words is often associated with oral use even though there are many examples of them that have written form, such as diaries. This is why while analyzing various texts I see that literary words are mostly used in the author's speech, while colloquialisms take place in discourses that imitate everyday oral communication.

Nevertheless, in many literary works, especially narrative, all registers may appear. As it has been said (cf. 6.2.1.1), Bakhtin theorized these variations when formulating the notion of polyphonic novel and, as it is intended to demonstrate, London's Klondike stories may be considered as polyphonic.

When classifying some text fragment as literary and colloquial one should not forget that the some of the words are neutral and others have colloquial or literary stylistic coloring. These registers consist on the one hand of words used by speakers in generalized communication and on the other hand there are also special words that may vary according to their communicative purpose.

Literary words give a message a tone of solemnity, sophistication, seriousness or gravity. These words are used in official documents, in scientific papers, high poetry and author's speech of creative prose. On the contrary, colloquial words mark message as informal, conversational, and are used in everyday conversations. There are also several special groups of colloquial words: slang, jargonisms, vulgarisms and dialectal words.

Slang words are used in very informal communication, they are highly emotive and expressive and due to this peculiarity they lose their originality very fast and are replaced by some new ones. This tendency to synonymic expansion results in long chains of synonyms with different degrees of expressiveness that denote the same concept. Substandard use of synonymic words through universal usage can be raised to the standard colloquial. Jargonisms are very close to slang as they are also substandard, emotive and expressive, but unlike slang they are only used in limited groups, united either socially or professionally.

Vulgarisms are coarse words with a strong emotive meaning, often disrespectful, normally avoided in polite conversation. The history of vulgarisms reflects the history of social ethics. Nowadays words, which were vulgar in nineteenth century,

are not seen as such anymore. At the present there are practically no words that can be banned from use by the modern society.

H.W. Fowler defines a dialect as “a variety of a language which prevails in a district, with local peculiarities of vocabulary, pronunciation and phrase”.¹¹ In what refers to dialectal words, here it should be noted that in case they are used inside of regional dialects – they are normative and don’t have any stylistic meaning. But when used outside them, dialectisms carry a strong flavor of the locality where they belong. In the USA three major dialectal varieties are distinguished: New England, Southern and Midwestern (Central, Midland). These classifications do not include many minor local variations. Dialects markedly differ on the phonemic level as one and the same phoneme is differently pronounced in each dialect. On the lexical level they are also different as they have their own names for locally existing phenomena and also provide locally circulating synonyms for the words that exist in general language. Some of them have entered the general vocabulary and lost their dialectal status.

Each of the above-mentioned groups justifies its name of special colloquial words as each of them for some reasons is used in certain limited groups of people or certain communicative situations.

7.3.2 Phonemic Stylistic Devices

When talking about the stylistic approach to utterance, one should remember that it is not limited by its structure and sense. There is also another very important thing that should be taken into account; that is the way a word, phrase or sentence sounds. When one deals with various cases of phonemic foregrounding it is important to remember that phoneme is unilateral. It helps to differentiate meaningful lexemes but has no meaning of its own. The sound of any

¹¹ Quoted in Antrushina (2001: 19)

word taken separately practically never has an aesthetic value; nevertheless, when combined with other words, it may acquire a desired phonetic effect.

Devoid of denotation or connotation meaning, a phoneme has a strong associative and sound-instrumenting power. Take for instance numerous cases of *onomatopoeia* – a combination of speech-sounds which aims at imitating sounds produced by nature, things, people and animals. Imitating the sounds of nature, man or objects, the acoustic form of the word foregrounds it and emphasizes its meaning too. So that the phonemic structure of the word proves to be important for the creation of expressive and emotive connotations. An onomatopoeic word not only transmits the logical information, but also provides the vivid description of the situation described.

Some other types of sound-instrumenting that are very common for fiction are *alliteration*, the repetition of the same consonant at the beginning of neighboring words or ascending syllables, and *assonance* – the repetition of the same vowels, usually in stressed syllables. Both of these devices may produce the effect of euphoria, the sense of comfort in hearing, or cacophony, a sense of discomfort and strain in pronouncing or hearing.

Generally the violation of the orthoepic and grammatical norms of literary language very characteristic for some layers of society is frequently used in an artistic dialogue. Various negative forms on the same subject-predicate pair, the universal collapsed form *ain't* that substitutes all other auxiliary and connecting verbs in all the forms and negative constructions, the incoordination of subject and predicate in a number, the direct word order in a question, are all examples of means of creating additional information about a character.

A similar role for indicating the social belonging of a character is played by graphon. The intentional violation of the graphical shape of a word or a word-combination, used to reflect its authentic pronunciation, and to recreate the individual and

social peculiarities of the speaker and the atmosphere of communication, is called *graphon*.

Graphon proved to be an extremely concise but effective means of providing information about the origin of the speaker, his social and educational background, physical or emotional condition, and other peculiarities. Graphon individualizes the character's speech, adds to it some vividness and memorability. At the same time, graphon is very good at transmitting the atmosphere of authentic live communication and informality of a speech act. There are various graphons that have become clichés of contemporary prose dialogues due to their having finally been assimilated into the language system.

Graphical changes not only reflect peculiarities of pronunciation, they are also used to transmit the intensity of the stress, emphasizing and foregrounding the stressed words. To such purely graphical means, which do not involve any violations, all changes of typography can be referred. According to the frequency of usage, variability of functions, italics occupy the first place among graphical means of foregrounding. Another kind of graphical changes are capitalization, spacing of graphemes, such as hyphenation and multiplication and spacing of lines as well.

When summing up the informational options of the graphical arrangement of a discourse, it seems clear that they may be applied in diverse ways of recreating the individual and social peculiarities of the character, the atmosphere and the act of communication – all aimed at revealing and emphasizing the author's viewpoint.

7.3.3 Syntactic Level

Speaking about syntax from the stylistic point of view, it is necessary to mention that in this case the object of the analysis is concerned with stylistic devices and expressive means of language based on some significant structural point

in an utterance, whether it consists of one sentence or a string of sentences. Syntactic stylistic devices add logical, emotive expressive information to an utterance regardless of the lexical meanings of the sentence components.

When speaking about the expressive impact of syntactic expressive means, I refer, first of all, to the sentence structure, as not only clarity and understandability of the sentence but also its expressiveness depend on the position of clauses constituting it.

One of the most prominent places among the stylistic devices dealing with the arrangement of members of the sentence undoubtedly belongs to *repetition*, which is the reiteration of the same word or phrase for the sake of expressiveness. There are various types of repetition, which, as will be shown in the following analysis, are widely used by London in his stories. Among them are anaphora, epiphora, framing, anadiplosis and other types.

As it has already been said, word order is essential for stylistic expressiveness. This is why it is important to speak about stylistic *inversion*, which deals with the rearrangement of normative word order. It is actually a direct word order changed either completely so that the predicate precedes the subject or partially, so that the object precedes the subject-predicate pair.

Very important for the further analysis is the notion of syntactic *parallelism*, which is the similarity of structure of successive phrases or sentences. Parallel constructions are often accompanied by the repetition of one or more words. Often parallelism implies comparison. The use of symmetry and mirror reflection distinguishes such syntactic construction as *chiasm*.

Syntactic stylistic devices add logical, emotive and expressive information to the utterance irrespective of the lexical meanings of sentence components. Yet there are certain structures that bear meaning based both on the syntactic organization of phrase members and their semantic

expressiveness. These structures are called lexical-syntactic stylistic devices.

7.3.4 Lexical-Syntactic Resources

Besides the three mentioned types of devices, London's discourse requires taking into consideration some combination of certain structures, whose emphasis depends not only on the arrangement of sentence members, but also on their definite demands on the lexical-semantic aspect of the utterance; these are sometimes considered as lexical-syntactic stylistic devices. There is a great deal of stylistic markers on this level of language.

The most outstanding examples of such stylistic markers are antithesis, climax and anti-climax, simile, litotes and periphrasis. *Antithesis* is a perfect example of this kind of stylistic devices. As to its structure, it looks as a parallel construction, but in what refers to its semantics, I should note that the two parts of antithesis are semantically opposite to each other. The main function of this device is stressing heterogeneity of a phenomenon described, in order to show that this phenomenon is a dialectical unity of several opposing features.

Another type of semantically complicated parallelism that is being used to a great extent in the corpus of this thesis is the *climax*, in which each next word combination is logically more important or emotionally stronger. When climax suddenly interrupted by an unexpected turn of the thought that defeats the reader's expectations and ends in a semantic reversal of the main idea it is called *anti-climax*.

One of the most popular stylistic markers of the same type is *simile*, which can be defined as an imaginative comparison of two unlike objects that belong to different classes, due to the similarity of some of their qualities.

The last lexical-syntactic stylistic device one needs to consider is *periphrasis*, a very peculiar device that basically consists of using a more complicated structure instead of a word. The main function of periphrasis is to convey a purely individual perception of the described object. In order to achieve it, the generally accepted name of an object is substituted by the description of one of its features, which for the author of this thesis seems to be the most characteristic, so that this description becomes more prominent.

PART III ANALYSIS

8 PROTOCOL OF ANALYSIS

The methodology of my research is situated in the general framework of Discourse Analysis and it integrates diverse components into a whole that allows for the description of the discursive specificity of Jack London's stories under analysis.

I have used a qualitative method of observation of the fragments according to the theoretical elements that have been presented in the theoretical framework.

In the following chapters I shall first present the analysis of the textual composition of the stories, where on the one hand I characterize the text sequences (c.f. 9.1) and on the other hand present the main characteristics of the narrative schemes (c.f. 9.2) that can be singled out in the stories.

Secondly, I trace the basic techniques that London uses to create the "world" of his stories (c.f. 10). Here firstly I outline the basic character-types characteristic for the corpus and London's stories in general. Secondly, I analyse the peculiarities of the landscapes in these stories, the ways they are described and I examine their functions in the stories.

Thirdly, in chapter 11, a detailed analysis of the narrative enunciation is carried out. I first outline the focalization and narrator types that prevail in the stories and analyse their functions. After that, I focus on the polyphonic enunciation and mark out its subtypes. I analyse the use of the narrator's speech, characters' speech and free indirect speech (FIS) and its main functions.

Finally, in the last chapter of this analysis (12) I focus on the stylistics means. I select, analyse and establish the typologies of tropes and figures, and determine how they contribute to shaping London's discourse.

These analyses allow me to present my general conclusions in chapter 13. This research is completed with the

presentation of the future research lines I would like to explore in chapter 14.

In my analyses I shall use the following abbreviations in order to name the stories of the corpus:

- M.T. for “To the Man on the Trail”
- W.S. for “The White Silence”
- F.C. for “In a Far Country”
- L.O.M. for “The League of the Old Men”
- Law. L. for “The Law of Life”
- N. B. for “Nam Bok the Unveracious”
- L.F. for “Lost Face”
- W.P. for “The Wit of Porportuk”
- B.F. for “To Build a Fire”
- Love L. for “Love of Life”
- S.K. for “The Story of Keesh”
- B.W. for “Brown Wolf”

These stories can be found in the Appendix of the thesis. They are presented in the chronological order of their first publishing, as listed in London’s chronological bibliography by (1972).

9 ANALYSIS OF THE STORIES' TEXTUAL COMPOSITION

9.1 Characteristics of the Text Sequences

In this chapter the analysis of the basic textual characteristics of Jack London's short stories is presented. First of all the peculiarities of the textual sequences used in the stories under analysis are going to be traced. As it has been said previously (c.f. 5.3), according to J.M. Adam (1999), all texts are heterogeneous and formed by sequences; these sequences are of the following types: narration, description, argumentation, explanation and dialogue. It is worth mentioning that even if the basic organisation of stories is narration, other modes of organisation are also present.

Various types of sequences may be combined in texts. Any text in general has a dominant discourse mode, depending on its genre. It is only natural that the dominant sequence or organisation in stories, as well as in other literary texts, is narrative, as it presupposes the transformation from the initial situation to the final state through the intrigue (plot) that gives meaning to the actions that happen in time. Nevertheless, the chronological development of the facts that are being told is differently presented, depending of the author's project of writing. It is the specificity of the composition of London's stories that are being explored in this subsection.

In all narrative texts description has an outstanding role, as it contributes to the "creation of a world" (cf. Adam-Lorda, 1999:139-154). This role is particularly important in London's stories, therefore, after a presentation, a special chapter will be dedicated to the study of it (cf. 9). But first of all the narrative organisation of London's stories and its variants are going to be analysed. Moreover, it is necessary to show how

dialogic, argumentative and explanatory sequences are related to the former and to each other in these stories.

9.1.1 Description of Actions in Exposition and in Dénouement

In general, it is characteristic for narration to present clear detailed facts and to unfold events, often starting by a description or by the presentation of a situation and the characters. In such stories as L.O.M., W.P., S.K., B.F. narration takes place from the very beginning of the story. It introduces the reader to a situation and draws a rather complete picture of it.

- (1) Keesh **lived long ago** on the rim of the polar sea, **was** head man of his village **through** many and prosperous years, and **died** full of honors with his name on the lips of men. So **long ago did** he **live** that only the old men **remember** his name, his name and the tale, which they **got** from the old men **before** them, and which the old men to come will tell to their children and their children's children down to the end of time. [...] (S.K.: 81)

In this particular extract, the narration provides preliminary information about the events that are going to be developed in the following parts of the story; thus, the given extract could almost be considered as a kind of prologue (cf. 9.2.7). Here the information about the protagonist contains a synthesis of his whole life and his subsequent fame through description of actions (lived, was, died, was remembered). In correspondence to this narrative modality, the given extract has various linguistic resources characteristic of narrative sequence, such as adverbs and prepositions of time (long ago, through before) and the use of the past tense. In the example given below narration with similar characteristics may be observed.

- (2) [...] The years **passed**. She **was** eight years old when she **entered** the Mission; she **was**

sixteen, and the Sisters **were** corresponding with their superiors in the Order concerning the sending of El-Soo to the United States to complete her education **when** a man of her own tribe **arrived** at Holy Cross and **had talk** with her. El-Soo **was** somewhat **appalled** by him. [...] (W.P: 131)

Example (2) does not come at the very beginning of a story, but it is a continuation of the same strategy of quick “narrative velocity” (Genette, 1991) that again represents the facts, as a row of events happening to a character – in this case the protagonist is an Indian girl. Such excerpts are characterized by the use of the past tense (here: passed, was, entered) and conjunctions of time (here: when).

Besides, a story may also end by a long description of actions, as in the end of Law L.

(3) [...] A cold muzzle **thrust** against his cheek, and at its touch his soul **leaped back** to the present. His hand **shot** into the fire and **dragged out** a burning faggot. Overcome for the nonce by his hereditary fear of man, the brute **retreated**, **raising a prolonged call** to his brothers; and greedily they **answered**, till a ring of crouching, jaw-slobbered graywas **stretched** round about. The old man **listened** to the drawing in of this circle. He **waved** his brand wildly, and sniffs turned to snarls; but the panting brutes **refused to scatter**. Now one **wormed** his chest **forward**, dragging his haunches after, now a second, now a third; but **never a one drew back**. [...] (Law L.: 45)

The old Indian is left to die alone because such is the tradition of his tribe. But he still has the temptation of fighting against the wolves surrounding him until he decides to accept the law of life.

9.1.2 Action as a Specific Feature of London's Narration

As mentioned in the previous subsection, from the very beginning actions play an important part in the stories under analysis. They appear not only in the exposition, but also in various parts of the plot development, such as in the following excerpt from W.S.

(4) [...] At his order, she **threw her weight** on the end of a quickly extemporized handspike, **easing** the pressure and **listening** to her husband's groans, while Malemute Kid **attacked** the tree with his axe. The steel **rang** merrily as it bit into the frozen trunk, each stroke being accompanied by a forced, audible respiration, the "Huh!" "Huh!" of the woodsman. At last the Kid **laid** the pitiable thing that was once a man in the snow [...] (W.S.: 16)

Some of the stories are actually based on description of actions; the most obvious examples of such a peculiarity are Love L. and B.F.

(5) [...] At last, when he could endure no more, he **jerked** his hands **apart**. The blazing matches **fell** sizzling into the snow, but the birch-bark **was** alight. He **began laying** dry grasses and the tiniest twigs on the flame. He **could not pick and choose**, for he had to lift the fuel between the heels of his hands. Small pieces of rotten wood and green moss **clung to** the twigs, and he **bit** them **off** as well as he could with his teeth. He **cherished** the flame carefully and awkwardly. [...] (B.F.: 171)

Excerpt (5) is just a part of a very detailed description of the protagonist's attempt to build a fire, which fails in the end. As in the rest of the story, from the beginning till the very end one may observe constant description of actions, sometimes alternated with other sequences. Besides the protagonist's actions, there are also actions of the dog.

(6) [...] The dog **sat facing** him and **waiting**. [...] its eager yearning for the fire **mastered** it, and with a **great lifting and shifting of forefeet**, it **whined** softly, then **flattened** its ears **down** in anticipation of being chidden by the man. But the man **remained silent**. Later, the dog **whined** loudly. And still later it **crept** close to the man and **caught** the scent of death. This **made** the animal **bristle** and **back away**. A little longer it **delayed**, **howling** under the stars [...]. Then it **turned** and **trotted up** the trail in the direction of the camp it knew, where were the other food-providers and fire-providers. (B.F.: 175)

In (6) all the details of the dog's behaviour are presented with an outstanding exactitude, which makes the scene come alive; it is as if the dog were in front of the reader, hence adding tension to what is happening and creating a special sense of reality.

The stories based on interior monologue (cf. 6.2.2.3.1) also contain examples of description of actions, since the characters recall and review facts and events, as in the case of Subienkow's reminiscences.

(7) [...] Again, the fourth and last time, he **had sailed** east. [...] he **had changed** ships and **remained** in the dark new land. [...] They **had massacred** whole villages that refused to furnish the fur-tribute; and they, in turn, **had been massacred** by ships' companies. He, with one Finn, had been the sole survivors of such a company. They **had spent** a winter of solitude and starvation on a lonely Aleutian isle, and their rescue in the spring by another fur-ship had been one chance in a thousand. [...] (L.F.: 178)

Finally, description of actions also takes place in dialogues; take for instance the story of old Imber who describes the intervention of white people into the life of his tribe and the following actions of the Indian elders.

(8) [...] "**Came** the third white man, with great wealth of all manner of wonderful foods and things. And twenty of our strongest dogs he **took** from us in trade. Also, what of presents and great promises, ten of our young hunters **did he take** with him on a journey which fared no man knew where. It is said they **died** in the snow of the Ice Mountains where man has never been, or in the Hills of Silence which are beyond the edge of the earth. [...]" (L.O.M.: 75)

9.1.3 Functions of Dialogue

Dialogues generally alternate with narration in most literary texts, and they are also typical of London's stories. Nevertheless, in several points of these stories a very quick transition between both kinds of sequences can be seen. In example (9) a quick transition between them takes place, so it appears that Jack London's stories often present *imbrication of sequences*. In the corpus of this thesis one can rarely come across a text sequence in its "pure" classic form. As in the other examples that are going to be discussed, it may be pointed out that *W.S.* begins with a dialogue that immediately brings forward the narrative complication or *plot*.

(9) "Carmen won't last more than a couple of days". Mason spat out a chunk of ice and surveyed the poor animal carefully, then put her foot in his mouth and proceeded to bite out the ice, which clustered cruelly between the toes [...]" (W.S.: 11).

Here a quoted or direct character's utterance takes place at the very incipit of *WS*, which immediately links with the description of Mason's actions as exposition.

Dialogue in London's stories is always meaningful, but it accomplishes different functions following the stories, as it is shown in the next subsections.

9.1.3.1 Increase of Tension

Several stories under analysis contain live dialogues and there are other stories which at the first sight seem to be purely narrative. Even in those stories that contain only one human character some type of dialogue is always present. In B.F., the unnamed protagonist remembers throughout the whole story a man, the old-timer of Sulphur Creek, who advised him not travel alone. The whole story narrates the account of events that happen to the protagonist who, in spite of the received counsels, travels all alone. However, each time something bad happens to him, the protagonist remembers the words of the old-timer and in the end, just before his death, the character does speak to the adviser, even though the old timer is not really present. This dialogue with the imaginary interlocutor increases the tension and makes the impression of the story even stronger.

(10) [...] "You were right, old hoss; you were right," the man mumbled to the old-timer of Sulphur Creek [...] Then the man drowsed off into what seemed to him the most comfortable and satisfying sleep he had ever known [...] (B. F.: 175)

Another story with only one protagonist is the one which may be considered an antithesis to B.F., – Love L. (whilst the protagonist of the former leads himself to death because of his carelessness and certain weakness of will –he easily accepts death- the latter is more careful and never stops fighting for his life). In the case of Love L., at the beginning of the story one more character is present, Bill. He never says a word in the whole story, but the protagonist tries to speak to him.

(11) [...] "I wish we had just about two of them cartridges that's layin' in that cache of ourn," said the second man.

His voice was utterly and drearily expressionless. He spoke without enthusiasm; and the first man,

limping into the milky stream that foamed over the rocks, vouchsafed no reply. [...] "I say, Bill, I've sprained my ankle." Bill staggered on through the milky water. He did not look around. The man watched him go, and though his face was expressionless as ever, his eyes were like the eyes of a wounded deer. [...] "Bill!" he whispered, once and twice; "Bill!" [...] (Love L.: 91)

This "dialogue" here, first of all, pictures the situation; Bill leaves his injured companion who shows his despair through repeated appeals. It may be said that these quotations are also used here to intensify the tension. The rest of the stories contain "true" dialogues, i.e. between two or more characters. In these cases four more types of dialogue can be singled out.

9.1.3.2 Intertextual Function

One dialogue in the corpus is particularly interesting because of the special function it accomplishes. This dialogue takes place at the moment Malemute Kid tells the story of Mason's marriage.

(12) [...] "That was before your time," Malemute Kid said as he turned to Stanley Prince, a young mining expert who had been in two years. "No white women in the country then, and Mason wanted to get married. Ruth's father was chief of the Tananas, and objected, like the rest of the tribe. Stiff? Why, I used my last pound of sugar; finest work in that line I ever did in my life. You should have seen the chase, down the river and across the portage."

"But the squaw?" asked Louis Savoy, the tall French-Canadian, becoming interested; for he had heard of this wild deed, when at Forty Mile the preceding winter. [...]

"We struck the Yukon just behind the first ice-run," he concluded, "and the tribe only a quarter of an hour behind. But that saved us; for the second run broke the jam above and shut them out. When they finally got into Nuklukyeto, the whole Post was ready for them. And as to the foregathering, ask Father Roubeau here: he performed the ceremony."[...] (M.T.: 2)

In example (12) Malemute Kid narrates the story about him and his friends when speaking with people in the saloon; thus, the narration is contained in the primary sequence, a dialogue. Through this dialogue two characters, which appear in another story (W.S.), are presented. In the given extract Kid recounts the events preceding the marriage of his friend Mason and an Indian girl, Ruth. In W.S., which was first published a month later than M.T., Mason and Ruth are the main characters, who travel together with Malemute Kid when a pine tree falls on Mason, thus giving him a deadly wound. As one may see, the dialogue that has just been presented has an intertextual function, since it establishes a relation between both stories, thus underlining the common background of Klondike stories.

9.1.3.3 Myse en Abîme

Another singular dialogue in the corpus is the one where the characters tell an anecdote which prefigures the dénouement of the main story, in a sort of *myse en abîme* (Gide, 1889-1939). This strategy presupposes a small reflection of the textual whole. Such is the reference to the Kilkenny cats in the F.C.

(13) [...] "Jacques Baptiste, did you ever hear of the Kilkenny cats?"

The half-breed shook his head.

"Well, my friend and good comrade, the Kilkenny cats fought till neither hide, nor hair, nor yowl, was left. You understand? – till nothing was left. Very good. Now, these two men don't like work. They won't work. We know that. They 'll be all

alone in that cabin all winter, – a mighty long, dark winter. Kilkenny cats, – well?" [...] (F.C.: 27-28)

The present dialogue takes place at the end of the general exposition of F.C. (c.f. 9.2.3.3). This is a dialogue between secondary characters, which in fact do not appear later in the story. This little reference made by one of them (Sloper) is used to prefigure what is going to happen to the protagonists, Cuthfert and Weatherbee, thus presenting the story "*en abyme*".

9.1.3.4 Completion of Actions and Character Portrayal

Even if the examples presented in the previous subsections are quite particular, dialogue in London's stories also fulfils its classical function in narrative. First of all, there are dialogues used to complete the actions with some details. Such is the following extract from S.K.

(14) [...] "I am minded to build me an igloo," he said one day to Klosh-Kwan and a number of the hunters. "It shall be a large igloo, wherein Ikeega and I can dwell in comfort."

"Ay," they nodded gravely.

"But I have no time. My business is hunting, and it takes all my time. So it is but just that the men and women of the village who eat my meat should build me my Igloo."

And the igloo was built accordingly, on a generous scale which exceeded even the dwelling of Klosh-Kwan [...] (S.K.: 86)

This particular dialogue doesn't bear any important function concerning the development of the plot. But it makes a contribution to the general scenery of the story.

Often London uses dialogues in order to characterize the personages.

(15) [...] "Thank God, we've got slathers of tea! I've seen it growing, down in Tennessee. What wouldn't I give for a hot corn pone just now! Never mind, Ruth; you won't starve much longer, nor wear moccasins either." (W.S.: 12)

[...]

"Yes, she 's been a good wife to me, better 'n that other one. Didn't know I 'd been there? Never told you, eh? Well, I tried it once, down in the States. That 's why I 'm here. Been raised together, too. I came away to give her a chance for divorce. She got it. [...]" (W.S.: 17)

Out of this example the reader may get the understanding of the characters' background story. Besides the fact that Mason is from Tennessee and that he has been married before, this dialogue also provides us with the reason that brought him to Klondike. Special linguistic features can be observed in his language (e.g. *better'n that other one; been raised together*, (c.f.12.1.1))

There are other dialogues in which background information is not presented through the content of what is being said, but through the discourse peculiarities of the character's speech. Take for instance the conversations in the saloon in M.T (Cf. (12)) or the very peculiar Indian manner of speaking.

(16) [...] "That **be** my talk, Howkan. Yet from **thy** lips it comes when **thy** ears have not heard."

[...] "**Nay**, from the paper it comes, **O Imber**. Never have my ears heard. From the paper it comes, through my eyes, into my head, and out of my mouth to thee. Thus it comes."

"Thus it comes? **It be** there in the paper?" Imber's voice sank in whisperful awe as he crackled the sheets 'twixt thumb and finger and stared at the

charactery scrawled there on. "It **be** a great medicine, Howkan, and **thou art** a worker of wonders." [...] (L.O.M.: 71)

The discourses of Howkan and Imber are full of various stylistic features. In this way, London creates an effect of authenticity and gives histories a polyphonic dimension (cf. 10.2.2). This and other dialogues will be studied as well from the point of view of oral language or social register in the chapter that focuses on the stylistic peculiarities of London's discourse (c.f. 12).

9.1.3.5 Development of a Point of View

A particular function of what could be only formally considered a dialogue may be observed in L.O.M., where there is a trial on the old Indian who has confessed to be the murderer of many white people whom he killed for seemingly inexplicable reason. The Indian, Imber, while answering to the questions of the Court, presents his version of what happened.

(17) [...] "And yet, and here be the strangeness of it, the white men come as the breath of death; all their ways lead to death, their nostrils are filled with it; and yet they do not die. [...] they are past understanding, these white men, far-wanderers and fighters over the earth that they be. [...]" And I, Imber, pondered upon these things, watching the while the Whitefish, and the Pellys, and all the tribes of the land, perishing as perished the meat of the forest. Long I pondered. I talked with the shamans and the old men who were wise. [...]

And in the end [...] when the village slept and no one knew, I drew the old men away into the forest and made more talk. And now we were agreed, and we remembered the good young days [...] and a mighty oath to cleanse the land of the evil breed that had come upon it. It be plain we were

fools, but how were we to know, we old men of the Whitefish? [...] (L.O.M.: 79)

From this example it is clear that Imber's speech may be seen as an explanation of his deeds, but what is more important, example (17) allows to single out one more peculiar function of a dialogue – the one of presenting a point of view.

9.1.3.6 Framing of the Stories

In the corpus there are several stories that have a “story inside of a story” structure (cf. 9.2.6); this means that inside of the main real-time plot development, there is also another story or memory about the past of some characters. Such *flashbacks* can be introduced by dialogues, as in the following example from Law L.

(18) [...] His son was good to do this thing. He remembered other old men whose sons had not waited after the tribe. But his son had. He wandered away into the past, till the young man's voice brought him back.

"Is it well with you?" he asked.

And the old man answered, "It is well."

"There be wood beside you," the younger man continued, "and the fire burns bright. The morning is gray, and the cold has broken. It will snow presently. Even now is it snowing."

"Ay, even now is it snowing."

"The tribesmen hurry. Their bales are heavy, and their bellies flat with lack of feasting. The trail is long and they travel fast. go now. It is well?"

"It is well. I am as a last year's leaf, clinging lightly to the stem. The first breath that blows, and I fall. My voice is become like an old woman's. My eyes no longer show me the way of my feet, and my feet are heavy, and I am tired. It is well." [...] (Law L.: 40)

Example (18) is the only dialogue that takes place in Law L. It is placed at the beginning and closes the part that acquaints the reader with the situation. The main function of this dialogue is to introduce the narration in flashback.

As long as the matter concerns the stories based on the memories of the protagonists, it is important to remember L.F., where the main dialogic part takes place after the flashback is finished. In that way, it brings the reader back to the current situation.

(19) [...] Well, it had been a sowing of blood, and now was come the harvest. The fort was gone. In the light of its burning, half the fur-thieves had been cut down. The other half had passed under the torture. [...]. He thought of appealing to Makamuk, the head-chief; but his judgment told him that such appeal was useless. Then, too, he thought of bursting his bonds and dying fighting. Such an end would be quick. But he could not break his bonds. [...] another thought came to him. He signed for Makamuk, and that an interpreter who knew the coast dialect should be brought. "Oh, Makamuk," he said, "I am not minded to die. I am a great man, and it were foolishness for me to die. In truth, I shall not die. I am not like these other carrion."

He looked at the moaning thing that had once been Big Ivan, and stirred it [...] (L.F.: 181)

The memories of the L.F. protagonist are recollecting the development of his life and this dialogue after the flashback (starting with the text transcribed in example (19) not only links the two parts of one whole story, but also it is used as a tool for the creation of an appropriate ending. This dialogue

shows the last scene(s) in the life of the protagonist, which are particularly meaningful, since it closes a life story on which the reader has given a quick look.

Another story with similar scheme to L.F. is B.W., although here the flashback is not based on direct reminiscences of the protagonists, but still it recounts the events that took place after the dog's appearance in the lives of Madge and Walt; these events are brought back by a conversation between the couple. Hence it may be seen that, as in L.F., dialogue here is used to show the current situation after explaining the pre-story.

(20) [...] Long discussion they had, during the time of winning him, as to whose dog he was. [...] Walt won in the end, and his victory was most probably due to the fact that he was a man, though Madge averred that they would have had another quarter of a mile of gurgling brook, and at least two west winds sighing through their redwoods, had Wait properly devoted his energies to song-transmutation and left Wolf alone to exercise a natural taste and an unbiassed judgment.

"It's about time I heard from those triolets", Walt said, after a silence of five minutes, during which they had swung steadily down the trail. "There'll be a check at the post-office, I know, and we'll transmute it into beautiful buckwheat flour, a gallon of maple syrup, and a new pair of overshoes for you." [...] (B.W.: 117)

In the three stories (Law L, L.F. and B. W.), dialogues have a framing function, as they indicate the transition from one part to another. The same logic may be applied to one more story, F.C. Although it is not based on a flashback, still here, dialogues are used to a great extent in the exposition. These dialogues (including the one which contains a *myse en abîme* in example (13), c.f. 9.1.3.3) serve as a frame that creates the scenery for the following plot development.

While speaking about dialogue use in F.C., it is important to mention that there is one short dialogue (c.f. (54)) that takes place in the last part of a story, and serves as introduction to the climatic part of a story. Hence the function of creating tension takes place again.

9.1.4 Dialogue and Argumentation

When dialogues accomplish the function of completing the presentation of the characters, one can deal with their argumentations. In these cases, (cf. 9.1.3), imbrications between two kinds of sequences take place again.

(21) “But you are not going to take him away with you?” Madge asked tremulously.

The man nodded

“Back into that awful Klondike world of suffering?”

He nodded and added: “Oh, it ain’t so bad as all that. Look at me. Pretty healthy specimen, ain’t I?”

“But the dogs! The terrible hardship, the heart-breaking toil, the starvation, the frost! Oh, I’ve read about it an I know.” [...]

“I said the dog doesn’t go, and that settles it. I don’t believe he’s your dog. You may have seen him sometime [...] Any dog in Alaska would obey you as he obeyed. Besides, he is undoubtedly a valuable dog, as dogs go in Alaska, and that is sufficient explanation of your desire to get possession of him.”[...] (B. W.: 124)

In example (21) argumentation presented in the form of dialogue may be observed. The participants argue, as both sides want to keep the dog, so that Madge is trying to convince her opponent that the life he leads is not appropriate for the dog, while he has his own arguments in his favour.

More than that, in the last paragraph this argumentation also takes the form of an explanation, as Madge lists various reasons that could explain Miller's desire to get the dog.

The goal of argumentation is to progressively convince the opponent to accept the speaker's opinion. This is why in the stories under analysis argumentation mostly appears in the form of dialogues, when the characters try to come to a certain decision between them or find a solution to their problems, such as in the following example, where the protagonist tries to convince his people that he is not a ghost.

(22) [...] "Thou art dead, Nam-Bok", he said.
 Nam-Bok laughed. "I am fat"
 "Dead men are not fat," Opee-Kwan confessed.
 "Thou hast fared well, but it is strange. No man
 may mate with the off-shore wind and come back
 on the heels of the years."
 "I have come back," Nam-Bok answered simply.
 "Mayhap thou art a shadow, then, a passing
 shadow of the Nam-Bok that was. Shadows come
 back."
 "I am hungry. Shadows do not eat." [...] (N.B.: 49)

Opee-Kwan presents some arguments for proving that Nam-Bok is a ghost (no man may mate with the off-shore wind...), but Nam-Bok also presents his own arguments in order to convince the others that he is a man (I am fat, I have come back, I am hungry).

9.1.5 Argumentation in the Internal World of the Characters

Argumentation also appears in the internal world of the characters. Sometimes narration is presented through the perception of the protagonists that have their internal discussions and deliberations. This phenomenon may be observed mainly in Love L. Here the very name of the story may be considered the premise of an argumentation as the development of events of the story demonstrates the struggle

of simplicity of giving up and dying versus the spiritual strength and will to live. This general argumentation of the story falls into many argumentative discourses in the text; these are the aspects that the character and the narrator deliberate on living or dying, and conclude that life is worth living.

(23) He began to shake as with an ague-fit, till the gun fell from his hand with a splash. This served to rouse him. He fought with his fear and pulled himself together, groping in the water and recovering the weapon [...] But hard as he strove with his body, he strove equally hard with his mind, trying to think that Bill had not deserted him, that Bill would surely wait for him at the cache. He was compelled to think this thought, or else there would not be any use to strive, and he would have lain down and died.

[...]

He pulled himself together and went on, afraid now in a new way. It was not the fear that he should die passively from lack of food, but that he should be destroyed violently before starvation had exhausted the last particle of the endeavor in him that made toward surviving.

[...]

There was no hurt in death. To die was to sleep. It meant cessation, rest. Then why was he not content to die? [...] He knew that he could not crawl half a mile. And yet he wanted to live. It was unreasonable that he should die after all he had undergone. Fate asked too much of him. And, dying, he declined to die. It was stark madness, perhaps, but in the very grip of Death he defied Death and refused to die. [...] (Love L.: 93-109)

In example (23) the protagonist not only argues with himself pros and cons of dying and living, thus evaluating the possibility of his following actions. He also becomes philosophic and deliberates about the worth of death and life. And even if death is logically more convenient, his nature still sticks to life. In this example the protagonist tries to convince himself that death is good for him, though he does not

manage to do that in comparison with the character from *B.F.*, who easily accepted the inevitability of the coming death.

(24) [...] Well, he was bound to freeze anyway, and he might as well take it decently. With this new-found peace of mind came the first glimmerings of drowsiness. A good idea, he thought, to sleep off to death. It was like taking an anaesthetic. Freezing was not so bad as people thought. There were lots worse ways to die. [...] (B.F.: 174).

The character gives himself reasons that prove this way of dying is not bad, thus he gives up to the outstanding cold (Freezing was not so bad as people thought. There were lots worse ways to die).

Argumentation plays an important part in the stories and frequently occurs both in the characters' speech and character's thoughts. But this study of argumentation will not be complete without the analysis of the narrator's argumentation.

9.1.6 Argumentation of the Narrator

In literary works it is the narrator who plays the role of the ultimate responsible for what is being related and for the modes of doing it (c.f. 11). Besides this general function, the narrator may also express himself in separate fragments or comments, where he can expound arguments and opinions. These lead to the expression of the narrator's point of view and – more globally – to the presentation of a certain vision of the world, the general analysis of which is going to be developed below (c.f. 9.1.6.3).

9.1.6.1 Digressions

In the stories under analysis the argumentation of the narrator can be observed in digressions. Although they can only be singled out in two stories, W.S. and F.C., they play a very important role here and transmit general ideas of the writer that, in my opinion, can be applied to the whole Northern cycle.

Very often digressions begin the story. They are considered to be the expression of a part of London's philosophic thought. As a rule this thought is not the main idea expressed in the story, but an idea that serves as a reason for telling the story. Such are the thoughts of the narrator about the adaptability in the North. This type of reflections is presented in the form of gnomic enunciation, manifesting general knowledge where the present tense is used.

(25) When a man journeys into a far country, he must be prepared to forget many of the things he has learned, and to acquire such customs as are inherent with existence in the new land; he must abandon the old ideals and the old gods, and oftentimes he must reverse the very codes by which his conduct has hitherto been shaped. [...] For the courtesies of ordinary life, he must substitute unselfishness, forbearance and tolerance. Thus, and thus only, can he gain that pearl of great price, – true comradeship. [...] (F.C.: 21-22)

On the other hand, there is another type of digressions. These interrupt the story in order to set off the author's relation to what is being pictured and to distract the reader from it in order to get into the author's thoughts that philosophically generalize the events of the story.

(26) [...] No more conversation; the toil of the trail will not permit such extravagance. And of all deadening labors, that of the Northland trail is the worst. Happy is the man who can weather a day's travel at the price of silence, and that on a beaten track. And of all heart-breaking labors, that of braking trail is the worst. At every step the great

webbed shoe sinks till the snow is level of the knee. Then up, straight up, the deviation of a fraction of an inch being a certain precursor of disaster, the snowshoe must be lifted till the surface is cleared; then forward, down, and the other foot is raised perpendicularly for the matter of half a yard. He who tries this for the first time, if haply he avoids bringing his shoes in dangerous propinquity and measures not his length on the treacherous footing, will give up exhausted at the end of a hundred yards; he who can keep out of the way of the dogs for a whole day may well crawl into his sleeping-bag with a clear conscience and a pride which passeth all understanding; and he who travels twenty sleeps on the Long Trail is a man whom the gods may envy. [...] (W.S.: 14)

9.1.6.2 Gnomonic Utterances and FIS

Besides digressions, the narrator's argumentation may be expressed through the comments that he makes while recounting events of a story. These comments usually take the form of a proverb or gnomonic enunciation, presented as general truth; and manifest the opinion of the narrator about what is being told.

(27) [...] The man and woman loved the dog very much; perhaps this was because it had been such a task to win his love. [...] (B.W.: 114)

The given excerpt may be seen as promotion of the narrator's hypothesis that things, which are hard to achieve, are worth doing and deserve love. Such was the situation with Wolf, who gained the great love of his new owners (and of his old owner as well, as it appears in the continuation of the story).

There are many more complicated and more global argumentations of the narrator introduced in the comments to the development of actions.

(28) [...] those of the Northland are early taught the futility of words and the inestimable value of deeds. With the temperature at sixty-five below zero, a man cannot lie many minutes in the snow and live. [...](W.S.: 16)

Here the narrator expresses one of London's main ideas that can be observed throughout the whole Northern cycle – real heroes never talk to no purpose, they do their job. (c.f. (2), c.f. 10.1.1)

In the same story there is another gnomic enunciation.

(29) [...] It is not pleasant to be alone with painful thoughts in the White Silence. The silence of gloom is merciful, shrouding one as with protection and breathing a thousand intangible sympathies; but the bright White Silence, clear and cold, under steely skies, is pitiless. [...] (W.S.: 21)

The narrator argues for the necessity of comradeship and solidarity in the North. He also promotes this necessity throughout the whole series of stories. He underlines the idea that till the very moment of death it is very important to be surrounded by the warmth and company of other people.

In addition to this sort of gnomic enunciations, it should also be said that some of the narrator's comments are used in order to modalize and modulate the events. This means that the narrator speculates upon different facts concerning the characters – he announces what is going to happen.

(30) [...] Like many another fool, disdainful of the old trails used by the Northland pioneers for a score of years, he hurried to Edmonton in the spring of the year; and there, unluckily for his soul's welfare, he allied himself with a party of men. [...] **Percy Cuthbert's evil star must have been in the ascendant**, for he, too, joined this company of argonauts. [...] (F.C.: 22-23)

In example (30) the narrator plays the role of a fortune-teller as by means of these comments he hints at the dysphoric (for the protagonists) development of events. In the same story he also promoted the idea of the contrast between the civilized but demoralized world and the North, where people are valued according to their actions and not their words; nor, as in the following example, according to their status in the civilized world.

(31) [...] They thought nobody noticed; but their comrades swore under their breaths and grew to hate them, while Jacques Baptiste sneered openly and damned them from morning till night. But **Jacques Baptiste was no gentleman**. [...] (F.C.: 24)

Here the narrator opposes the “gentlemen”, Cuthfert and Weatherbee, and the real men, those who know how to struggle, to work and cooperate. Such arguments are oriented to the global argumentation of the stories. (c.f. 9.1.6.3)

The argumentation of the narrator can also be perceived through the use of FIS (c.f. 6.2.2.3.2, 11.2.3)

(32) [...] overcome by the common dread of the Unknown Lands, their *voyageurs* began to desert, and Fort of Good Hope saw the last and bravest bending to the tow-lines as they bucked the current down which they had so treacherously glided. **Jacques Baptiste alone remained. Had he not sworn to travel even to the never-opening ice?** (F.C.: 24)

Here the narrator associates himself with the principles of the character, thus transmitting his position and ideas.

By using FIS the narrator not only associates himself with the characters. On the contrary, sometimes FIS is used in order to underline the absurdity of the human and way of thinking.

(33) [...] Would the tale of this ever reach the world? How would his friends take it? They would read it over their coffee, most likely, and talk it over at the clubs. He could see them very clearly. "Poor Old Cuthfert," they murmured; "not such a bad sort of a chap, after all." [...] (F.C.: 38)

Here by using FIS the narrator ironizes and mocks at one of the protagonists, who even on the verge of death is preoccupied about the opinion of the others. In contrast to that, in the following example quite the opposite function of the narrator's argumentation expressed through FIS takes place.

(34) [...] Could it possibly be that he might be that ere the day was done! Such was life, eh? A vain and fleeting thing. It was only life that pained. There was no hurt in death. To die was to sleep. It meant cessation, rest. Then why was he not content to die? [...] (Love L.: 104)

The narrator here accompanies the protagonist throughout his whole journey, he demonstrates certain solidarity with the character and admires the strength of his instinctive desire to survive.

9.1.6.3 General Argumentative Orientation of the Stories

The whole series of the Northern stories may be seen as a set of discourses expressing opinions and ideas, which are argumentation oriented. As a part of this set, the 12 Klondike stories of the corpus participate in such an orientation.

As it has been mentioned in the theoretical part of the present investigation (c.f.: 2.5), Jack London promoted the idea of *the survival of the fittest*. (Bykov, 2004) The whole *Northern cycle* is seen as the argumentative part of his grand belief. This interpretation is deduced from a multitude of his stories. And

through the corpus to trace the fundamentals of this thesis are going to be traced.

On the one hand the writer demonstrates the incapacity to survive of the morally and physically weak people who come to the North in search of gold, like the protagonists of *F.C.* and the character from *B.F.*, who in spite of his physical strength lacked foresight and was too self-confident (c.f. (127).

Therefore, 'fittest' doesn't only mean physical strength but also knowledge and intelligence and, specially, solidarity and comradeship (c.f. (29)

On the other hand, London shows the inevitable incapacity to survive of the Indian people who are unable to resist against the power of the white "invaders". The examples of Indians that cannot accept the existence of a different life near them are depicted in *N.B.* Indians live a primordial life, they are reserved and they reject all inevitable change caused by the arrival of the white people, that weakness of the Indian people is also pictured through some of their very traditions, such as the custom of leaving the old and weak people, who become a burden for the tribe, to die alone; their absolute acceptance of this and lack of desire to fight for life: "To perpetuate was the task of life; its law was death". (*Law L.:* 2); (Their cruelty is also shown in *W.P.* where one sees how the Indian elders approve of Porportuk shooting *El Soo's* feet (c.f. 10.1.5, (82)) And in *L.O.M.* the writer depicts the sad destiny, the ruin of the Indian people who are powerless when facing the white people and their powerful and destructive law.

(35) [...] The square-browed judge likewise dreamed, and all his race rose up before him in a mighty phantasmagoria – his steel-shod, mail-clad race, the lawgiver and world-maker among the families of men. He saw it dawn red-flickering across the dark forests and sullen seas; he saw it blaze, bloody and red, to full and triumphant noon; and down the shaded slope he saw the blood-red sands dropping into night. And through

it all he observed the Law, pitiless and potent, ever unswerving and ever ordaining, greater than the motes of men who fulfilled it or were crushed by it, even as it was greater than he, his heart speaking for softness. (L.O.M.: 81)

As previously mentioned, when London presents the success of the strongest, he not only understands physical qualities, but also the internal, moral strength of the characters, and their ability to live through any situation. It is Keesh who becomes a chief due to his wit. This story argues for the strength of human intelligence. The protagonist of *Love L.* whose outstanding desire to live helps him to overcome all deadly difficulties is another respectable representative of this type (c.f. (23), (34)). And of course one cannot forget the most typical representative of the fittest survivor – the old-timer Malemute Kid – who appears in two stories under analysis. This character has all the typical characteristics of a noble protagonist, which shall be analysed in the following chapter (c.f. 10.1.1).

9.2 Narrative Schemes of Jack London's Stories

The present subsection of this research will focus on the elaboration of narrative schemes, i.e. the specific organisation of these sequences in the stories under analysis. First, it shall be explained what the narrative schemes are and how they function.

What is called a narrative scheme is basically a plan of each story under analysis, which is based on several theoretical approaches to the organisation of narrative sequence. As said in the theoretical part of this investigation, the analysis is based on the theory suggested by Freytag (1863), summarized in the graph that represents the main points of the plot development (c.f. 6.1.3). For the purposes of this research Freytag's pyramid has been adapted by adding some crucial points for the short story analysis. As it has been previously said (c.f. 6.1.3), narrative organisation consists of

the following elements: exposition, complication, rising action, climax, falling action, dénouement and post-position (or epilogue). There is also one more optional point – a prologue.

Jack London's stories normally consist of an unusual episode of the protagonists' lives, an adventure or various interconnected exciting episodes. These episodes are going to be analysed by taking into consideration the different parts of the narrative structure mentioned above.

9.2.1 Dysphoric Exposition

One of the features of London's stories is that the majority of them begin with a certain distressing and unstable situation. This is why it is possible to speak about dysphoric exposition, which, in most of London's short stories, presupposes that from the very beginning of the story characters find themselves surrounded by dysphoric circumstances. It is only natural for London to create a situation where characters are put on the trail in the middle of "nowhere" in the Far North, surrounded by the cruel nature of the extreme cold, and to give a very vivid description of the initial situation of a story, which can be regarded as the first type of dysphoric expositions ("on the trail").

(36) Day had broken **cold and gray, exceedingly cold and gray**, when the man turned aside from the main Yukon trail and climbed the high earth bank [...]. There was **no sun nor hint of sun**, though there was not a cloud in the sky. It was a clear day, and yet there seemed **an intangible pall over the face of things, a subtle gloom that made the day dark, and that was due to the absence of sun**. This fact did not worry the man. He was used to the lack of sun. It had been days since he had seen the sun, and he knew that a few more days must pass before that cheerful orb, due south, would just peep above the sky-line and dip immediately from view. [...] (B.F: 158-159)

In example (36) the reader finds the character (the man) in the middle of some seemingly unadventurous journey. Nevertheless, due to the description of the extremely cold day, the sense of tension is created immediately. This example is one of the typical expositions of London's stories that brings the reader to the cruel reality of the Klondike and prepares him / her for the tragic development of the plot. The other example of this exposition type is W.S.

(37) "Carmen **won't last** more than a couple of days. "Mason **spat out a chunk of ice** [...] "I never saw a dog with a highfalutin' name that ever was worth a rap," he said, as he concluded his task and shoved her aside. "They just fade away and die under the responsibility. Did ye ever see one go wrong with a sensible name like Cassiar, Siwash, or Husky? No, sir! Take a look at Shookum here, he's – " [...]" As I was saying, just look at Shookum, here – he 's got the spirit. **Bet ye he eats Carmen before the week 's out.**" "I 'll bank another proposition against that," replied Malemute Kid, reversing the frozen bread placed before the fire to thaw. **"We 'll eat Shookum before the trip is over.** What d' ye say, Ruth?" [...]" (W.S.: 11)

In example (37) the story starts with a dialogue and this is how a tense and unfavourable situation is created, and an atmosphere of anxious expectance progresses with the development of the plot; and even though exposition in its classical form is not presented, one may clearly understand the situation in which the characters are put, thanks to the forecasts made in the dialogue (Carmen won't last, Shookum will eat Carmen, We'll eat Shookum). According to Bogoslovsky (1959:98), it is typical of Jack London to start stories with dialogues and actions so that the reader is instantly driven into the circle of events, which creates a certain mood that prepares for the coming changes. As a rule such events are dysphoric as well.

Seemingly different, but also dysphoric, is the following example of exposition. Here the dysphoric mood of the situation is perceived through the description of the characters' state and the whole scene of their appearance.

(38) They **limped painfully** down the bank, and once the foremost of the two men **staggered** among the rough-strewn rocks. They were **tired and weak, and their faces had the drawn expression of patience, which comes of hardship long endured**. They were heavily burdened with blanket packs, which were strapped to their shoulders. Head-straps, passing across the forehead, helped support these packs. Each man carried a rifle. They walked in a **stooped posture, the shoulders well forward, the head still farther forward, the eyes bent upon the ground**.

"I wish we had just about two of them cartridges that's layin' in that cache of ours," said the second man. **His voice was utterly and drearily expressionless. He spoke without enthusiasm**; and the first man, limping into the milky stream that foamed over the rocks, vouchsafed no reply. The other man followed at his heels. They did not remove their foot-gear, though **the water was icy cold – so cold that their ankles ached and their feet went numb**. In places the water dashed against their knees, and both men staggered for footing. [...] (Love L.: 91)

While the first two stories (B.F. and W.S.) are characterized by the utmost cold, in Love L. the situation is different, since the story takes place in August. Nonetheless, besides the absence of cold, the rest of the characteristics (on the trail, surrounded by the wilderness of nature) are the same as in W.S., and B.F. It is clear that the protagonist is put in a very severe situation as well, thus confirming that this story belongs to this given dysphoric exposition-type ("on the trail").

Another exposition may also be ascribed to “on the trail” exposition type. Although it is a little different, since, besides the fact that in a way it takes place on the trail, its dysphoria is mostly expressed through the narrator’s comments (c.f. (30))

Through the very beginning the narrator already announces the dysphoric development of Cuthfert’s and Weatherbee’s story.

In these stories the protagonists are foreigners, those who came to the North in search of gold (as it is vividly shown in Love L, F.C.) or for some other reason not explained by the author, and the narrator presents them in the middle of their path. It should also be noted that, except for F.C. (and partly W.S. c.f. 9.1.3.4, (15)), the narrator does not explain why his protagonists encounter themselves in the situations that he presents at the beginning of the story. One can only guess that the characters came to the North in search of gold and adventure, but their real history is never revealed and more than that, in the case of W.S, B.F. and Love L., there is no information about the reasons of the journey the characters make when the reader first meets them.

Not all of the stories under analysis have a dysphoric exposition that is exactly based on the characteristics described before. There are three stories where the reader does not find the characters on the trail but in an extreme situation from the incipit. It must be said that the protagonists of these three stories are Indians. It is Imber, the protagonist of L.O.M., now about to be judged by the white people, who finds himself in such a dysphoric situation.

(39) At the barracks **a man was being tried for his life**. He was an old man, a native from the Whitefish River, which empties into the Yukon below Lake Le Barge. All Dawson was wrought up over the affair, and likewise the Yukon-dwellers for a thousand miles up and down. It has been the custom of the land-robbing Anglo-Saxon to give the law to conquered peoples, and oftentimes this law is harsh, But **in the case of Imber the law for once seemed inadequate**

and weak. The mathematical nature of things, equity did not reside in the punishment to be accorded him. The punishment was a foregone conclusion, there could be no doubt of that; and though it was capital, Imber had but one life while the tale against him was one of scores. [...] (L.O.M.: 64)

In example (39) the dysphoric characteristics of the exposition are quite different from those described previously. But still they transmit dysphoric information about this Indian, who is considered to be a criminal and is facing capital punishment.

Another type of dysphoric exposition is S.K. In this case, the exposition creates a different mood, due to the prologue that sets the fact that the story is written in the genre of a legend and presupposes a certain heroic outcome. Even though one may foresee the positive development of the plot, the initial situation is negative.

(40) [...] He was a bright boy, so the tale runs, healthy and strong, and he had seen thirteen suns, in their way of reckoning time. For each winter the sun leaves the land in darkness, and the next year a new sun returns so that they may be warm again and look upon one another's faces. The **father** of Keesh had been a very brave man, but he **had met his death in a time of famine, when he sought to save the lives of his people by taking the life of a great polar bear**. In his eagerness he came to close grapples with the bear, and his bones were crushed; but the bear had much meat on him and the people were saved. Keesh was his only son, and after that Keesh lived alone with his mother. But the **people are prone to forget, and they forgot the deed of his father**; and he being but a boy, and his mother only a woman, **they, too, were swiftly forgotten, and ere long came to live in the meanest of all the igloos.** [...] (S.K.: 81-82)

Again, the story begins with a grievous situation where the father of the protagonist is dead and he is obliged to live in

poverty, thus the dysphoria of the exposition is obvious. In both stories just spoken about (L.O.M. and S.K.), there is omniscient third person narration, whereas in the following example (Law L.), with an Indian protagonist as well, the dysphoric exposition is presented from the position of the character, thanks to the use of entrusted speech (cf. 11.2.1).

(41) Old Koskoosh listened greedily. Though his sight had long since faded, his hearing was still acute, and the slightest sound penetrated to the glimmering intelligence which yet abode behind the withered forehead, but which no longer gazed forth upon the things of the world. Ah! that was Sit-cum-to-ha, shrilly anathematizing the dogs as she cuffed and beat them into the harnesses. [...] The long trail waited while the short day refused to linger. Life called her, and the duties of life, not death. And **he was very close to death now.** [...] At last **the measure of his life was a handful of fagots. One by one they would go to feed the fire, and just so, step by step, death would creep upon him.** When the last stick had surrendered up its heat, **the frost would begin to gather strength. First his feet would yield, then his hands; and the numbness would travel, slowly, from the extremities to the body. His head would fall forward upon his knees, and he would rest.** It was easy. **All men must die.** [...] (Law L.: 39-42)

From this excerpt the reader may perceive that the protagonist is going to die soon and that he shows an attitude of quiet resignation to his fate.

In the corpus there is one story, very similar to the situation just described – L.F., this is why it has to be added it to the cases of “extreme situation” type. Although Subienkow, the protagonist of the story, is not an Indian, he, like old Koskoosh, knows that he is going to die very soon. Here the main character is not left to die alone but is about to be tortured to death.

These four stories (L.O.M., S.K., Law L., and L.F.), in contrast with the previous ones (B.F., W.S, F.C, Love L.), present an extreme situation which does not give the protagonists the opportunity to go on, because death threatens them or they are not able to defend themselves.

9.2.2 Neutral or Euphoric Exposition

The other four stories, on the contrary, represent neutral or rather euphoric exposition. One of them is B.W.; this story starts with a certain action – a young couple is walking with their dog. The general situation is rather static and, as it has been said, euphoric. In B.W (as well as in M.T. (c.f. 44) and in N.B. (c.f. 42)) there is a certain action from the very beginning of the story (cf. (48)).

In M.T., the characters are placed in some warm place. They are drinking and talking about their adventures. Nevertheless, in this case they are foreigners gathered together in some saloon in the Far North and it seems clear that outside the saloon it is still extremely cold. (c.f. (44))

Again the exposition places the reader directly in a quite static situation but the characters evoke different actions in their conversations.

Among the stories with euphoric (or neutral expositions) that take place at the moment of the telling, there is one more story to be mentioned – N.B.

(42) "A bidarka, is it not so? Look! A bidarka, and one man who drives clumsily with a paddle!"

Old Bask-Wah-Wan rose to her knees, trembling with weakness and eagerness, and gazed out over the sea.

"Nam-Bok was ever clumsy at the paddle," she maundered reminiscently, shading the sun from

her eyes and staring across the silverspilled water. "Nam-Bok was ever clumsy. I remember . . ."

But the women and children laughed loudly, and there was a gentle mockery in their laughter, and her voice dwindled till her lips moved without sound.

[...]

"It is Nam-Bok," old Bask-Wah-Wan repeated. "Should I not know my son?" she demanded shrilly. "I say, and I say again, it is Nam-Bok."

"And so thou hast said these many summers," one of the women chided softly.

[...]

Koogah, the Bone-Scratcher, retreated backward in sudden haste, tripping over his staff and falling to the ground. "Nam-Bok!" he cried, as he scrambled wildly for footing. "Nam-Bok, who was blown off to sea, come back!" [...] (N.B.: 46-48)

N.B. begins by the arrival of a Bidarka with Nam Bok, who had disappeared some time ago. Nam Bok's arrival breaks the routine life of a tribe. This exposition can be described as neutral (or even euphoric if one takes into consideration Nam Bok's mother's happiness of seeing her son back). In contrast to general expositions, as those in the stories that have just been talked about (B.W., M. T., N. B.), in W.P, exposition is presented in the most traditional way, which means that the narrator actually provides the reader with the basic background information about the main character.

(43) El-Soo had been a Mission girl. **Her mother had died when she was very small**, and Sister Alberta had plucked El-Soo as a brand from the burning, one summer day, and carried her away to Holy Cross Mission and dedicated her to God. El-Soo was a full-blooded Indian, yet she

exceeded all the half-breed and quarter-breed girls. Never had the good sisters dealt with a girl so adaptable and at the same time so spirited. [...] (W.P.: 130)

As it may be seen, in example (43) the exposition contains information about El-Soo's parentage, her childhood and the explication of why she found herself in the Mission. More than that, the description of El-Soo's appearance as well as her other qualitative characteristics are provided.

9.2.3 Different Types of Exposition Organisation

As long as Jack London presents peculiar features in the organisation of his stories, one might come across the fact that there are different types of exposition structure. Some of them are simpler, and some of them are characterized by their complexity.

9.2.3.1 Simple Exposition

The exposition in its classic form is presented in S.K. (c.f. (40)) since it is rather static, and complete information on the setting and the character is given. Another exposition that can also be considered simple is the one from L.O.M., where the background information of the situation is presented in a laconic way (c.f. (39))

When the matter concerns peculiar types of exposition in the stories under analysis it is important to, first of all, single out *indirect exposition* type, which is represented by mimesis – begins with a conversation, such as M.T.

(44) "Dump it in."

"But I say, Kid, isn't that going it a little too strong? Whiskey and alcohol 's bad enough; but when it comes to brandy and pepper-sauce and" -

"Dump it in. Who 's making this punch, anyway?" And Malemute Kid smiled benignantly through the clouds of steam. "By the time you 've been in this country as long as I have, my son, and lived on rabbit-tracks and salmon-belly, you 'll learn that Christmas comes only once per annum. And a Christmas without punch is sinking a hole to bedrock with nary a pay-streak." [...] (M. T.: 1)

The exposition of this story is presented in the form of a dialogue interwoven with narrative sequence (c.f. 9.1.2.2.), which occupies a long paragraph; it definitely fulfils the task of a classical exposition, as it gives basic information about the place of the current situation and the situation itself, and about the characters (and their descriptions). In precisely this story, in comparison with other "conversational" expositions (cf. examples (34), (28)), the exposition may be easily singled out due to the fact that it is separated from the complication by the paragraph mark. Moreover, it has some kind of logical ending, which is a toast, pronounced by the characters, which prepares the reader for the following complication.

(45) [...] Then Malemute Kid arose, cup in hand, and glanced at the greased-paper window, where the frost stood full three inches thick. "A health to the man on trail this night; may his grub hold out; may his dogs keep their legs; may his matches never miss fire." [...] (M. T.: 3)

9.2.3.2 Mixed Exposition

In many cases the writer does not separate exposition from the rising action. He presents them as a whole. This means that the exposition is not cut from the rising action but serves as an introduction to it, a so-called *prolegomenon*. In such a type of exposition, the characters are just on the point of

performing an action. In various cases such expositions are represented in the form of mimesis. Such is the story of N.B. (c.f. (42)), which begins with the arrival of N. B., an Indian man who disappeared some time ago and his tribe considered him to be dead. His appearance immediately brings the reader to the rising action incidentally providing the general background information common for expositions (N.B. disappeared, his mother still believed he would come back, description of Nam Bok's appearance, description of the tribe). Another similar example is the incipit of W.S, where exposition and rising action are interwoven as well and slide one into another until the climax. (c.f. (37))

In example (37) the complication is already a part of exposition. This effect is achieved through the mixing of a dysphoric general situation with action. When the reader first meets the characters, they are already at a certain stage of their journey, in a complex situation, marked by shortage of food and the aggressive behaviour of the dogs. This exposition gives an impression of joining a story that already started some time earlier. The same type of exposition appears in Love L. (c.f. (38)). Here the protagonist is also encountered in the situation that started some time ago; he is already on the way to his destination and his condition shows that it has been a while since the journey started.

There is one more story, Law L., which is difficult to classify in one of these types, since, on the one hand, it has some characteristics of simple exposition, due to the description of the setting and the characters (c.f. (41)). On the other hand, it begins at the present moment and is marked by the actions of secondary characters, while the protagonist just observes, evaluates and ponders over the situation. The exposition ends with the complication – the dialogue between the protagonist and his son; and as the latter leaves, the protagonist starts reflecting and reminiscing, which brings the reader to the rising action.

9.2.3.3 Progressive Exposition

Another type of peculiar exposition may be observed in F.C. and W.P. Here the case in point is a *progressive exposition that is presented in the form of a story*. Within this exposition-type one may easily single out its own complete plot-structure that has a clear exposition, complication, rising and falling actions, climax and dénouement and it even has paragraph marks that separate some of the plot elements. This compound exposition has various characters that appear to be secondary for the whole story, but they are very carefully described and appear to be important for this general exposition. Such are the descriptions of Jacques Baptiste and Sloper in F.C.

(46) [...] There was nothing unusual about this party, except its plans [...] Even **Jacques Baptiste, born of a Chippewa woman and a renegade voyageur (having raised his first whimpers in a deerskin lodge north of the sixty-fifth parallel, and had the same hushed by blissful sucks of raw tallow)**, was surprised. [...]

Sloper rose to his feet. **His body was a ludicrous contrast to the healthy physiques of the Incapables. Yellow and weak, fleeing from a South American fever-hole, he had not broken his flight across the zones, and was still able to toil with men. His weight was probably ninety pounds, with the heavy hunting-knife thrown in, and his grizzled hair told of a prime which had ceased to be. The fresh young muscles of either Weatherbee or Cuthfert were equal to ten times the endeavor of his; yet he could walk them into the earth in a day's journey.** And all this day he had whipped his stronger comrades into venturing a thousand miles of the stiffest hardship man can conceive. **He was the incarnation of the unrest of his race, and the old Teutonic stubbornness, dashed with the quick grasp and action of the**

Yankee, held the flesh in the bondage of the spirit. [...] (F.C.: 22-26)

From this excerpt it is clear that the narrator sympathizes with Sloper and Baptist. He presents their description as a contrast to Cuthfert and Weatherbee, thus intensifying the impression produced by the protagonists, who were “shrinks and chronic grumblers” and also underlines this difference himself by pointing out that even though the protagonists were physically stronger than Sloper, he “could walk them into the earth in a day’s journey.”

The same exposition type is presented in *W.P.*, where the author gives a detailed account of the story of El-Soo since her childhood and till the moment of her father’s last days. But in the case of this story, the plot-structure of the exposition is not as vivid as in the previous example. Here the case of inseparable exposition and rising action takes place. More exactly, the very beginning of the story might be seen as a classical simple exposition that explains the setting and provides the description of the protagonist (as it was analysed in the previous subsection, 9.2.1). But at some moment her life changes, as she is obliged to go live with her father; her subsequent life story develops till it comes to the climatic point where her father is about to die. But globally, the situation just described is an exposition as it only serves to prepare the reader for the development of actions after the real complication of the story, i.e. when Porportuk says to the dying Klakee-Nah that he wants to marry his daughter, El-Soo, as a payment for her father’s debts.

9.2.3.4 Complex Flashback Exposition

The last type of exposition in the Klondike stories that are being studied is what is going to be called a *complex flashback exposition*. It is a very peculiar type, which presupposes that the story begins with some kind of initial situation that is further on supported by a flashback or analepsis that explains what happened to the protagonist that

made him/her encounter such a situation. In the corpus under analysis there are two stories that have this type of exposition structure. These stories are L.F. and B.W.

In the case of L.F. the exposition is presented through diegesis. One of the peculiarities of this story consists in the fact that, again, the complication is interwoven with the exposition, since the protagonist is encountered already tied up and watching the torture of his companion. Clearer complication features can be noted at the moment the protagonist realizes that he wants to die quickly and not to be tortured and this is when the flashback begins and pictures the brief story of the character's life till the present moment. It should be underlined that the flashback here forms part of the exposition.

The protagonist of L.F., Subienkow, is put in a dysphoric situation from the very beginning, as it has been pointed out in the previous chapter (c.f. 9.2.1). This story deals with both character types, the foreigner and the Indians.

(47) It was the end. [...] He sat in the snow, arms tied behind him, waiting the torture. He stared curiously before him at a huge Cossack, prone in the snow, moaning in his pain. The men had finished handling the giant and turned him over to the women. That they exceeded the fiendishness of the men, the man's cries attested.

Subienkow looked on, and shuddered. He was not afraid to die [...] But he objected to the torture. It offended his soul. And this offence, in turn, was not due to the mere pain he must endure, but to the sorry spectacle the pain would make of him. He knew that he would pray, and beg, and entreat, even as Big Ivan and the others that had gone before. This would not be nice. [...] to lose control, to have his soul upset by the pangs of the flesh, to screech and gibber like an ape, to become the veriest beast, ah, that was what was so terrible. (L.F.: 175-176)

As for the second story of this type, B.W., it begins with a situation where one of the main characters, Madge, appears and speaks to her husband. But after a short conversation between these characters there comes a flashback that describes the appearance and the domestication of the dog in California.

(48) She had delayed, because of the dew-wet grass, in order to put on her overshoes, and when she emerged from the house found her waiting husband absorbed in the wonder of a bursting almond-bud. She sent a questing glance across the tall grass and in and out among the orchard trees. "Where's Wolf?" she asked. [...] "You Wolf, you!" and "You blessed Wolf!" the man and woman called out to him. The ears flattened back and down at the sound, and the head seemed to snuggle under the caress of an invisible hand. [...] The man and woman loved the dog very much; perhaps this was because it had been such a task to win his love. It had been no easy matter when he first drifted in mysteriously out of nowhere to their little mountain cottage. Footsore and famished, he had killed a rabbit under their very noses and under their very windows, and then crawled away and slept by the spring at the foot of the blackberry bushes [...] (B.W.: 114)

Here, as in the majority of the stories just analysed, the exposition begins with a situation at the present, when the characters are going for a walk with their dog. As in the previous example (47), here the flashback story of the dog also forms part of the exposition and is framed by dialogues on both sides of the flashback.

9.2.4 Actions and Tension in London's Stories

London's stories are dynamic and full of action; this is why description of actions is very frequent (cf. 9.1.1). As a rule, there is a great deal of movement, struggling and conflicts. London always tends to create a dynamic intrigue. He

develops the plot in an onrush way and in the middle of it puts some adventure. During their development, these stories reach extreme emotional tension, the appearance of which is favoured by the use of dramatic collisions.

Conflict and struggle lie at the basis of most stories. In general, in such stories, the change from one situation to another is particularly extreme. The corpus of the research work perfectly represents such a feature of London's stories.

After having presented the features of expositions, it is important to focus on the whole process of plot development. In narrative texts the balanced process of the initial situation is usually interrupted by certain events. It is the totality of such events that is called complication. As a rule, it determines the following development of the plot. And the whole plot itself just comes to variation of actions predetermined by the main contradictions introduced by this complication.

In the case of the stories under analysis, the complication is always well detached. It is, for instance, the arrival of Westondale in M.T, the moment when Old Koskoosh is left to die alone in Law L., or the sprained ankle in Love L. Even in the stories where, as it has been described before, exposition and rising action are interwoven, complication is always simple to single out; take for instance W.S., where, during the journey, there are several critical moments, such as the dog's attempt to bite Mason's throat or the quarrel between the two friends, and the actual complication of the story, the moment when the pine tree falls on Mason.

(49) [...] He stooped to fasten the loosened thong of his moccasin. The sleds came to a halt and the dogs lay down in the snow without a whimper. The stillness was weird; not a breath rustled the frost-encrusted forest; the cold and silence of outer space had chilled the heart and smote the trembling lips of nature. A sigh pulsed through the air, – they did not seem to actually hear it, but rather felt it, like the premonition of movement in

a motionless void. Then the great tree, burdened with its weight of years and snow, played its last part in the tragedy of life. He heard the warning crash and attempted to spring up, but almost erect, caught the blow squarely on the shoulder. [...] (W.S.: 15-16)

In B.F. the man beginning his journey in spite of the utmost cold is a complication, whereas in F.C., on the opposite, the complication is the moment the protagonists decide to spend winter in the cabin.

When one speaks about rising action it should be remembered that it is a progressive development of the actions, which is established by the complication. In the corpus it may be characterized by a very strong increase of tension. It is only natural that the stronger the contradictions in the situations, the more intense the circumstances. Take for instance the fact that in such stories as N.B. and B.W., where the conflict between the characters does not imply a life-and-death struggle, the tension is not as strong as in B.F. or F.C.

9.2.4.1 Struggles and Tension

Different extreme situations constitute the frame of episodes marked by tension, such as the proximity of death or the moments of struggle between men and nature or just between men.

9.2.4.1.1 Action in the Proximity of Death

Through the analysis of the stories various significant peculiarities of the stories that refer to action have been established. The author always places the action in some unusual life episodes, interesting meetings and other special situations; and due to such an origin of the stories it is only

natural that the development of the plot is always full of action.

The characters of London's stories are placed in unusually dramatic and tense situations, where everything alien and inauthentic disappears whilst true human nature reveals itself. Even in such story as *Law L.*, where the situation is seemingly passive and refers to the philosophical thoughts of the protagonist rather than to action, there is still a lot of dynamism as in his memories his previous actions are described.

Death in London's stories is a consequence of a certain conflict, which may either be caused by the behaviour of the characters (e.g. the protagonists kill each other in *F.C.*) or which may be the result of a certain event, which happened independently of human behaviour (a pine tree killing Mason in *W.S.*). In many cases closeness of death provokes different reactions of those who are about to face it. Take for instance the seeming acceptance displayed by the old Koskoosh. Very peculiar is the tension in *Law L.* It is seen through the fact that, while in the present moment Koskoosh is very old, motionless and is left to die all alone, he reminisces about his past full of bright impressions, such as the times of famine, the times of plenty and the war with Pellys. But one of his strongest memories is the image of an old moose assailed by wolves and desperately fighting for his life.

(50) [...] He remembered, when a boy, during a time of plenty, when he saw a moose pulled down by the wolves. [...] But the moose. [...] "an old one who cannot keep up with the herd. The wolves have cut him out from his brothers, and they will never leave him." [...] Now they came to where the moose had made a stand [...] everywhere, were the lighter footmarks of the wolves. [...] **One wolf had been caught in a wild lunge of the maddened victim and trampled to death.** [...] Here **the great animal had fought desperately.** Twice **had he been dragged down**, as the snow attested, and twice **had he shaken his assailants** clear and gained footing once more.

He had done his task long since, but none the less **was life dear to him**. [...] his foes had laid on from behind, till **he reared and fell back upon them**, crushing two deep into the snow. It was plain the kill was at hand, for their brothers had left them untouched. Two more stands were hurried past, brief in time-length and very close together. The trail was red now, and the **clean stride of the great beast had grown short and slovenly**. Then they heard the first sounds of the battle – not the full-throated chorus of the chase, but the short, snappy bark, which spoke of close quarters and teeth to flesh. Crawling up the wind, Zing-ha bellied it through the snow, and with him crept he, Koskoosh [...] Together they shoved aside the under branches of a young spruce and peered forth. It was the end they saw [...] (Law L.: 43 – 44)

This is the most detailed description among Koskoosh's memories, and it serves to prefigure the death of the Indian. Moreover, it is used to reflect his internal struggle, as on the one hand he sticks to life and his nature yearns to struggle for living, as the moose "fought desperately" with the wolves and "had shaken his assailants" for "life was dear to him"; but still Koskoosh's mind agrees to giving up, according to his tribe's tradition, although even if in the last moments of his life the image of struggling still persists. (c.f. (62))

This story is very representative of picturing a particular case of human behaviour at the moment of facing death. This example depicts the calm acceptance. The old Indian doesn't make any attempts to save his life. A little different is the behaviour of the character in B.F., who didn't expect that his journey would be fatal and was desperate when he realised that it was.

(51) [...] A certain **fear of death**, dull and oppressive, **came to him**. This fear quickly became poignant as he realized that it was no longer a mere matter of freezing his fingers and toes, or of losing his hands and feet, but that it was a matter of life and death with the chances against him. This **threw him into a panic**, and he

turned and ran up the creek-bed along the old, dim trail [...] **He was losing in his battle with the frost.** It was creeping into his body from all sides. The thought of it drove him on, but **he ran no more than a hundred feet, when he staggered and pitched headlong.** It was **his last panic.** When he had recovered his breath and control, **he sat up and entertained in his mind the conception of meeting death with dignity.** However, the conception did not come to him in such terms. His idea of it was that he had been making a fool of himself, running around like a chicken with its head cut off – such was the simile that occurred to him. Well, **he was bound to freeze** anyway, and he might as well **take it decently.** With this new-found peace of mind came the first glimmerings of drowsiness. **A good idea, he thought, to sleep off to death.** It was like taking an anaesthetic. **Freezing was not so bad as people thought.** There were lots worse ways to die. [...] (B.F.: 173)

The example (51) reflects the behaviour of a person who, in contrast to the protagonist in Law L. was not prepared to die. This is why it is full of descriptions of moral panic and panicky actions (he ran, he was losing his battle with the frost, he ran when he staggered and pitched headlong, it was his last panic), which in any case end with the rather quick and easy acceptance of death (he entertained in his mind the conception of meeting death with dignity, freezing was not so bad as people thought). Acceptance of death is rather characteristic for the characters in the corpus, but it is usually based on the understanding of the hopelessness of a situation (c.f. L.F., W.S.).

Death comes out as a result of some events caused by a clash between a character and some antagonistic force, represented either by other characters or by nature. In the following subsection the features of the stories are going to be described more precisely. Firstly, two main types of struggle are distinguished: on the one hand, *man against nature*; on the other hand, *man against man*.

9.2.4.1.2 Man against Nature

In the first case, the characters are performing different actions while they are trying to survive at any cost by fighting the obstacles that nature throws in their way. In such stories nature plays the role of an antagonist that looks for different ways to defeat the protagonist. This is why the whole plot in most of the stories under analysis may be seen as the progressing process of struggle between a man and nature. Here first of all the matter concerns such stories as W.S, B.F. and Love L. (and, to a certain extent, Law L.). In these stories the writer gives a very strong description of nature (that in a way may be considered as a character). In the case of W.S., the extremity of nature is expressed by the description of utmost cold and snow (c.f. 26).

Through this excerpt, the narrator manages to transmit the whole complexity of breaking a trail, which can be seen as the ordeals put on purpose by some fictitious force, which aims to prevent the journey of the characters (shoe sinks till the snow is level with knee, the deviation of a fraction is a precursor of disaster, the snowshoe must be lifted till the surface is cleared, the other foot is raised perpendicularly for half a yard). In the same story there are several descriptions that suit the same characteristics, such is the tired dogs (“dying dog dragging herself in the rear”) and, of course, the falling pine tree (“the great tree, burdened with its weight of years and snow, played its last part in the tragedy of life”).

In B.F., the main struggle of the story is just between the protagonist and the utmost cold. The main mistake of the character consists in the fact that he does not understand the meaning and the intensity of extreme cold immediately. This understanding comes to him gradually, as he experiences its effects and this is the reason of all misfortunes that happened to him. Each time the protagonist comes to realize that the cold is more extreme than he has ever suffered, and the level of tension rises, gradually leading to the inevitable climax c.f. (51).

- (52) [...] **It certainly was cold, he concluded**, as he rubbed his numb nose and cheek-bones with his mittened hand. [...] (p. 160)
- Once in a while **the thought reiterated itself that it was very cold and that he had never experienced such cold**. As he walked along he rubbed his cheek-bones and nose with the back of his mittened hand. [...] But rub as he would, the instant he stopped his cheek-bones went numb, and the following instant the end of his nose went numb. [...] (p. 162)
- He did not expose his fingers more than a minute, and **was astonished** at the swift numbness that smote them. **It certainly was cold**. He pulled on the mitten hastily, and beat the hand savagely across his chest. [...] (p.164)
- He stamped up and down until the stinging returned into the feet. **It certainly was cold, was his thought**. [...] **There was no mistake about it, it was cold**. [...] (B.F.: 164)

The character's understanding of cold increases progressively together with the effect that it produces on him, thus intensifying the tension (it certainly was cold, he concluded, the thought reiterated itself that it was very cold, he was astonished at the swift numbness, there was no mistake about it, it was cold).

In Love L. there is no cold that affects a man but the wilderness of nature, where the sick human being has no access to food. The tension here is created by the gradual development of several obstacles (hunger, sickness, animals...) threatening the character and at the same time driving him forward. The main motive is hunger.

- (53) His ankle had stiffened, his limp was more pronounced, but the pain of it was as nothing compared with **the pain of his stomach**. **The hunger pangs were**

sharp. They **gnawed and gnawed** until he could not keep his mind steady on the course he must pursue to gain the land of little sticks. [...] (p. 97)

- **The keenness of his hunger had departed.** Sensibility, as far as concerned the yearning for food, had been exhausted. There was a **dull, heavy ache in his stomach, but it did not bother him so much.** [...] (p. 99)
- He ate the fish raw, masticating with painstaking care, for the eating was an act of pure reason. While **he had no desire to eat, he knew that he must eat to live.** [...] (Love L.: 100)

The increase of tension here is expressed through the description of the protagonist's desperate attempts to feed him or at least smooth the feeling of utmost hunger (the hunger pangs were sharp, they gnawed and gnawed, heavy ache in his stomach), which although do not succeed well enough still permit him to move forward (while he had no desire to eat, he knew that he must eat to live). And continue struggling with the obstacles that nature doesn't fail to throw. On the one hand, the weather was affecting his journey as it was getting worse as long as he was trying to move forward; on the other hand, he was dealing with wild animals, first – a bear and later a sick wolf, which were pursuing him hoping to outlive the protagonist and thus feed themselves.

9.2.4.1.3 Man against Man

As far as tension is concerned, a conflict between the characters takes place. Here is a more classical development of the situation, where the protagonist's objectives contradict those of the other characters. The rest of the corpus, except for F.C., which is spoken about infra (cf. (54)), refers to this type of story. When the conflict between characters is encountered, a reader may observe that some of them are transparent. In N.B., conflict is represented in the useless

attempts of Nam-Bok to bring the truth of real world to his tribe, or, in B.W., conflict appears between the new and the old owners of the dog (cf. (21)). On the other hand, in such stories as L.O.M., contradictions are juxtaposed. Here, on the one hand, there is the murderer of the white people and, on the other hand, the Indian trying to revenge the murderers of his people (c.f. (17) and (79)).

L.O.M. is not just a picture of life in the Klondike, though, as such, it gives an extremely vivid and powerful impression of social conditions typical of that time and place. This story deals with the problem of human existence, it shows the tragedy inherent in any violent confrontation between the "steel age" and the "stone age" and the sad outcome of this confrontation. The losses of the Indians can never be made good; and the drama that affected the Indians is hopeless. For only the old men stood up and fought; the young ones submitted, striving to adapt to the new ways and doing their best to become like white people. London shows that the Indians' old way of life vanished forever with Imber's death, and with it there perished a whole philosophy of life, a code of ethics and a particular human type.

In what refers to F.C., this story contains both types of struggles, as on the one hand the theme of surviving the winter in the middle of the Klondike, surrounded by the cruellest nature, is revealed and, on the other hand, the idea of the story is that it is the two protagonists who drive themselves to a sad ending.

(54) [...] "Carter! I say, Carter!"

Percy Cuthfert was frightened at the look on the clerk's face, and he made haste to put the table between them.

Carter Weatherbee followed, without haste and without enthusiasm. There was neither pity nor passion in his face, but rather the patient, stolid

look of one who has certain work to do and goes about it methodically.

"I say, what 's the matter?"

The clerk dodged back, cutting off his retreat to the door, but never opening his mouth.

"I say, Carter, I say; let 's talk. There 's a good chap."

The master of arts was thinking rapidly, now, shaping a skillful flank movement on the bed where his Smith & Wesson lay. Keeping his eyes on the madman, he rolled backward on the bunk, at the same time clutching the pistol.

"Carter!"

The powder flashed full in Weatherbee's face, but he swung his weapon and leaped forward. The axe bit deeply at the base of the spine, and Percy Cuthfert felt all consciousness of his lower limbs leave him. Then the clerk fell heavily upon him, clutching him by the throat with feeble fingers. The sharp bite of the axe had caused Cuthfert to drop the pistol, and as his lungs panted for release, he fumbled aimlessly for it among the blankets. Then he remembered. He slid a hand up the clerk's belt to the sheath-knife; and they drew very close to each other in that last clinch. [...] (F.C.: 37)

Here, as it has been already mentioned before (c.f. 9.1.3.1), dialogue serves to indicate the beginning of the climatic part of the plot. Its function is on the one hand underlined by the fact that it is the only conversation presented by the author in the development of plot, and on the other hand, by the fact that it is a logical continuation of the situation. Moreover, this dialogue is alternated with a description of actions that contributes to the general creation of tension and thus logically leads to the climax – the characters kill each other.

9.2.4.2 Means of Creating Tension in These Stories

Tension is an effect used by authors to maintain the reader interested in the following development of events. London succeeds particularly in creating scenes with remarkable tension. In order to achieve this effect the Londonian narrator resorts to various techniques. As a rule, the author uses various means of achieving tension in the same story separately or he mixes them.

9.2.4.2.1 Tension Based on Actions

One of the means is based on the actions undertaken by the protagonists in order to survive the strife with the ordeals of Klondike

(55) [...] He cowered in the midst of the milky water, as though the vastness were pressing in upon him with overwhelming force, brutally crushing him with its complacent awfulness. He began to shake as with an ague-fit, till the gun fell from his hand with a splash. This served to rouse him. He fought with his fear and pulled himself together, groping in the water and recovering the weapon. He hitched his pack farther over on his left shoulder, so as to take a portion of its weight from off the injured ankle. Then he proceeded, slowly and carefully, wincing with pain, to the bank. [...] (Love L.: 93)

Example (55) presents in detail the actions of the protagonist, which, due to their nature, are characterized by the growing (and at some moments dropping) negative impression that they produce on the reader (he cowered, began to shake till his gun fell, pulled himself together, proceeded, wincing with pain).

9.2.4.2.2 Contradiction between Characters' Interests or Moral Points of View

Another means that produces increase of tension is based on the contradiction of the characters' interests: Porportuk wants El-Soo to be his wife and she tries every possible means to avoid this. During the development of the plot sometimes luck is on her side and sometimes not, and the further the situation goes the tenser it becomes, as at first a reader deals with Porportuk claiming his debt (El-Soo father had promised to pay with his daughter); after that, she tries to sell herself at the auction, where there are various buyers interested in such a bargain. When Porportuk buys her, she manages to escape and finally the tensest moment is when Porportuk finally catches her and makes the elders of an Indian tribe decide on whose side the truth is.

(56) [...] "It is not good that a wife should run so fast. I paid for her a heavy price, yet does she run away from me. Akoon paid no price at all, yet does she run to him.

[...]

The old men coughed and remained silent.

"Akoon would buy," Porportuk went on, "but he has no money. Therefore I will give El-Soo to him, as he said, without price. Even now will I give her to him."

Reaching down, he took El-Soo by the hand and led her across the space to where Akoon lay on his back.

"She has a bad habit, Akoon," he said, seating her at Akoon's feet. "As she has run away from me in the past, in the days to come she may run away from you. But there is no need to fear that she will ever run away, Akoon. I shall see to that. Never will she run away from you – this the word of Porportuk. [...]."

Stooping, Porportuk crossed El-Soo's feet, so that the instep of one lay over that of the other; and then, before his purpose could be divined, he discharged his rifle through the two ankles. As Akoon struggled to rise against the weight of the young men, there was heard the crunch of the broken bone rebroken. "It is just," said the old men, one to another.

El-Soo made no sound. She sat and looked at her shattered ankles, on which she would never walk again.

[...]

"Is it just?" Porportuk asked, and grinned from the edge of the smoke as he prepared to depart.

"It is just," the old men said. And they sat on in the silence. [...] (W.P.: 157-158)

Example (56) represents the tensest moment of the story. Here the tension is felt through the fact that the main characters have no way back and their destiny depends on Porportuk and the Indian elders, whose understanding of justice differs from theirs.

The moral contradictions between the characters or between a character and the general situation are also means that London uses to create tension. For example in L.O.M. tension is achieved not only through the description of the murders performed by Imber, but also through its context. There is a growing conflict between the reasons of what he had done and the reaction of the society.

In the case of stories based on conflict between the characters, there are various examples of tension that is felt from the beginning as well. Take for instance the story L.F., where tension is not only felt through contradiction of interests (Indians want to torture Subienkow to death and he wants to die quickly), but also through the description of his memories (cf. (7), (19), (110)).

9.2.4.2.3 Environment and Situation's Stress

Thirdly, tension may also be achieved through very peculiar descriptions of the environment that add to the stress of the situation. Sometimes tension is felt from the very beginning of the stories. In the stories based on struggle with nature (as W.S., B.F., Love L.), it is obvious from the description of extreme cold, the statement of the utmost tiredness of the characters or their physical conditions (cf. 9.2.1.). But this kind of tension can appear in other moments of the story where nature is described. (c.f. (26))

Moreover, in W.S. after the introduction to the situation, the narrator presents various complicating moments such as the quarrel between the two friends and the angry dogs, which adds to the sensation of the coming catastrophe that does not wait to happen, this is the complication of the story – the falling tree hits Mason and gives him some deadly wounds. But the drama of the story keeps growing and its climax is the dialogue between Mason and Kid when the first one wants his friend to kill him (since he must die anyway). And even after that, the drama of the story is not fulfilled, as there is still some very little hope for salvation, the dénouement comes at the very end of the story when the time given by Mason runs out.

(57) [...] I 'm a gone man, Kid. Three or four sleeps at the best. You 've got to go on. You must go on! Remember, it 's my wife, it 's my boy, – O God! I hope it 's a boy! You can't stay by me, – and charge you, a dying man, to pull on."

"Give me three days," pleaded Malemute Kid.
"You may change for the better; something may turn up."

"No."

"Just three days."

"You must pull on."

"Two days."

"It 's my wife and my boy, Kid. You would not ask it."

"One day."

"No, no! I charge" –

"Only one day. We can shave it through on the grub, and might knock over a moose."

"No, – all right; one day, but not a minute more. And Kid, don't – don't leave me to face it alone. Just a shot, one pull on the trigger. [...] (W.S.: 18)

In the case of F.C. the most memorable and tense moments are the descriptions of the characters' perception of the Northland. These descriptions reflect their fear of the North, which may be compared to an agony which even far stronger men are unable to withstand.

(58) [...] This Fear was the joint child of the Great Cold and the Great Silence, and was born in the darkness of December, when the sun dipped below the southern horizon for good. It affected them according to their natures. Weatherbee fell prey to the grosser superstitions, and did his best to resurrect the spirits which slept in the forgotten graves [...] Cuthfert deemed the man going mad, and so came to fear for his life. [...] He dwelt upon the unseen and the unknown till the burden of eternity appeared to be crushing him. Everything in the Northland had that crushing effect, – the absence of life and motion; the darkness; the infinite peace of the brooding land; [...] (F.C.: 32)

This tension only increases when the momentary appearance of the tip of the sun, whose rays seemed to dispel the terror

and made Weatherbee and Cuthfert stretch out their crippled hands to each other, as a reader can feel that they do it for one last time. Basically, the motif of the great fear of North can be seen as a main idea – it is a story of men overcome by a terrified numbness in the silent greatness of nature, a story about the eternally recurring cycle of existence, which reveals as utterly insignificant both quarrels over sugar and the longing for wealth and prosperity.

9.2.4.2.4 Agonistic Conversation

Certain conversations may also contribute to the creation of tension in the stories, especially if there are arguments between the characters. In M.T. the following argumentative dialogue is a bright example of narrative tension.

(59) [...] "Lend me five dogs?" he asked, turning to Malemute Kid.

But the Kid shook his head.

"I 'll sign a check on Captain Constantine for five thousand, – here 's my papers, – I 'm authorized to draw at my own discretion."

Again the silent refusal.

"Then I 'll requisition them in the name of the Queen." [...] (M.T.: 9)

Here the policeman first asks Kid to lend him the dogs as he wants to follow Westondale. As Kid refuses, the Captain suggests paying and, as he receives a negative answer, he claims other dogs according to his job position. Thus the increase of tension can be observed and is intensified by the fact the reader knows that the protagonist sympathizes with Westondale and doesn't want him to be caught.

9.2.4.3 Climax

The tension is growing while it is getting closer to the change of the situation. This is why it is worth speaking about the climax. Like complication, it is well detached in London's stories. The climax always produces the strongest impression as it transfers all the peaks of tension of the actions and feelings; this is the point of strongest concentration on the reading.

(60) [...] Wolf's **perturbation began to wax**. He **desired ubiquity**. He **wanted to be in two places at the same time**, with the old master and the new, and steadily **the distance between them was increasing**. [...]. Suddenly Wolf turned his head, and over his shoulder just as steadily regarded Walt. **The appeal was unanswered**. [...] **He was depressed by the coldness of these humans who had never been cold before**. [...] **They were as dead**. He turned and silently gazed after the old master. Skiff Miller was rounding the curve. [...] A few minutes later **Wolf got upon his feet**. **Decision and deliberation marked his movements**. He did not glance at the man and woman. His eyes were fixed up the trail. [...] (B.W: 128)

In the example above one may see the final part of B.W., where the dog has to decide whether it stays with its old master or the new ones. The excerpt is full of tension created by the description of the dog's very realistic actions. As Skiff Miller leaves, the dog becomes very nervous as it "desires ubiquity" and wants to stay with both owners, "to be in two places at the same time." But as the owners decline its attempts to reunite them (the appeal was unanswered, he was surprised by the coldness of these humans, they were as dead), the story comes to the point where the dog has "made up his mind" and follows its original master.

It may be said that in London's stories there are various climaxes. In such a story as B.F., the following climax is stronger than the previous one and each of the two climaxes is signalled with the repeated phrase "it happened." Due to the presence of these climatic points in B.F., extreme emotional tensions achieved in its plot. And, as the next climax is stronger than the previous one, the plot emerges with steady progressive development; that adds to the creation of growing tension.

(61) [...] And then **it happened**. At a place where there were no signs, where the soft, unbroken snow seemed to advertise solidity beneath, **the man broke through**. It was not deep. [...] But before he could cut the strings, **it happened**. It was his own fault or, rather, his mistake. He should not have built the fire under the spruce tree. [...] Each time he had pulled a twig he had communicated a slight agitation to the tree – an imperceptible agitation, so far as he was concerned, but an agitation sufficient to bring about the disaster. High up in the tree one bough capsized its **load of snow**. This fell on the boughs beneath, capsizing them. This process continued, spreading out and involving the whole tree. It **grew like an avalanche**, and **it descended** without warning upon the man and the fire, and **the fire was blotted out!** Where it had burned was a mantle of fresh and disordered snow. [...] (B.F.: 167-168)

In example (61) the two crucial points of the story are presented. These two moments demonstrate the accidents that caused the following death of the protagonist: first he wet himself and then the fire was put out.

Progressive climax and tension appear in other stories as well (W.S., Love L., L.O.M., W.P.). In Love L., there are various climaxes that do not depend on each other and are just used to describe the development of what goes on. Though the tension of the story is very strong as well, here it is created by the pure description of actions. Hence here there is no

progress of the plot but chain of events. In the case of this particular story a reader deals with various narrative sequences, complete and not interdependent. Even if E.F. Shefer suggested analysing Love L. as a chain of separate stories (1976), however, these “stories” form a narrative unity.

The analysis shows that tension is an important feature in the stories which are being analysed. And this tension displays itself from the very beginning till the end. Besides, it occurs that tension increases while moving from one climax to the other, until the *dénouement* comes.

9.2.5 Dysphoric *Dénouement*.

London’s stories have definite and in most cases dysphoric ending. Five of the twelve stories under analysis result in the death of the protagonist; these stories are W.S., F.C., Law L., L.F., B.F.

Nevertheless, in the case of Law L., death is not tragic, but something inevitable (a law). Through the whole story the author logically leads the reader to this ending.

(62) [...] Why should he cling to life? he asked, and dropped the blazing stick into the snow. It sizzled and went out. The circle grunted uneasily, but held its own. Again he saw the last stand of the old bull moose, and Koskoosh dropped his head wearily upon his knees. What did it matter after all? Was it not the law of life? (Law L.: 45-46)

In L.F. the aim of the protagonist is to avoid torture. And, as he succeeds in it, the feeling before this end is not completely dysphoric, though it cannot be called a good ending neither, as the protagonist is equally dead. The ending is also dysphoric for the chief of the tribe who loses his face.

Three more stories have an ambiguous but sad dénouement: Nam-Bok is driven away from his tribe due to the incapacity of his people to believe in a different life, and in the technical progress of white people near them; Imber (L.O.M.) should be punished for all the deadly crimes he committed trying to save the existence of the Indian folk, and finally Porportuk (W.P.) shoots the legs of El-Soo so that she could never walk again.

In M.T. the dénouement is seemingly good, as Westondale seems to be capable to achieve his goal; but the narrator never put an end to the situation so that is why it is impossible to find out whether he succeeded or not.

The same may be said about B.W., as on the one hand it is a touching fact that the dog chooses its first owner to stay with, but on the other hand it leaves the people who loved it and made a great effort in order to achieve that love. In fact, this story shows the actual conflicts of real life, where no situation is perfect.

And finally the dénouement of Love L. produces dissatisfied feelings as after the strongest development of the plot, the final description of how the protagonist was saved is blurry.

(63) [...] There were some members of a scientific expedition on the whale-ship *Bedford*. From the deck they remarked a strange object on the shore. It was moving down the beach toward the water. They were unable to classify it, and, being scientific men, they climbed into the whale-boat alongside and went ashore to see. And they saw something that was alive but which could hardly be called a man. It was blind, unconscious. It squirmed along the ground like some monstrous worm. Most of its efforts were ineffectual, but it was persistent, and it writhed and twisted and went ahead perhaps a score of feet an hour. (Love L.: 110)

The general meaning of the dénouement is euphoric as the protagonist survived and was saved by the people on the ship. But, on the other hand, the whole process of finding him,

and the description of his state have dysphoric characteristics, as even when saved by the scientists the protagonist has become something that “could hardly be called a man”; he is described as a beast, and to name him the pronoun “it” is used. So that there is no complete euphoria in this saving; it is presented with certain irony.

Even in these three stories, which are supposed to have a happy end to a certain extent, London’s final situations cannot be described from the position of happy/unhappy end. And, although as a rule there is no epilogue, the moral and the lesson of the story are implicit, hence they require reflection.

9.2.6 Inserted Story

Besides the different parts of the narrative sequence which have been presented in previous subsections (from 9.2.1 to 9.2.4), there are several stories that are very particular in their structure as they are composed in the traditional way of the so-called “story within the main story.” This peculiarity is characteristic of Jack London, as this composition appears in five out of the twelve stories (L.O.M., N.B., B.W., S.K., M.T.). The stories that have this structure presented in a very profound way are L.O.M., N.B., B.W. and S.K.

In the previous subsections (c.f. 9.1.2.4) several stories that are based on a flashback structure have been already mentioned (L.F., Law L. B.W.); these stories form part of the composition that is going to be called “story within the main story,” which means that within a general story, there occur another stories; they can be of different length and different organisation. As the flashback stories have been already discussed, it is necessary to point out again that two of the flashback stories take place in the interior monologues of the protagonists (Law L., L. F.). While in B.W. it is the narrator who tells the story of Wolf’s appearance (see appendix pp. 114-116)

Besides the flashback stories (cf. 9.2.3.4), the story within the main story composition in dialogues can be observed. In S.K. two Indians who followed Keesh tell the story of what they saw while they were watching Keesh hunting.

(64) [...] "Brothers! As commanded, we journeyed on the trail of Keesh, and cunningly we journeyed, so that he might not know. And midway of the first day he picked up with a great he-bear. It was a very great bear."

"[...]after him came Keesh, very much unafraid. And he shouted harsh words after the bear, and waved his arms about, and made much noise. Then did the bear grow angry, and rise up on his hind legs, and growl. But Keesh walked right up to the bear."

"[...] And the bear took after him, and Keesh ran away. But as he ran he dropped a little round ball on the ice. And the bear stopped and smelled of it, then swallowed it up." [...]And this continued until the bear stood suddenly upright and cried aloud in pain, and thrashed his fore paws madly about" [...]And after a while the bear grew weak and tired, for he was very heavy and he had jumped about with exceeding violence, and he went off along the shore-ice, shaking his head slowly from side to side and sitting down ever and again to squeal and cry. And Keesh followed after the bear, and we followed after Keesh, and for that day and three days more we followed. The bear grew weak, and never ceased crying from his pain." [...] (S.K.: 87-88)

This inserted story told by two secondary characters, the Indians from Keesh's tribe, is based on the description of Keesh's actions (c.f. 9.1.1), used to display the process of hunting.

In M.T., two stories, told by the protagonist can be singled out. The first one is the story of Mason's marriage (c.f. (65)), and the second one is essential in its meaning, as it serves as

an explanation of the whole situation; which is the story of Westondale, which Kid tells to his companions in order to explain why he helped that man.

(65) [...] "You 've only heard one side. A whiter man than Jack Westondale never ate from the same pot nor stretched blanket with you or me. Last fall he gave his whole clean-up, forty thousand, to Joe Castrell, to buy in on Dominion. To-day he 'd be a millionaire. But while he stayed behind at Circle City, taking care of his partner with the scurvy, what does Castrell do? Goes into McFarland's, jumps the limit, and drops the whole sack. Found him dead in the snow the next day. And poor Jack laying his plans to go out this winter to his wife and the boy he 's never seen. You 'll notice he took exactly what his partner lost, – forty thousand. Well, he 's gone out; and what are you going to do about it?" [...] (M.T.: 10)

Besides that, it is possible to single out several stories presented in dialogic form, though dialogues are much longer. These are the stories told by Imber in L.O.M., and Nam Bok in N.B. In the case of Imber his stories are divided into two parts. The first one is the recounting of the murders that Imber did, this one is presented as Imber's confession written down, read by Howkan and often interrupted by Imber's additions.

(66) [...] "It be nothing, it be nothing," the young man responded carelessly and pridefully. He read at hazard from the document: *"In that year, before the break of the ice, came an old man, and a boy who was lame of one foot. These also did I kill, and the old man made much noise – "*

"It be true," Imber interrupted breathlessly. "He made much noise and would not die for a long time. But how dost thou know, Howkan? The chief man of the white men told thee, mayhap? No one beheld me, and him alone have I told." Howkan shook his head with impatience. "Have I

not told thee it be there in the paper, O fool?" [...]
(L.O.M.: 71-72)

Another story of Imber is told by him, and is only sometimes interrupted by the people from the Court. It has characteristics of both narration and argumentation (c.f. 9.1.4) (c.f. (8), (17))

9.2.7 Prologue and Epilogue (post-position)

In the stories under analysis there are four stories that besides the general elements of plot structure also contain either a prologue (F.C., S.K.) or an epilogue (Love L., S.K., B.F.).

The prologue in its pure form and clearly detached form only appears in F.C. It is given in the form of digression (c.f. (25) which has been already spoken about in a previous subsection (c.f. 9.1.6) and serves to transmit the general idea of the importance of comradeship and will to work in order to survive in the utmost scenery of the North.

As it has been noted previously, there is one more story that has a part that can be seen as a prologue; that is S.K. (c.f. (40)). It can be considered as a prologue since it does not form part of a logical plot development. This story also has a certain kind of epilogue. Here the narrator proclaims that everything ended well.

(67) [...] And this is the story of Keesh, who lived long ago on the rim of the polar sea. Because he exercised headcraft and not witchcraft, **he rose** from the meanest IGLOO **to be head man of his village**, and **through all the years that he lived**, it is related, **his tribe was prosperous**, and neither widow nor weak one cried aloud in the night because there was no meat. (S.K.: 90)

As one may see, this story has a fixed positive ending, which enunciates that after the events related in the story, Keesh's

situation improved greatly (he rose to be head man of his village and, during the years he lived, his tribe was prosperous).

This excerpt represents the logical summary of the whole story and points out what happens to the protagonist after the events of the story and till his death: he became the head of the village and “through the years that he lived the tribe was prosperous.” It also contains a certain type of typical moral for a legend: “because he exercised headcraft, and not witchcraft he rose to be head man.”

In B.F. an epilogue can be also singled out. It takes place after the death of the protagonist and recounts what happened to the dog after its master was gone. (c.f. (6))

The epilogue in its larger form only appears in one story, Love L. Here it describes the further destiny of a protagonist after he was found

(68) [...] The days were not many after that when he sat at table with the scientific men and ship's officers. **He gloated over the spectacle of so much food, watching it anxiously as it went into the mouths of others.** [...] He was **haunted by a fear that the food would not last.** [...] It was noticed that the man **was getting fat.** He grew stouter with each day. [...] They saw him **slouch forward** after breakfast, and, like a mendicant, **with outstretched palm,** accost a sailor. The sailor grinned and passed him a fragment of sea biscuit. He **clutched it avariciously, looked at it as a miser looks at gold, and thrust it into his shirt bosom.** [...] They let him alone. But they privily examined **his bunk.** It **was lined with hardtack;** [...] Yet he was sane. He was **taking precautions against another possible famine** – that was all. **He would recover from it,** the scientific men said; **and he did,** ere the *Bedford's* anchor rumbled down in San Francisco Bay. (Love L.: 111)

This epilogue demonstrates the life of the protagonist shortly after the scientists saved him. As in the *dénouement* (c.f. 9.2.5), the situation is given with certain irony as it depicts the peculiar behaviour of the character, which has become somewhat less human and more animalistic, based on the constant desire to “take precautions against another possible famine” (he watched anxiously as the food went into the mouths of others, haunted by the fear the food would not last, his bunk was lined with hardtrack...). And although at the very end of the story it is said that the protagonist recovered from this particular behaviour, the general impression left by the *dénouement* is quite controversial, as long as on the one hand it is less heroic than a reader might expect, and on the other hand, it seems very realistic, showing the impact of the whole situation described in the story on the human mind.

9.3 Conclusions for Chapter 9

The sequential organization of the stories under analysis has various peculiarities. On the one hand, if textual heterogeneity is quite common in narrative texts in general, London’s stories are characterized by intensification of heterogeneity, which reaches even to imbrication of sequences; on the other hand, London uses several particular composition strategies that contribute to the specificity of his narrative discourse.

As it can be observed, one of the main characteristics of the composition of the corpus is the frequent use of description of actions that can be observed in all the stories of the corpus. More than that, there are two stories (B.F., Love L.), which basically consist of these peculiar sequences, sometimes alternated with other ones.

Another outstanding compositional feature of the corpus is the imbrication of sequences. This means that the same story may contain quick transition between text sequences, which appear as a single whole and are inseparable.

Very often such imbrications take place in dialogues (imbrication with narration or argumentation / explanation). Dialogues are always meaningful, bearing some peculiar functions such as: increase of action and tension, intertextual or *myse en abîme* special functions, a completion of the actions or description of the characters, sometimes providing a point of view.

Finally, sequences in London's stories not only narrate events but they are also used to transmit his ideas, which can be observed both in the discourse of the characters and, most of all, in the discourse of the narrator.

In what refers to the narrative schemes of Jack London's stories, they could be characterized by dysphoria, which is especially strong in expositions and dénouements. In general, dysphoric exposition seems to be a quite typical device, used by Jack London in order to create a certain strained mood. It is obvious that in corpus eight of the twelve stories have dysphoric exposition. But even those four that are not part of this group do not belong to the classic exposition type.

As it may be seen, in nine of the twelve stories the reader becomes an immediate observer of a situation. Very close to such characteristic is L.O.M., but here, the incipit presents a dysphoric situation (Imber is going to be condemned for his murders) but shortly after this beginning, the narrator accounts for the facts that have led to such a situation and goes on narrating the events around it.

There are two stories (S.K. and W.P.) that do correspond to the general exposition characteristics, as here the main characters are presented and the general characteristics of their situations are given.

The analysis of exposition organization allows to single out four main types of exposition. These are the following:

- Simple exposition (S.K., L.O.M., B.F.)
- Indirect exposition (M.T.)

- Prolegomenon of the rising action or mixed exposition (N.B., W.S., Love L., Law L.)
- Progressive complex exposition, a story (F.C., W.P.)
- Complex flashback exposition (L.F., B.W.)

Even if these exposition types overlap in some cases, each story has a dominant type, as it has been demonstrated.

These particular beginnings of the stories prepare the reader for the following (mostly dysphoric) development of actions, which are full of unexpected moves and impress the reader with highest levels of tension.

London uses different means of achieving tension, which he uses in the same story. The creation of tension is based on the following means:

- actions undertaken by the characters
- contradictions between characters' interests or moral points of view
- hostile environment and situation's stress
- agonistic dialogues

As a rule tension displays itself from the beginning till the very end. However, not all of the stories under analysis have tension from the very beginning. Those that start as some non-negative situation are not intense till the complication (as in the traditional way). This analysis shows that tension increases while moving from one climatic point to another until the dénouement of a story, which is dysphoric in the majority of the stories of the corpus (eight of twelve stories).

The endings of the stories are usually ambiguous as there is always some uncertainty about the final situation. It can be either seemingly good for some of the characters but not all of them (e.g. B.W.) or it can be dysphoric but easily perceived due to the whole situation of the story (e.g. L.F.).

10 CREATION OF A WORLD

In chapter 9 the specificity of the textual composition and the narrative sequence in London's stories have been studied. When presenting events organized in an intrigue, the narrator constructs a particular world where the characters act in time and in space. London's characters are quite prototypical and polarized to some extent, and they live in the severe conditions of the North.

10.1 Construction of the Character

The Klondike stories exhibit periodic characters and character types, particularly the strong man or the hero, who lives by the Code of the Northland and insists upon brotherhood and community. There are some stereotypes – the sociopath, the strong woman, trickster figures, the loyal Indian, the weakling, and many others – but three primary character types receive serious treatment in the Klondike tales: the hero, the Indian, and the woman. An examination of some of the most significant stories with these types of characters in mind reveals that they overlap in almost every one, with the greatest conjunctions occurring between the Indian and the Woman, yet each story tends to have an emphasis upon one or another.

10.1.1 Strong Man

The Northern stories depict an extremely bright and original world, full of energy and action. The characters depicted in these stories are of different nationalities and religions; they are of different level of education, diverse tempers, age and gender. They can be hunters, gold diggers, dog team drivers, vagabonds or adventurers. In most cases positive heroes are old-timers of the North. They are bearers of its traditions.

Among them can be distinguished various character types that are characteristic for the stories under analysis.

The first character type is the strong man. It is a prototype that combines various individual peculiarities, characteristic for London's characters. This image develops from the thoughts and actions of many characters of various stories. The Klondike hero is adept at survival in the frozen wilderness. He is usually a white man coming to the North to prospect for gold, though he is immune to the gold fever. He is a reformed chechaquo, in love with the Northland.

One of the most thoroughly described personages is Malemute Kid, who in the corpus appears in two stories, M.T. and W.S. The prototype for this personage was London's travelling companion, Merritt Sloper, who also appears under his own name in F.C (c.f. (46), (72)). Malemute Kid is a manly, disciplined and wise Northland bachelor and veteran, who knows well its way of life and its tempers. He is much respected by the other people and becomes the referee, whose word is of great importance in arguable situations. He is London's most admirable Northland hero; he appears in nine stories. He functions variously in the tales as central participant, as more passive auditor and/or as moral commentator. Malemute Kid is the possessor of the kind of imagination London deemed crucial for survival and the understanding of the Klondike life.

The positive heroes' main traits in London's stories are honesty, fair play, and comradeship. They possess fine emotions and are capable of loving; take for instance dying Mason who admits to Kid that he cares a lot about his (Mason's) wife.

(69) [...] "You remember when we foregathered on the Tanana, four years come next ice-run? I didn't care so much for her then. It was more like she was pretty, and there was a smack of excitement about it, think. But d' ye know, I 've come to think a heap of her. She 's been a good wife to me, always at my shoulder in the pinch.

[...] (W.S.: 17)

But this kind of episodes where the characters express their feelings are not frequent, even though these feelings are always strong. In general, London's heroes are quite reticent about manifesting their emotions. They are strong and brave people, who do not yield to difficulties or danger. All of them are very active, have an outstanding strength of will and are very persistent when trying to achieve their goal (e.g. the protagonist from *Love L.*, who survives despite all the disasters that happen to him (c.f. (38), (53), (91), (115))).

Another characteristic peculiarity of the Londonian hero is that he is humane and very kind both to people and animals. The latter love him for that. Such is the example of Malemute Kid's behaviour: on the one hand he helps Jack Westondale, whom he has never met before (c.f. M.T.) and he stays with his dying friend till the very last moment (c.f. W.S.); on the other hand, he treats dogs nicely, and even protects them from the rude behaviour of his friend (c.f. (142), see also appendix p. 15).

Positive heroes never talk much. All of them are very reserved about what they say and extremely laconic. "No more conversation; the toil of the trail will not permit such extravagance." (W.S.: 2) The talkers as a rule are just useless boasters. One should act and not speak to no purpose, this is the main principle according to which the heroes of London's stories live.

10.1.2 Appearance of London's Characters

As long as the scenery and the circumstances in which the stories unfold are extreme (cold, hunger, wilderness, imminent death), heroes must resist, fight, and, finally, survive, and these hard conditions give these characters heroic traits.

Only extremely strong people can deal with the extreme situations of the North. These images are created through descriptions.

(70) [...] He was a **striking personage**, and a **most picturesque one**, in his Arctic dress of wool and fur. Standing **six foot two or three**, **with proportionate breadth of shoulders and depth of chest**, his smooth-shaven face nipped by the cold to a gleaming pink, his long lashes and eyebrows white with ice, and the ear and neck flaps of his great wolfskin cap loosely raised, **he seemed, of a verity, the Frost King**, just stepped in out of the night. Clapsed outside his mackinaw jacket, a beaded belt held two large Colt's revolvers and a hunting-knife, while he carried, in addition to the inevitable dogwhip, a smokeless rifle of the largest bore and latest pattern. As he came forward, for all his step was firm and elastic, they could see that fatigue bore heavily upon him. [...] (M.T.: 3)

Here the narrator gives a vivid description of Westondale who has just entered the saloon and has made a strong impression on those who were there due to the peculiar strength seen from the constitution of his body (six feet two or three, with proportionate breadth of shoulders and depth of chest). He is also described by antonomasia (c.f. 12.2.4) *Frost King* and by the objects such as *Colt's*, *hunting-knife* or *dogwhip*.

Despite their various origins, all of London's heroes have something in common in their appearance. For example in the following two excerpts one may see the description of two completely different characters in their physical condition who still give the impression of very strong people.

(71) [...] It was a crunching of **heavy feet**, punctuated now and again by the clattering of a displaced stone. [...] He was bare-headed and sweaty. With a handkerchief in one hand he mopped his face, while in the other hand he carried a new hat and a wilted starched collar

which he had removed from his neck. He was a **well-built man, and his muscles seemed on the point of bursting out of the painfully new and ready-made black clothes he wore.** [...] (B.W.: 118)

(72) [...] Sloper rose to his feet. His body was a ludicrous contrast to the healthy physiques of the Incapables. **Yellow and weak, fleeing from a South American fever-hole, he had not broken his flight across the zones, and was still able to toil with men. His weight was probably ninety pounds, with the heavy hunting-knife thrown in,** and his grizzled hair told of a prime, which had ceased to be. [...] He was **the incarnation of the unrest of his race, and the old Teutonic stubbornness, dashed with the quick grasp and action of the Yankee, held the flesh in the bondage of the spirit.** [...] (F.C.: 26)

From these descriptions, Miller from B.W. (71), Sloper from F.C. (72) and Westondale described above (70), have the physical and moral strength depicted in his body, while Sloper seems to be skinny and weak (yellow and weak, His weight was probably ninety pounds, with the heavy hunting-knife thrown in), nonetheless his actual strength is seen through the description and is even underlined by the narrator himself ([he] held the flesh in the bondage of the spirit) (c.f. also (46)).

It is necessary to emphasize that among positive heroes there are no people who came only in search of gold. Unselfishness is one of the most characteristic peculiarities of these heroes. The North is attractive not because it gives people an opportunity to get rich, but because it is the place where simple relations still exist and where a person can show his/ her real capacities and courage. London's heroes are more attracted by the process of searching for gold than by gold itself. They are fond of the hard work needed to mine. But when they obtain it, they can easily get rid of it. The most important thing for London's hero is to remain real, a good person, and not to look for selfish ends.

London's descriptions of characters have a peculiar role in London's stories, since, on the one hand they are laconic and, on the other hand, the protagonists are sometimes described with less specifications than secondary characters (for example, in the corpus no vivid description of Malemute Kid, who is the protagonist of both M.T. and W.S.) are encountered.

As it is seen below (c.f. 10.1.3), in these stories the description of the internal world of the characters and their way of thinking is more important than their physical appearance. The narrator tends to describe their state, their actions and their thoughts at one moment of a story more than giving the classic description of face and clothes features. What is more, the writer tends to give more detailed description to secondary characters than to the protagonists. One of the examples is the description of Sloper given above (c.f. (72)), who only appears at the beginning of the story. This kind of secondary character descriptions sometimes gives wrong expectations about what is going to happen in the story. For instance in L.O.M. the narrator describes every person that speaks to Imber, but gives little description of the Indian himself.

(73) Dickensen [...] was a romantic little chap, and he likened the immobile old heathen to the genius of the Siwash race [...] Emily Travis was dainty and delicate and rare, and whether in London or Klondike she gowned herself as befitted the daughter of a millionaire mining engineer. [...] A mounted policeman [...] was a stalwart young fellow, broad-shouldered, deep-chested, legs cleanly built and stretched wide apart, and tall though Imber was, he towered above him by half a head. His eyes were cool, and gray, and steady, and he carried himself with the peculiar confidence of power that is bred of blood and tradition. His splendid masculinity was emphasized by his excessive boyishness, – he was a mere lad, – and his smooth cheek promised a blush as willingly as the check of a maid. [...] Imber looked very tired, The fatigue of

hopelessness and age was in his face. His shoulders drooped depressingly, and his eyes were lack-lustre. His mop of hair should have been white, but sun and weather beat had burned and bitten it so that it hung limp and lifeless and colorless [...] (L.O.M.: 64-69).

In example (73), some qualities are attributed to characters who are presented with his names (Dickensen is “romantic,” Emily Travis is “delicate and rare,” a mounted policeman is “a stalwart young fellow”); nevertheless, these characters do not play any important role in the story, whilst Imber’s description is restricted to his “mop of hair” and his mood. In fact the most accurate descriptions of London’s characters appear when the narrator describes their thoughts and their worries.

10.1.3 Internal World of the Characters

London succeeds remarkably in the picturing the internal world of his characters. He describes with outstanding expressiveness the state of the soul, thoughts and feelings. Such is his description of the psychology of the freezing person in B.F.

(74) [...] But **he was safe**. Toes and cheeks could be only touched by the frost, for the fire was beginning to burn with strength. [...] The man **was shocked**. It was as though he had just **heard his own sentence of death**. [...] The old-timer on Sulphur Creek was right, he thought in **the moment of controlled despair** that ensued [...] As he **looked apathetically** about him, his eyes chanced on the dog [...] He spoke to the dog, calling it to him; but in his voice was a **strange note of fear that frightened the animal**, who had never known a man to speak in such way before.[...] A certain **fear of death, dull and oppressive, came to him**. [...] **This threw him into panic, and he turned and ran** up the creek-bed along the old, dim trail. [...] He **ran blindly, without intention, in fear such, as he had**

never known in his life. [...] A good idea, he thought, to sleep off to death. [...] (B.F.: 167-174)

In the beginning the character is frightened by deadly cold, then he has some hope for salvation; but then as the fire cannot be kindled, he starts to feel despair which is followed by indifference and apathy. This is a complex and progressive description of a changing mental state (he was safe, shocked, heard his own sentence of death, looked apathetically, this threw him into panic...). In fact, the internal world description occupies an important part in the textual organisation of B.F. The psychological representation of the character's internal world is associated with tension increase. (cf. 9.2.3)

The same kind of description appears in F.C. Here the narrator gives a detailed account of the protagonists' moral and physical degradation; first they live in prosperity but their own laziness and moral incapacity stage by stage leads them to an inevitable ending; they kill each other.

(75) [...] Things **prospered** in the little cabin at first. The rough badinage of their comrades had made Weatherbee and Cuthfert conscious of the **mutual responsibility**, which had **devolved** upon them; besides, there was not so much work after all for two healthy men. [...] Save existence, **they had nothing in common** [...] Occasionally, the flash of an eye or the curl of a lip got the better of them, though **they strove to wholly ignore each other** during these mute periods. And a great wonder sprang up in the breast of each, as to how God had ever come to create the other. **With little to do, time became an intolerable burden to them.** This naturally made them still **lazier**. They **sank into a physical lethargy**, which there was no escaping, and which made them rebel at the performance of the smallest chore. [...] The luxuries suffered in this gluttonous contest, as did also the men. In the absence of fresh vegetables and exercise, **their blood became impoverished, and a loathsome, purplish rash crept over their**

bodies. Yet they refused to heed the warning. [...] They lost all regard for personal appearance, and for that matter, common decency. [...] They were sick, and there was no one to see; besides, it was very painful to move about. [...] (F.C.: 31)

As in the previous example (c.f. (74)), the description of the characters' degradation here goes hand in hand with growing tension and reflects and predicts the inevitable disaster of their coexistence.

10.1.4 Role of Women in London's Short Stories

Besides the male heroes the writer creates another important image: the women. In various stories women turn out to be true heroines. Like the heroes, they are also strong, and also of different types: old-timers, chechaquos, Indians, married and single. Apart from B.W., where Madge is presented as the dog's owner and Skiff Miller's antagonist, female characters of certain importance are observed in two stories, W.S. and W.P, and in both cases the women are of Indian origin.

London generally depicts women as physically beautiful. Take, for instance, Elh-Soo.

(76) For El-Soo was beautiful – not as white women are beautiful, not as Indian women are beautiful. It was the flame of her, that did not depend upon feature, that was her beauty. So far as mere line and feature went, she was the classic Indian type. The black hair and the fine bronze were hers, and the black eyes, brilliant and bold, keen as sword-light, proud; and hers the delicate eagle nose with the thin, quivering nostrils, the high cheek-bones that were not broad apart, and the thin lips that were not too thin. But over all and through all poured the flame of her – the unanalyzable something that was fire

and that was the soul of her, that lay mellow-warm or blazed in her eyes, that sprayed the cheeks of her, that distended the nostrils, that curled the lip, or, when the lip was in repose, that was still there in the lip, the lip palpitant with its presence. (W.P.: 134)

Nonetheless the main virtue of London's women is their internal world, their mind. As in men, in women London's narrator values most their persistence, will-power and their capacity to overcome difficulties. Such is Ruth from W.S. who being pregnant, has to overcome her beloved husband's deadly injury.

(77) [...] Nor did the Indian girl faint or raise her voice in idle wailing, as might many of her white sisters. At his order, she threw her weight on the end of a quickly extemporized handspike, easing the pressure and listening to her husband's groans, while Malemute Kid attacked the tree with his axe. [...] Ruth had received her husband's last wishes and made no struggle. Poor girl, she had learned the lesson of obedience well. From a child, she had bowed, and seen all women bow, to the lords of creation, and it did not seem in the nature of things for woman to resist. [...] (W.S.: 21)

Being courageous, active and generous themselves, these women value most these qualities in men; they can't stand cowards, loafers and greedy people. This is why El-Soo refuses to marry Porportuk; she cannot stand him as he turned hoarding into the aim of his life.

(78) [...] And through the large house moved the figure of Porportuk, ominous, with shaking head, coldly disapproving, paying for it all. Not that he really paid, for he compounded interest in weird ways, and year by year absorbed the properties of Klakee-Nah. [...] (W.P.: 134)

In general, London creates an image of heroic woman, who possesses good qualities, as presented in the stories:

sincerity, frankness and humanity. The narrator seems to present them as the personification of beauty and grace. But woman is a little romanticized, as she is always presented as sublime (elevated), she is as morally as strong as a man and, moreover, she is beautiful and full of stoicism. A woman is first of all a comrade, a friend coming through the danger and sorrow along with a man. She is capable of coming to his rescue at any moment.

But the narrator is reserved when describing the relationship between men and women. In London's stories, love is a feeling possessing high moral standards. It is possible to say that love, in these stories, seems to contribute to the development of humanity and generosity in the characters.

10.1.5 Tragic Fate of Indians

Another important image is the Indian. London dedicates a great part of his work to the "Indian theme," which is connected to the place occupied by the indigenous population of America. By the time the writer started writing, the number of Indians of the USA had diminished significantly. But there were still many of them in Alaska. In his stories London always unfolds the idea of the tragic destiny of the Indian folk, who were subjected to mass destruction; he tells how in a very short period of time only few people of the great tribes are left and even so they are doomed to extinction.

Such is the sad story of the destruction of the Indian folk depicted in L.O.M, which is at the same time the depiction of a white man as the antagonist of the Indian people.

(79) [...] At that time there was more fish in the water than now, and more meat in the forest. [...] And one day came the first white man. [...] And he was weak. [...] And when he was in his full strength he went away, and with him went Noda, daughter to the chief. [...] And that was the beginning. [...] Came a second white man [...]

Came the third white man [...] And more white men came with the years [...] As I say, we were become a weak breed, we Whitefish. We sold our warm skins and furs for tobacco and whiskey and thin cotton things that left us shivering in the cold. And the coughing sickness came upon us, and men and women coughed and sweated through the long nights, and the hunters on trail spat blood upon the snow. [...] (L.O.M.: 74-77)

Some of the Indians, seeing the extinction of their tribes, try to fight the newcomers, but they are too few to manage, hence they die one by one.

The narrator insists on the idea that by attacking the white people, the Indians were protecting their own liberty and right to live. London depicts them as strong and courageous men. He enthusiastically describes their way of life and their customs. According to his stories, the Indians appear before the reader as live people, with their inherent merits and demerits. Among them there are brave people as well as cowards, honest people and liars. And most of the Indian characters are just simple folk, working hard in order to live a normal life.

For instance S.K. is a story, a legend about the force of human intelligence and the triumph of justice, re-established by a teenager Indian, who gains the respect of his tribe by his keenness of wit.

(80) [...] And be it known, now, that the division of that which I kill shall be fair. And no widow nor weak one shall cry in the night because there is no meat, when the strong men are groaning in great pain for that they have eaten overmuch. And in the days to come there shall be shame upon the strong men who have eaten overmuch. I, Keesh, have said it! [...] (S.K.: 83)

The life of the Indians is well reflected in the stories already mentioned, such stories as S.K., L.O.M., W.P.; a reader may also find very bright reflections of Indian life in Law L., L.F. and N.B. Indians are depicted not only as courageous people,

but they are also truthful, honest and people who never break their promises. The writer often shows the Indians' moral superiority over the whites, especially their womenfolk (c.f. (98)). Such is the comparison made by the dying Mason when he speaks about Ruth.

(81) [...] Yes, she 's been a good wife to me, better 'n that other one. Didn't know I 'd been there? Never told you, eh? [...] (W.S.: 17)

On the other hand the narrator also depicts the Indian people as naïve and closed to the innovations brought by the white people. In N.B., where the tribe doesn't believe the story of Nam Bok's adventures, the Indians prefer to consider him as a ghost and make him leave the tribe.

But they can also be very cruel. Like Yakaga and Makamuk from L.F., who torture their captives to death, but again because of their naivety, the protagonist manages to escape the torture (c.f. (154)). In W.P., the naivety and cruelty also go hand in hand, for at the end of the story the old men of the Mackenzie tribe consider Porportuk's cruel action as being justified (c.f. (56)).

Another characteristic feature of the Indians is their obedience to the natural way of life. It is depicted in all the mentioned above stories but it can be seen especially in Law L.; the protagonist accepts being left to die alone; he accepts it and, in the end, he feels ready to meet his death.

10.1.6 Antagonist

The analysis of the heroes would not be complete without the portrait of the antagonist. As a rule he is a chechaquo, a newcomer, who has arrived in search of gold, but in contrast to the hero, the antagonist only looks for his own well-being. The negative personage is always depicted as something foreign, occasional and condemned to die in the free and great North. He is the one for whom the sense of

comradeship and friendship does not exist. For him the main principles of life are strength, rudeness and cruelty. Despite having come to the North, he doesn't want to live according to its rules. The author underlines that such characters are greedy and possessive.

F.C. is one of the best examples of antagonistic characters. One of them is a former office clerk, drawn to the North purely by the opportunity of getting rich. The other one is a romantically-inclined intellectual, who is not going North for the good of his richness but in search of vivid impressions. Weatherbee and Cuthfert are opposites in all except one thing: they are not made for the North. Neither perceives the force of its laws and neither feels the sense of responsibility; nor are they open to job-sharing.

It happens that these moral weaklings are forced to spend the winter together in a shack far away from any human habitation because they are too lazy to make the journey out with their comrades. Face to face with nature, they are "locked out" of civilization. At this moment there emerges that primal factor which – for all their differences – puts the clerk and the aesthete on the same level: their boundless selfishness. Relations between them turn into a competitive struggle – though it is not for profit but for sheer survival. But they do not manage to survive. Stupid and poor death is the destiny of such people.

The same may be said about the protagonist of B.F., who is also the antithesis of London's strong man. The conventional flaw of this character is pride, a mistaken conviction that one is capable of handling destructive situations more easily than he has the right to believe. He flies in the face of the conventional wisdom offered by the "old-timer on Sulphur Creek," thus going against the life-preserving knowledge painfully acquired through longer, more cautious experience. After successfully making the first fire, London's hero, having thought before of the old-timer's warning about the deadly cold, thinks that for the moment the cold of space has been outwitted. And after successfully making a second fire to dry out his leggings and socks he remembers the old-timer again.

(82) [...] He remembered the advice of the old-timer on Sulphur Creek, and smiled. The old-timer had been very serious in laying down the law that no man must travel alone in the Klondike after fifty below. Well, here he was; he had had the accident; he was alone; and he had saved himself. Those old-timers were rather womanish, some of them, he thought. [...] (B.F.: 167)

But as it happens, at his moment of greatest pride he is struck down and through his own actions. At seventy-five below zero, his feet wet and hands freezing, the man is forced once more to build his fire, buried now under a tree's snow avalanche, a result of his mistake in building the fire under a snow-laden spruce.

10.2 Northern Landscapes

If the first impression the reader perceives from the stories is the image of a strong man, the second one is always the scenery that surrounds him. London pays special attention to descriptions of nature. Nature is represented as the interaction of natural force and human being. The image of nature usually blends with that of a strong man. Both of them are splendid and stern in their own way.

[...] Природа в рассказах Лондона – противник человека. В них правильнее выделять не тему природы, а тему человека в борьбе с природой. [...] (Грузинская: 68)

[Nature in London's stories is man's opponent. It is more correct to single out not the theme of nature, but the theme of a man struggling with nature.] (Gruzinskaya: 68)¹²

¹²My translation

The hostility of nature may be represented in different ways. It is the snow that puts out the fire of the freezing traveller (B.F.), the pine tree that hits and kills Mason (W.S.) and of course it is always the outstanding cold.

London describes nature as a frightful, hostile but beautiful force and he dedicates to such descriptions a rather considerable part of his writing. He always gives it heroic traits. The northern nature in his works is always grand and majestic. It is described in an elevated and pathetic way. On the other hand one could say that these descriptions are not self-sufficient. In many cases it plays the role of background.

(83) [...] The Yukon lay a mile wide and hidden under three feet of ice. On top of this ice were as many feet of snow. It was all pure white, rolling in gentle undulations where the ice-jams of the freeze-up had formed. North and south, as far as his eye could see, it was unbroken white, save for a dark hair-line that curved and twisted from around the spruce-covered island to the south, and that curved and twisted away into the north, where it disappeared behind another spruce-covered island [...] (B.F.: 159)

Another very important role of nature description is its interconnection with human lives and destinies. It serves to reflect man's internal world. By means of nature descriptions a reader figures out human force and weakness, bravery and cowardice and other peculiarities, such as a character's statements at a certain moment of the story, for instance the feelings of Malemute Kid, who had to kill his deadly wounded comrade.

(84) [...] At high noon the sun, without raising its rim above the southern horizon, threw a suggestion of fire athwart the heavens, then quickly drew it back. Malemute Kid roused and dragged himself to his comrade's side. He cast one sight upon him. The White Silence seemed to sneer, and a great fear came upon him [...] (W.S.: 21)

A similar impression is produced by the description of landscape in Love L. It transmits the growing sense of loneliness and fear in the character's soul:

(85) Near the horizon the sun was smouldering dimly, almost obscured by formless mists and vapors, which gave an impression of mass and density without outline or tangibility. [...] Everywhere was soft sky-line. The hills were all low-lying, there were no trees, no shrubs, no grasses – naught but a tremendous and terrible desolation that sent fear swiftly dawning into his eyes. [...] (Love L.: 92)

In (85), the protagonist is in a quite bad situation, having also been abandoned by his companion. In parallel with such situations, the sun lacks its shining and the entire landscape presents “a tremendous and terrible desolation.”

Deserts of ice, Great Cold, White Silence, endless Tundra are the kinds of landscapes that linger in a reader's mind for a long time. They reproduce the picture of the mighty and majestic northern nature, depicted in seemingly few but very colourful touches. In his stories London describes nature as frightful, hostile and tragically beautiful and at the same time indifferent. Nature doesn't intend to kill or help the people. It has its own life.

Landscape doesn't play a self-containing role, as a rule it serves as a background for the action. Such are the descriptions of nature at the beginning of B.F., which are used in order to make the reader dip into the atmosphere of the North and transmit the state of the landscape surrounded by the outstanding cold.

(86) [...] North and south, as far as his eye could see, it was unbroken white, save for a dark hair-line that curved and twisted from around the spruce-covered island to the south, and that curved and twisted away into the north, where it disappeared behind another spruce-covered

island. This dark hair-line was the trail – the main trail – that led south five hundred miles to the Chilcoot Pass, Dyea, and salt water; and that led north seventy miles to Dawson, and still on to the north a thousand miles to Nulato, and finally to St. Michael on Bering Sea, a thousand miles and half a thousand more. [...] (B.F.: 159)

Here different expressions and words make this snowy scenery look realistic (three feet of ice, pure white, unbroken white, dark hair-line that curved and twisted...) Yet the interesting peculiarity of the given example (86) is that the reader tends to perceive it as a harsh yet common description of the Northern landscape, but the narrator himself in the following chapter makes the reader realize that this appearance hides threats that are invisible or a careless traveller.

(87) [...] 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 [...] (B.F.: 159)

From this excerpt the first idea of the character's mind occurs, and it is immediately developed by the narrator. (c.f. (127))

The role of landscape is that of being closely connected to the origin of human destiny, such is the description of the White Silence, the phenomenon that affects the doom of those who come to the North. Due to the vivid description, it is possible to perceive and feel all the peculiarities of what the characters of the story go through.

(88) [...] The afternoon wore on, and with the awe, born of the White Silence, the voiceless travellers bent to their work. Nature has many tricks wherewith she convinces man of his finity, – the ceaseless flow of the tides, the fury of the storm, the shock of the earthquake, the long roll of heaven's artillery, – but the most tremendous, the most stupefying of all, is the passive phase of

the White Silence. All movement ceases, the sky clears, the heavens are as brass; the slightest whisper seems sacrilege, and man becomes timid, affrighted at the sound of his own voice. Sole speck of life journeying across the ghostly wastes of a dead world, he trembles at his audacity, realizes that his is a maggot's life, nothing more. Strange thoughts arise unsummoned, and the mystery of all things strives for utterance. And the fear of death, of God, of the universe, comes over him, – the hope of the Resurrection and the Life, the yearning for immortality, the vain striving of the imprisoned essence, – it is then, if ever, man walks alone with God. [...] (W.S.: 14)

London chooses images neatly to describe the White Silence (movement ceases, the slightest whisper seems a sacrilege, man becomes timid, frightened at the sound of his own voice). He calls the Nature – she, hence empowering “her” with the force of some ancient mighty Goddess, while a man himself is compared to a maggot. The writer uses certain stylistic devices that help to emphasize his idea, so that he compares the heavens to brass; and describes the landscape as *ghostly wastes of a dead world*; while a human being is just a *sole speck of life*.

The role of landscape is important for the revelation of the personages' inner characteristics. Besides that, landscape also transmits their mood; in such cases landscape either changes according to the character's state or affects it. In order to illustrate this idea various landscape descriptions are presented. Take for instance the landscape as seen by Imber's eyes in the L.O.M.

(89) [...] He sat close by a window, and his apathetic eyes rested now and again on the dreary scene without. The sky was overcast, and a gray drizzle was falling. It was flood-time on the Yukon. The ice was gone, and the river was up in the town. Back and forth on the main street, in canoes and poling-boats, passed the people that

never rested. Often he saw these boats turn aside from the street and enter the flooded square that marked the Barracks' parade-ground. Sometimes they disappeared beneath him, and he heard them jar against the house-logs and their occupants scramble in through the window. After that came the slush of water against men's legs as they waded across the lower room and mounted the stairs. Then they appeared in the doorway, with doffed hats and dripping sea-boots, and added themselves to the waiting crowd. [...] (L.O.M.: 69)

Here the old Indian sees the world with his tired eyes. For him landscape of a town is very usual and dull. Nothing can excite him. In order to transmit the feelings of the Indian, London chooses such phrases as: dreary scene, overcast sky and gray drizzle. The action of the people on the street is also described as a part of a landscape, – back and forth [...] passed the people that never rested.

Another interesting example of landscape used as a reflection of the internal world and mood of the characters is the one that has already been traced in the previous chapters, namely the landscape representing Nam Bok, and his role in the life of his tribe.

(90) [...] A stray wild-fowl honked somewhere to seaward, and the surf broke limply and hollowly on the sand. A dim twilight brooded over land and water, and in the north the sun smouldered, vague and troubled, and draped about with blood-red mists. The gulls were flying low. The off-shore wind blew keen and chill, and the black-massed clouds behind it gave promise of bitter weather. [...] A shaft of light shot across the dim-lit sea and wrapped boat and man in a splendor of red and gold. Then a hush fell upon the fisherfolk, and only was heard the moan of the off-shore wind and the cries of the gulls flying low in the air. [...] (N.B.: 63)

In N.B. the description of nature serves to reflect Nam Bok's relation to his tribe. On the one hand Nam Bok here is compared to a lonely wild-fowl. On the other, there are several markers that symbolize the sad future of what is going to happen to those who do not accept changes. The writer uses several metaphorical phrases that reflect a dim mood of this situation: dim light brooded over the land, the sun smouldered, vague and troubled about with blood-red mists, black-massed clouds [...] made promise of bitter weather.

In Love L. it is possible to trace the change of landscape according to what happens to the protagonist, so that at the very beginning, when his companion abandons him, the scene seems to turn very sad and frightful. (c.f. 85)

Here the narrator uses the similar metaphorical phrase that can be found in Nam Bok – the sun was smouldering dimly. Besides that, there are several stylistic devices that add to the creation of the mood, like the repetition of the negation: there were no trees, no shrubs, no grasses, – naught but a tremendous and terrible desolation. As one may see, in the very same phrase the description of desolation is also exaggerated, which adds to the creation of a sad and hopeless mood. As the protagonist feels worse, the landscape around him worsens as well.

(91) [...] He awoke chilled and sick. There was no sun. The gray of earth and sky had become deeper, more profound. A raw wind was blowing, and the first flurries of snow were whitening the hilltops. The air about him thickened and grew white while he made a fire and boiled more water. It was wet snow, half rain, and the flakes were large and soggy. [...] (Love L.: 99)

In this description (91) the reader may clearly see and feel everything that the protagonist saw and was going through. At this level the protagonist doesn't separate many characteristics of nature, for him everything is just "the gray of earth and sky." Till one day, when he suddenly wakes up out of the state of unconsciousness.

(92) [...] He awoke in his right mind, lying on his back on a rocky ledge. The sun was shining bright and warm. [...] Below him flowed a wide and sluggish river. [...] Slowly he followed it with his eyes, winding in wide sweeps among the bleak, bare hills, bleaker and barer and lower-lying than any hills he had yet encountered. Slowly, deliberately, without excitement or more than the most casual interest, he followed the course of the strange stream toward the sky-line and saw it emptying into a bright and shining sea. [...] he was confirmed in this by sight of a ship lying at anchor in the midst of the shining sea. [...] (Love L.: 105)

This description has a meaningful function in Love L., since it marks a dramatic change in both landscape and the twist of the plot. He wakes up to the sun, which is shining warmly and the landscape around him is, on one side, the *gray* of earth but on the other side the *bright and shining sea* appears bringing hope to the protagonist.

Very often the nature in London's stories plays the role of antagonist, the opponent of a human. In these cases it is possible to speak about the theme of struggle between man and nature (cf. 9.2.4). In example (53) it is nature itself which does not provide food for the damaged and tired traveller. In such stories as B.F. (c.f. (52)) and W.S. (c.f. (26)), the antagonistic features of nature are first of all expressed in the description of the cold and everything that it implies, such as the breaking of the trail in the W.S.

10.3 Conclusions for Chapter 10

As for character description, in the corpus there are four especially bright character types that can be distinguished from among others: strong man, woman, Indian, antagonist.

The strong man is a hero, always in love with the Northland, which gave him the heroic characteristics and made him the kind of person he is. His appearance reflects the circumstances and the setting he lives in. The description of the hero's appearance in a way corresponds to the description of the Northland itself. Nevertheless, as a rule, the narrator gives little description of strong man's appearance. This character type is often represented through his thoughts and actions. The strong man is always a good friend; he is fair and honest, morally strong, kind to all living things. He does not tend to express his emotions, although he has very strong feelings. The woman has much in common with the strong man. She is first of all a friend and a comrade with a beautiful soul, strong will and an outstanding capacity to overcome problems. To these characteristics London adds physical beauty, which serves to reflect their internal world.

When describing the Indians, in the corpus, the writer underlines the thought about their tragic doom. In the stories under analysis they are depicted as a folk that is about to become extinct. At the same time he shows them as regular people with their positive and negative traits, their strengths and weaknesses. Generally they are very naïve and closed to novelties. At the same time they are extremely cruel in their authentic traditions, which are based on the obedience to the natural laws of life.

The antagonist often appears as the opposite of the strong man. He comes to the North in search of welfare. He may be physically strong, but he is too proud and lacks wisdom and respect for Nature and its laws. This is why he always ends dying in some ridiculous way.

The descriptive features of London's landscapes vary throughout various stories. He uses a great deal the colours grey (when it is not winter) and white. When describing the nature of the North he tends to refer to it as a desert (both of snow or not). The weather moods that prevail are dim and obscure, independently of the season. The majority of the stories are characterized by the extreme cold and extreme difficulty of dealing with the natural force.

Nature is always presented as hostile; in several cases it plays the role of an antagonist. London always underlines its superiority over the society. He sees it as wild, severe but at the same time beautiful, free and sincere. In the stories under analysis it often plays the role of background and is used to show the change of the internal state of the characters.

11 NARRATIVE ENUNCIATION IN JACK LONDON'S STORIES

The narrator represents a basic position in narrative enunciation, as his point of view is the widest. The function and interaction of different text levels of a story are created and guided by the narrator, as a delegate of the author himself/herself. It is his/her point of view that determines and manages everything in a story.

The narrator subordinates the whole structure of a narrative work whether it is represented in his/her proper speech or in entrusted speech. In any case, the whole existence and development of events depend on the narrator's position. In Jack London's stories that are being analysed in this research, the narrator's speech always occupies the major position. More than that, it is an omniscient narrator, who always guides the development of the story, as on the one hand, he recounts the events, states the facts of the story and on the other hand, he describes the setting as well as the internal world of the characters.

Previously it has been noted that, due to the fact that there are two main speech streams, the narrator's and the character's speech, four types of narration may be singled out (c.f. 6.2): *author's narrative (omniscient and entrusted)*, *characters' dialogues*, *interior speech* and *free indirect speech*. In the stories under analysis these types are found, as it will be shown in this section.

Jack London tends to mix various types of enunciation, which makes it rather difficult to systematize the use of the omniscient, entrusted and all other types of narration, as it is very natural for the writer to imbricate these types just as he imbricates the types of sequences (description, argumentation...) that have been described in a previous chapter. (c.f. 8)

The narrator is a mediator between the characters and the readers (receivers). Sometimes the narrator is indicated by the author (general narrator) as a concrete person that tells the story and sometimes this person is not indicated by the author; but still the narrator and the characteristic peculiarity of his speech become apparent in the very manner of speech: global rhythm, choice of epithets, comparisons and other stylistic devices. So the narrator plays the role of an independent that can manifest himself by his manner of telling, describing and expressing his relation towards the characters.

The stories under analysis are modulated by the way they are told, i.e. the narrative enunciation. This is related to the point of view of the addresser, as the narrator and the characters may offer various angles of perception of the same object. As a rule, it is the narrator who organizes these polyphonic effects and the readers (or narratees) identify different views from different characters without attributing them to the narrator, as his views and opinions are explicitly expressed in the narrator's speech. The development of the plot is mainly concentrated here, the characters, time and place of the action are described in the way the narrator sees them. The narrator's speech supplies the narratees with information about his preferences, beliefs, objections and contradictions so that it creates the shape of the narrator's image.

11.1 Types of Narrator and Focalization

In the present section there will be a focus on the analysis of different types of focalization (c.f. 6.2.2 and 6.2.4), which is the point of view from which the narration is told, in the stories under analysis. As it has been already said, there are three basic types of focalization, as formulated by Genette (1972), which are *neutral focalization*, *internal focalization* and *external focalization*.

11.1.1 Neutral Focalization and its Descriptive Function

In what refers to the first type, where narration is un-focalized, Genette himself considered it to be the classical story type with the all-knowing narrator; and Jack London resorts to this type of focalization in the majority of his stories. Take for instance the following extract from W.S.

(93) [...] So **wore the day away**. The river took a great bend, and **Mason headed his team** for the cut off across the narrow neck of land. But **the dogs balked** at the high bank. Again and again, though Ruth and Malemute Kid were shoving on the sled, **they slipped back**. Then came the concerted effort. The miserable creatures, weak from hunger, exerted their last strength. Up – up – **the sled poised** on the top of the bank; but **the leader swung the string of dogs** behind him to the right, fouling Mason's snowshoes. The result was grievous. Mason was whipped off his feet; one of the dogs fell in the traces; and the sled toppled back, dragging everything to the bottom again. [...] (W. S.: 14)

As it may be seen from the given example, the omniscient narrator describes here the set of actions (so wore the day away, they slipped back, the leader swung the string of dogs) and the state of the dogs (miserable creatures, weak from hunger) and situation (exerted their last strength, the result was grievous) at the same time, hence one may say that narration with neutral focalization bears a general descriptive function, which is directed towards transmitting greater content in a laconic way. When the role of descriptive narration increases, the narrator laconically uses speech constructions in order to show the development of action, alternation of phases in the plot progress; he also concretizes and individualizes images of characters, gives their evaluation and motivation of their actions.

There are usually rather short and laconic informative means for transmission of a rather large amount of information. Such

is the example of W.P., where the narrator transmits the story of an Indian girl whose life changes drastically as her brother dies and she has to move in with her father who has led a very peculiar life.

(94) [...] The years passed. **She was eight years old when she entered** the Mission; **she was sixteen**, and the Sisters were corresponding with their superiors in the Order concerning the **sending of El-Soo to the United States** to complete her education, when a man of her own tribe arrived at Holy Cross and had talk with her. [...] It was the mighty curve of the Yukon at Tananaw Station, with the St. George Mission on one side, and the trading post on the other, and midway between the Indian village and a certain **large log house** where lived an old man tended upon by slaves. [...] All this was unusual for a Yukon Indian, but **Klakee-Nah was an unusual Indian**. Not alone did he like to render **inordinate hospitality**, but, what of being a **chief and of acquiring much money**, he was able to do it. In the primitive trading days he had been a power over his people, and he had dealt profitably with the white trading companies. [...] (W.P.: 131-132)

As the narrator describes El-Soo (c.f. also (43)), she is presented as a very intelligent and at the same time talented full-blooded Indian girl. But the narrator also gives a panoramic view of her life and her world. The reader knows that she has lived in a mission for eight years and might have interesting perspectives in the United States. And at the same time the author describes the peculiarities of her father's life, as he was a chief of his tribe, very generous and noble and thus respected by everybody.

In a similar way, with only few traits, London, in his story F.C., manages to describe laconically the pre-story of the protagonists, their character-types and he even gives a hint on the possible development of the story

(95) [...] When the world rang with the tale of Arctic gold, and the lure of the North gripped the heartstrings of men, **Carter Weatherbee** threw up his snug **clerkship**, turned the half of his savings over to his wife, and with the remainder bought an outfit. There was **no romance in his nature**, – the bondage of commerce had crushed all that; he was simply tired of the ceaseless grind, and wished to risk great hazards in view of corresponding returns. [...] He (Percy Cuthfert) was an **ordinary man**, with a bank account as deep as his culture, which is saying a good deal. He had no reason to embark on such a venture, – no reason in the world, **save that he suffered from an abnormal development of sentimentality. He mistook this for the true spirit of romance and adventure.** Many another man has done the like, and **made as fatal a mistake.** [...] (F.C.: 22)

From this short introduction one may get much background information about the characters, as on the one hand a reader finds out that one of them was a clerk who had “no romance in his nature” and another one was a rich but yet ordinary man, as his bank account was, as the narrator ironically states, “as deep as his culture” and that he “suffered from an abnormal development of sentimentality.” On the other hand, the narrator, as it has been mentioned in the previous chapters (c.f. 9.1.6.2, (30)), also gives the reader a hint on the future negative development of events. It is possible to get this idea from such phrases as “like many other fool” and “unluckily for his soul’s welfare” when the narrator speaks about Carter Weatherbee and even more transparent phrases when he speaks about the other protagonist: “Percy Cuthfert’s evil star must have been in the ascendant...” “he mistook this (sentimentality) for the true spirit of romance” and hence made a “fatal mistake.” So that from the given phrases one may clearly understand that nothing good is going to happen in the story and, based on the “fatal mistake,” a reader may even foresee the death of the characters.

11.1.2 Omniscient Narrator and External Focalization

There are various cases when the omniscient narrator does not seem to know everything about the world of the story nor about the inside condition of the characters. In this situation he seems to be watching what is going on in the story from the “outside” so that the reader only gets the perception of what is being under the vision of the narrator. In this case *external focalization* is used, which presupposes that the narrator knows less than the characters and he only tells what he can see or what he has been told.

External focalization allows the narrator to create the image of a strong person with no previous story, for instance in Love L. Here in order to underline the effect produced by the following development of the plot, the narrator begins with the external description of two exhausted travellers. A reader does not know why they are so exhausted or what brought them to that situation; as well as the name of the protagonist is unknown. (c.f. (38))

In example (38) the narrator’s speech appears at the beginning of the story. It reflects the action – the men walking in the rocks– and describes the physical state in which these men were: tired and weak, though well prepared for the journey as they had a riffle and blanket packs. The description of these characters and the way they are introduced into the story immediately create in the reader the sense of tension.

Similar is the example from S.K., a story of a young Indian boy who proved himself to be the wisest hunter of his tribe (c.f. (40)). The peculiarity of this story consists in the fact that it is written in the form of a legend. The marker that establishes the story form is the phrase “so the tale runs.” In the given extract there is the information about the events that happened to Keesh up to the time the story takes place. Hence, here all the background information is received by a

reader, such as his age (13 years old), the story of his father's death, who "came to close grapples with the bear," died but saved his tribe from hunger, and about the way Keesh and his mother were treated after his father's death "were swiftly forgotten and came to live in the meanest of all the igloos." The whole story may be seen as written with external focalization, as the narrator never tells more than he has heard or can observe, hence the reader is not allowed to know the thoughts and feelings of the protagonist.

11.1.3 Borderline Between External and Internal Focalization

In the stories under analysis there is a particular phenomenon when focalization may be perceived as either external or internal depending on the side from which the reader takes a look at what is being described. Such is the example from the L.O.M.

(96) [...] **All Dawson was wrought up** over the affair, and likewise the Yukon-dwellers for a thousand miles up and down. It has been the custom of the land-robbing and sea-robbing Anglo-Saxon to give the law to conquered peoples, and oftentimes this law is harsh. **But in the case of Imber the law for once seemed inadequate and weak.** In the mathematical nature of things, equity did not reside in the punishment to be accorded him. The punishment was a foregone conclusion, there could be no doubt of that; and though it was capital, Imber had **but one life**, while the tale against him was one of scores. **In fact**, the blood of so many was upon his hands that the killings attributed to him did not permit of precise enumeration. [...] They had been whites, **all of them, these poor murdered people**, and they had been slain singly, in pairs, and in parties. [...] (L. O. M.: 64)

The beginning of example (96) is given within the bounds of external focalization, and it serves to create the presence of a certain mystery, take for instance the fact that a reader finds out that “All Dawson was wrought up over the affair.” It should be noted that that this part of the story is being told as if it were observed by the people who live in the North and are impressed by the scandalous case pleaded against Imber, the Indian murderer, and considered that even though “the punishment was a foregone conclusion,” at the same time, for all the deeds of Imber “the law seemed inadequate and weak.”

On the other hand, as the story continues, there appears the sense of seeing the situation on the inside, which is supported by several enunciational markers (in fact, these poor murdered people) that refer to society’s general speech or thoughts. these markers have been underlined in the quoted passage. The following development of the plot contributes to the comprehension that this fragment may be seen as an ordinary omniscient narration, as in the rest of the story, where the true story of Imber is revealed, and hence it is becomes clear that the beginning was not objective towards the protagonist.

11.1.4 Internal Focalization

In his stories, Jack London tends to depict the internal world of his characters by means of making the narrator show what is on their minds. When focalisation is internal, the narrator can only tell what the characters know and hence he is using *internal focalization* by which it is possible to understand the position of the focal character, which is a perceiving subject inside of the story. In the majority of the stories under analysis the narrator may move from one character to another so that one may see the situation from various angles. In W.S. a reader first encounters Ruth’s position.

(97) [...] The woman threw off her gloom at this, and in **her eyes welled up a great love for her**

white lord, – the first white man she had ever seen, – the first man whom she had known to treat a woman as something better than a mere animal or beast of burden. [...] (W.S.: 12)

Example (97) shows that Ruth adores her husband, this feeling is presented through internal focalization, which is clearly marked by the pronouns “her” and “she” as the Indian woman looks at her husband, “her white lord” and “the first white man she had ever seen” and who treated women well.

Later, in the same story, the position of Malemute Kid is dealt with, which reappears in several moments of the story.

(98) [...] The sudden danger, the quick death, – how often had Malemute Kid faced it! The pine needles were still quivering as he gave his commands and sprang into action. Nor did the Indian girl faint or raise her voice in idle wailing, as might many of her white sisters. At his order, she threw her weight on the end of a quickly extemporized handspike, easing the pressure and listening to her husband's groans, while Malemute Kid attacked the tree with his axe. The steel rang merrily as it bit into the frozen trunk, each stroke being accompanied by a forced, audible respiration, the "Huh!" "Huh!" of the woodsman. At last the Kid laid **the pitiable thing that was once a man** in the snow. But **worse than his comrade's pain was the dumb anguish in the woman's face, the blended look of hopeful, hopeless query.** Little was said; those of the Northland are early taught the futility of words and the inestimable value of deeds. With the temperature at sixty-five below zero, a man cannot lie many minutes in the snow and live. So the sled-lashings were cut, and the sufferer, rolled in furs, laid on a couch of boughs. Before him roared a fire, built of the very wood which wrought the mishap.[...] (W.S.: 16)

Example (98) starts with Malemute Kid's FIS, which is marked by the exclamation mark. Then the narrator continues his

focalization from Kid's position, so that one may see him thinking about Mason, who is now just "the pitiable thing that was once a man" and about the "anguish" in Ruth's face that made him feel even worse than about "his comrade's pain."

On the other hand there are four stories where the narrator tends to stick to the same character throughout the whole story, thus using fixed internal focalization. Such is the example from the following fragment in *Love L.* where the narrator transmits the character's reasoning about his future actions (c.f. 125)

In *Love L.* the narrator always tells the events as seen from the protagonist's position, so that a reader may understand the thoughts, the knowledge (he knew he would come [...] to the shore of a little lake) and the plans (to cross the divide, to find a cache and flour and some other food) of the protagonist. This means that fixed internal focalization takes place. It is generally common in the stories under analysis since, besides *Love L.*, it can be observed in *Law L.*, *B.F.*, *L.F.* as well. All these stories are based on fixed internal focalization where the narrator never deserts his post as connected to the same character. In the case of *Law L.*, this character is old Indian Koskoosh, in *L.F.* – Subienkow and in *B. F.* it is the protagonist who is never called by the name.

The peculiarity of the listed stories, based on internal focalization, is that all of them, at a certain moment, change the focalizing actor. But this change is secondary as it occupies a minor position in the stories. The only exception is *Law L.*, which is always seen as a type of interior monologue reproduced through the narrator's speech, In the case of a story as *L.F.*, the narrator sticks to Subienkow's vision during the whole story, but at the very end, when the protagonist tricks Makamuk into killing him quickly, without torture, the narrator takes Makamuk's position. (c.f. (154))

The grammatical components indicating the subject of the internal focalization are the same for these two characters; it is still marked by the pronouns he/him/ his as it was when the

subject of focalization was different (Subienkow). Only the change of gender results in a change of pronoun (cf. (97)).

Nonetheless, a discourse change may be produced in particular episodes. One of them appears in *Love L.*, as here the slide of focalization is connected with the appearance of a research group that finds the protagonist and hence the narration slides to the point of view of the scientists (c.f. (63))

The scientists of the boat are being referred to as “they” and the protagonist named “it,” for his poor physical state. This use of “it” shows that the protagonist is being described as seen by the scientists, from their position and the contrast produces an ambiguous effect: it is a naturalistic manifestation of the traveller’s state. The character then appears through the eyes of new people who have no idea about what has happened to the protagonist, though we, the readers, do know his story and hence understand him. Therefore, these indifferent and cold discourses produce a shocking effect on the reader. Besides, there is also a change parallel to the change of focalization. Sentences are shorter and the repetitive use of “it” makes the discourse sound ironic and it shapes a quite particular dénouement.

Rather similar is the situation in *B.F.*, as the story is basically focused on the protagonist, but there are several moments when the internal focalization slides from him to the dog so that two different successive internal focalizations are encountered; but for each of the “characters” (if the dog is included) there is also external focalisation, as each of them sees the other but cannot read his mind. Finally, it is because of the narrator’s omniscience that a reader has access into both characters’ mind and follows their sight.

(99) [...] **He would kill** the dog and bury his hands in the warm body until the numbness went out of them. Then **he could build** another fire. He spoke to the dog, calling it to him; but **in his voice was a strange note of fear that frightened the animal, who had never known the man to speak in such way before.**

Something was the matter, and **its suspicious nature sensed danger – it knew not what danger**, but somewhere, somehow, in its brain arose an apprehension of the man. It flattened its ears down at the sound of the man's voice, and its restless, hunching movements and the liftings and shiftings of its forefeet became more pronounced; but **it would not come** to the man. He got on his hands and knees and crawled toward the dog. This unusual posture **again excited suspicion**, and the animal sidled mincingly away. [...] (B.F.: 171)

The peculiarity of these two examples also consists in the fact that the very same extracts may be considered both examples of internal and external focalization. In example (99) the marks of the dog's internal focalization (the animal, who had never known the man to speak in such a way, sensed danger, it knew not what danger, it would not come) can be seen both as focused on the dog, which is surprised and alerted by the behaviour of its owner and vice versa.

The same logic may be applied to B.W., as the situations described in this story may be seen from the inside and from the outside at the same time.

(100) [...] he went out of view. Wolf waited for him to reappear. **He waited** a long minute, silently, quietly, without movement, as though turned to stone – withal stone quick with eagerness and desire. **He barked once, and waited. Then he turned and trotted back** to Walt Irvine. He sniffed his hand and dropped down heavily at his feet, watching the trail where it curved empty from view.

The tiny stream slipping down the mossy-lipped stone seemed suddenly to increase the volume of its gurgling noise. Save for the meadow-larks, there was no other sound. The great yellow butterflies drifted silently through the sunshine and lost themselves in the drowsy shadows. Madge gazed triumphantly at her husband.

A few minutes later **Wolf got upon his feet. Decision and deliberation marked his movements. He did not glance** at the man and woman. His eyes were fixed up the trail. **He had made up his mind. They knew it. And they knew**, so far as they were concerned, that the ordeal had just begun. [...] (B.W. 130)

The given extract may be seen from various angles, as on the one hand it can be treated as a simple omniscient narration that describes step by step the behaviour of the characters (Skiff Miller left, Wolf waited, he barked, he sniffed Irvine's hand, he made up his mind and ran after his old master). But, on the other hand, it may be seen from the point of view of a couple that observes the behaviour of their dog and does not know what is going on in its mind till the very end of the extract, where a clear marker of internal focalization is encountered – “they knew it.” The complexity and imbrication of the characters' views is the reason why in London's stories it is rather difficult to single out external focalization in its pure form.

In the very same story and place there is an even more complicated mix of imbrication of focalizations, which is rather characteristic for the writer as here he manages to transmit the thoughts of the dog (c.f. (60)).

(101) [...] He backed away from her and began writhing and twisting playfully, curvetting and prancing, half rearing and striking his fore paws to the earth, struggling with all his body, from the wheedling eyes and flattening ears to the wagging tail, to express the thought that was in him and that was denied him utterance.

This, too, he soon abandoned. **He was depressed by the coldness of these humans who had never been cold before.** No response could he draw from them, no help could he get. They did not consider him. They were as dead. [...] (B.W.: 129)

This description of the dog's behaviour may seem a simple omniscient narration; nevertheless, as in example (100), it may be considered as a case of Walt and Madge's internal focalization, but the writer uses the phrase "these humans," which personalises the speech as if it were said by a dog, hence the dog's internal focalization is observed.

11.2 Polyphonic Enunciation

Story is, by definition, a space of polyphony, and that is obvious due to the fact that in each story there is, at least, the combination of two kinds of voices: the voice of the narrator and the voices of the characters.

We have already noticed before that in the majority of the stories under analysis, besides the narrator's, there is somebody else's opinion about some depicted subject, which helps to present this subject from different angles. The use of these various points of view creates polyphonic effects in these stories. Such is the example from B. F., which is based on omniscient narration with several interruptions of other types of narrative enunciation. It is the most natural way used by the writer. The omniscient narrator tells a story and mixes it with dialogues and thoughts of his personages.

(102) [...] He pictured the boys finding his body next day. Suddenly **he found himself with them**, coming along the trail and looking for himself. And, still with them, he came around a turn in the trail and found himself lying in the snow. [...] When **he got back to the States he could tell** the folks what real cold was. He drifted on from this to a vision of the old-timer on Sulphur Creek. He could see him quite clearly, warm and comfortable, and smoking a pipe. [...] (B.F.: 174-175)

The given passage is a characteristic example of a consecutive omniscient narration that takes place in the whole story and is mixed with entrusted narrative and FIS. The first sentence of example (102) adopts the form of

omniscient narration; it introduces the following entrusted narrative where the author refers to the protagonist in the third person but at the same a reader sees the world with his eyes (he found himself with them, he came around a turn and found himself lying, he could tell the folks, he could see him).

Below two different types of narration are going to be analysed (entrusted speech, alternation of narrators, character's speech and FIS) that create polyphonic effects.

11.2.1 Entrusted Narrative

It is very natural for Jack London to entrust some imaginary character with the task of telling a story so that the perception of reality is being transferred to a foreign consciousness, and then to a foreign system of rules and values. The description and interpretation of what is going on in the story is expounded from the character's point of view. This phenomenon, as it has been already said in the previous chapter (cf. 6.2.3), is called *entrusted narrative*. The character tells a story in the first person; it may be an anonymous narrator, which differs from the omniscient narration in the manner of presentation. To some extent it takes place in all the stories under analysis.

In L.O.M. the third person entrusted narration is represented by the thoughts of the Indian, where the narrator is confused with the character and his situation; and the former has the same perceptions and feelings as the latter (c.f. (89)).

The beginning of the given extract is expressed through omniscient narration, though the phrase "his apathetic eyes" moves the reader to a different type of narration and it is possible to see everything that happens on the street out of the windows through the eyes of the old Indian. So that the entrusted narrative here is expressed through clear markers (he saw these boats, they disappeared beneath him, he heard them).

The third person is the type of entrusted narrative that mainly occurs in the stories under analysis, though to a different extent. The stories are basically an inseparable mix of omniscient and third person entrusted narration and this may be considered as a characteristic device of the narrator's enunciation. In some stories one may observe just some traces of it, such as in the following abstract from N.B.

(103) [...] And Bask-Wah-Wan sopped a **particularly** offensive chunk of salmon into the oil and passed it fondly and dripping to her son.

In despair, when premonitory symptoms warned him that his stomach was not so strong as of old he filled his pipe and struck up a smoke. [...] (N-B.: 51)

Here an omniscient narrator tells the story; but elements of entrusted narrative (particularly offensive chunk of salmon, In despair, when the premonitory symptoms warned him) are used in order to bring the reader closer to understanding the protagonist's perception of the world.

As it has been said in previous chapters, the entrusted narrative can also be presented in the first person. (c.f. 6.2.3.1) In the stories under analysis it is difficult to single out the first person entrusted narrative in its pure state as it always coincides with the form of a dialogue. Such is the example from L.O.M. where the old Indian, Imber, tells his story:

(104) [...] "And then the two dead white men we cast into the river. And of the canoe, which was a very good canoe, we made a fire, and a fire, also, of the things within the canoe. But first we looked at the things, and they were pouches of leather which we cut open with our knives. And inside these pouches were many papers, like that from which thou has read, O Howkan, with markings on them which we marvelled at and could not understand. [...]"

A whisper and buzz went around the courtroom when Howkan finished interpreting the affair of

the canoe, and one man's voice spoke up: "That was the lost '91 mail, Peter James and Delaney bringing it in and last spoken at Le Barge by Matthews going out." [...]

"There be little more," Imber went on slowly. "It be there on the paper, the things we did. We were old men, and we did not understand. [...]" (L.O.M.: 79-80)

The author uses quotation marks that establish dialogue as a form of narration; there are some interruptions of the hearers, but the Indian does not show any reaction to these interruptions, so that his speech may be seen as a separate story told in the first person.

In S.K., the omniscient narrator coincides with the entrusted narrator, as this story is written in the form of a legend and hence it requires a special way of narrating. Thus it is possible to say that in the given story anonymous entrusted speech is observed as long as even though the narrator does not openly express his point of view, the way in which this story is told presupposes that the story is told by some factotum (c.f. (1)).

The language used in the present extract does not sound natural but lofty and solemn because of the use of inversion (so long ago did he live), repetition (remember his name, his name and the tale; tell to their children and their children's children) and exaggeration (down to the end of time), which will be analysed precisely in the following chapters (cf. 11 and 12), as it presupposes to be narrated not by a simple omniscient narrator but by a folk tale narrator. Since it is not known whether the story is based on a real legend or it is just a creation of the writer it can be considered as anonymous entrusted speech.

11.2.2 Inserted Stories. Alternations of Narrators

As it has been shown in the previous subsection (c.f. 9.2.6), London sometimes inserts secondary stories into the main one. When the story slides from the main narrator to the character the first person entrusted narrative takes place. In L.O.M. this type of entrusted narrative is observed, which is represented in the narration of the Indian:

(105) [...] "**And I, Imber, pondered** upon these things, watching the while the Whitefish, and the Pellys, and all the tribes of the land, perishing as perished the meat of the forest. Long I pondered. **I talked** with the shamans and the old men who were wise. **I went apart** that the sounds of the village might not disturb me, and **I ate no meat** so that my belly should not press upon me and make me slow of eye and ear. **I sat long and sleepless** in the forest, wide-eyed for the sign, my ears patient and keen for the word that was to come. And **I wandered alone** in the blackness of night to the river bank, where was wind-moaning and sobbing of water, and where **I sought wisdom** from the ghosts of old shamans in the trees and dead and gone. [...] (L.O.M.: 78)

From this example one may see clear markers of the first person narration introduced into the story (I, Imber... I talked... I went apart...).

Very similar is the use of entrusted speech in N.B.; here after a part of omniscient narration, the protagonist starts telling the story of his adventures and even though he is regularly interrupted by the other Indians, his story may be considered to be the entrusted first person narration.

(106) [...] "**I had little strength left in me** and could not run away. **So I was taken on board** and water was poured down my throat and good food given me. Twice, **my brothers, you have seen** a white man. These men were all white and as many as have I fingers and toes. And when I saw they were full of kindness, **I took heart, and I resolved to bring away with me report of all**

that I saw. And they taught me the work they did, and gave me good food and a place to sleep.

"And day after day we went over the sea, and each day the head man drew the sun down out of the sky and made it tell where we were. And when the waves were kind, we hunted the fur seal **and I marvelled much**, for always did they fling the meat and the fat away and save only the skin." [...] (N.B.: 56)

In this story it is much more difficult to single out entrusted narration due to the fact that the protagonist is interrupted all the time and, more than that, these interruptions make his manner of narrating very unsteady, and he skips from one point to another. Nonetheless, there are some definite parts, like the example (106) just given, which clearly corresponds to the first person entrusted narration.

11.2.3 Characters' Speech

Now that the use of the narrator's speech in the stories has been analysed, the attention should be drawn to the character's speech as well. As it has been said previously (c.f. 6.2.3.2), the characters' speech can be dialogic, interior or it can be manifested by free indirect speech (or FIS).

11.2.3.1 Peculiarities of Dialogical Speech

The use of the character's speech in stories creates the notion of so-called dramatized narration, where the story is "represented" by the exchanges between the characters and hence creates the impression of live conversation. (Adam-Lorda, 1999: 19-22)

When dramatized narration increases, adding dynamism to the story, the narrator does not describe the feelings and worries of the characters, but quotes their speech, which

comes to the forefront; the narration moves from the narrator's remarks to the statements of the characters.

(107) [...] "How long since that basket-sled, with three men and eight dogs, passed?" he asked.

"An even two days ahead. Are you after them?"

"Yes; my team. Run them off under my very nose, the cusses. 've gained two days on them already, – pick them up on the next run."

"Reckon they 'll show spunk?" asked Belden, in order to keep up the conversation, for Malemute Kid already had the coffee-pot on and was busily frying bacon and moose-meat.

The stranger significantly tapped his revolvers.

"When 'd yeh leave Dawson?"

"Twelve o'clock."

"Last night?" – as a matter of course.

"To-day." [...] (M.T.: 4)

This dialogue is perceived as a mimesis of this part of the plot. Constructions of direct speech preserve the authenticity of live speech through short sentences and various stylistic peculiarities, which will be analysed in the following chapter.

We should also note that the narrator demonstrates the feelings and worries of his characters through their speech, but also adds some comments and explicative remarks. In the author's comments there are many verbs denoting movement, gestures, physical actions and mimics. Let's observe the following extract from W.P., where the stage directions include such verbs as "make no movement," "go on carefully," "crackle the paper," "raise voice slightly" and others.

(108) [...] "Do you remember the two things I told you in the spring?" El-Soo asked, **making no movement** to accompany him.

"My head would be full with the things women say, did I heed them," he answered.

"I told you that you would be paid," El-Soo **went on carefully**. "And I told you that I would never be your wife."

"But that was before the bill of sale." Porportuk **crackled the paper** between his fingers inside the pouch. "I have bought you before all the world. You belong to me. You will not deny that you belong to me."

"I belong to you," El-Soo **said steadily**.

"I own you."

"You own me."

Porportuk's voice rose slightly and triumphantly. "As a dog, own you."

"As a dog you own me," El-Soo **continued calmly**. "But, Porportuk, you forget the thing I told you. Had any other man bought me, I should have been that man's wife. I should have been a good wife to that man. Such was my will. But my will with you was that I should never be your wife. Wherefore, I am your dog." [...] (W.P.: 149-150)

11.2.3.2 Interior Speech in Stories

When materialization of interior speech, thoughts and interior worries of a character takes place, the narrator refers to the description of what the character thinks, i.e. the interior speech of a character. Among the stories under analysis

there are two stories where the interior speech is the pivot of the story: Law L. and L.F.; there both interior monologues adopt the form of the third person singular. The common denominator of interior speech here is the fact that both protagonists are speaking to themselves right at the moment of narration and, while they are doing it, the development of the plot is suspended. Take for instance the following extract from Law L.

(109) [...] The picture, like all of youth's impressions, was still strong with him, and his dim eyes watched the end played out as vividly as in that far-off time. Koskoosh marvelled at this, for in the days which followed, when **he was a leader of men and a head of councillors, he had done great deeds and made his name a curse in the mouths of the Pellys**, to say naught of the strange white man he had killed, knife to knife, in open fight..[...] (Law L.: 45)

In example (109) the memories of a dying old Indian can be observed as seen from the inside although they are told by the narrator in the third person. From this example a reader finds out that in his youth, Koskoosh was a prominent leader; the opposite tribe hated him for his greatness, and once he had killed a white man.

The whole story L.F. is also based on the memories of a protagonist, Subienkow.

(110) [...]The years had passed. **He had served** under Tebenkoff when Michaelovski Redoubt was built. **He had spent** two years in the Kuskokwim country. Two summers, in the month of June, **he had managed** to be at the head of Kotzebue Sound. Here, at this time, the tribes assembled for barter; here were to be found spotted deerskins from Siberia, ivory from the Diomedes, walrus skins from the shores of the Arctic, strange stone lamps, passing in trade from tribe to tribe, no one knew whence, and, once, a hunting-knife of English make; and here, **Subienkow knew**, was the school in which to learn geography. For

he met Eskimos from Norton Sound, from King Island and St. Lawrence Island, from Cape Prince of Wales, and Point Barrow. [...] (L.F.: 179)

The narrator presents the image of the character through his thoughts and memories and this is how the reader gets to know a man whose life was full of crime and cruelty and is about to finish in a very dramatic way. His interior speech is always marked by the pronouns he or his (he had served, he had spent years, he managed, he met).

11.2.4 Free Indirect Speech: the Imbrication of Voices

Free Indirect Speech (FIS) (c.f. 6.2.3.4) is also frequent in London's stories (except in S.K., written in the form of a legend). This form of reported speech, as it has been explained, consists in a mix of the narrator's speech (third person marks) and character's speech (clues of the first person). FIS performs different functions in London's narrative discourse.

11.2.4.1 Retrospective Function of FIS

Through FIS, memories and reasoning of the characters can be transmitted; the narration takes the form of reflection and retrospection, and the transition from present to past is realized through the character's mind with an echo of his reflexive activity.

In such stories as L.F. and Law L., since they include the protagonists' memories, there occurs a concentration of life material that embraces all the past life of the characters. The role of FIS in these stories grows and takes over the function of narration and description. In this case, FIS suspends the plot development in the present and leads the narration, often accompanied by description, into the past. For example, in

Law L., one may observe the old Indian observing everything that happens around him (c.f. (41)).

The FIS of the given extract is especially meaningful, as here the reader may feel the traces of condemnation by the old Koskoosh of Sit-cum-to-ha's behaviour. Here it is possible to observe the solidarity of the narrator with the old Indian; in the case of Law L., the narrator's voice unites with his characters.

After this short but meaningful introduction, the narrator gives an explanation of what is about to happen: according to the traditions of his tribe, Koskoosh is about to be left alone; and after he says goodbye to his son, the old Indian is left all alone and this is when he starts reflecting and reminiscing.

(111) [...] He did not complain. It was the way of life, and it was just. He had been born close to the earth, close to the earth had he lived, and the law thereof was not new to him. It was the law of all flesh. Nature was not kindly to the flesh. She had no concern for that concrete thing called the individual. Her interest lay in the species, the race. This was the deepest abstraction old Koskoosh's barbaric mind was capable of, but he grasped it firmly. He saw it exemplified in all life. The rise of the sap, the bursting greenness of the willow bud, the fall of the yellow leaf – in this alone was told the whole history. But one task did Nature set the individual. **Did he not perform it, he died. Did he perform it, it was all the same, he died.** [...] There was the time of the Great Famine, when the old men crouched empty-bellied to the fire, and let fall from their lips dim traditions of the ancient day when the Yukon ran wide open for three winters, and then lay frozen for three summers.[...] Then the winter came, but with it there were no caribou. [...] But the caribou did not come, and it was the seventh year, and the rabbits had not replenished, and the dogs were naught but bundles of bones. And through the long darkness the children wailed and died, and the women, and the old men; and not one in ten of the tribe lived to meet the sun when it came

back in the spring. **That was a famine!** [...]. (Law L.: 43)

In example (111) there is interior monologue where the protagonist first talks with himself about life, Nature and its rules; he thinks that it “had no concern” for individuals, and that the “interest lay in species, the race.” After that, he gets deep into his memories, when he remembers the “Great Famine” that lasted for seven years, when “he had lost his mother,” “the children wailed and died,” “and not one in ten lived to meet the sun.” The extract ends by a FIS utterance, where the narrator assumes the exclamation “*That was a famine!*” which is emphasized by the italicised verb “was” (c.f. 11.1.1), which gives emotional tone to the utterance and to the Indian’s memories in general as well.

It is worth mentioning that these reminiscences stop the development of the plot till the end of the story, when the protagonist listens carefully, in the hope that his son will come back for him, and hears the wolves.

The same functions appears in L.F., where first a man who is about to be tortured to death is observed and then the development of this story is suspended by his reminiscences.

(112) [...] It was the end. Subienkow had travelled a long trail of bitterness and horror, homing like a dove for the capitals of Europe, and here, farther away than ever, in Russian America, the trail ceased. He sat in the snow, arms tied behind him, waiting the torture. [...] **He strove to think of other things**, and began reading back in his own life. . **He remembered his mother and his father**, and the little spotted pony, and the French tutor who had taught him dancing and sneaked him an old worn copy of Voltaire. **Once more he saw** Paris, and dreary London, and gay Vienna, and Rome. **And once more he saw** that wild group of youths who had dreamed, even as he, the dream of an independent Poland with a king of Poland on the throne at Warsaw. **Ah, there it was that the long trail began.** [...] (L.F.: 175)

The structure of this example is very similar to the previous one as here a reader is first introduced into the mind of the protagonist and then, as he “strove to think of other things,” his memories are revealed (he remembered his mother and father, once more he saw Paris, and once more he saw that wild group) that end with a FIS utterance marked by the interjection “ah.”

The narration suspended by FIS is in many cases expressed by constructions in direct speech, thus creating the next expansion of the narration: FIS used after direct speech takes the narration away from the present, expressed by constructions in direct speech, to the past, but the direct speech, which follows FIS, re-establishes the present in the narration.

When FIS takes a reflexive-retrospective form, the memories represented may be interwoven with reflections of a character that may be of a general type, such as Kid’s reasoning about his comrade’s coming death in W.S.

(113) [...] The sudden danger, the quick death – how often had Malemute Kid faced it! [...] But now he hesitated. For five years, shoulder to shoulder, on the rivers and trails, in the camps and mines, facing death by field and flood and famine, had they knitted the bonds of their comradeship. So close was the tie that he had often been conscious of a vague jealousy of Ruth, from the first time she had come between. And now it must be severed by **his own hand**.

Though he prayed for a moose, **just one moose**, all game seemed to have deserted the land, and nightfall found the exhausted man crawling into camp, light-handed, heavy-hearted. Uproar from the dogs and shrill cries from Ruth hastened him. [...] (W.S.: 19)

The example given begins with FIS, which shows the hopeless bitterness of the protagonist who has just watched

his friend being crashed by the tree. After the FIS he reasons himself about what is to be done next and the narrator's internally focalized speech turns to the entrusted speech, which is marked by the following phrases "and now it must be severed by his own hand" and "he prayed for a moose, just one moose."

Another bright example of this reflexive type of FIS is the following extract from F.C.

(114) [...] Beyond his bleak sky-line there stretched vast solitudes, and beyond these still vaster solitudes. There were no lands of sunshine, heavy with the perfume of flowers. Such things were only old dreams of paradise. The sunlands of the West and the spicelands of the East, the smiling Arcadias and blissful Islands of the Blest, – **ha! ha!** His laughter split the void and shocked him with its unwonted sound. There was no sun. This was the Universe, dead and cold and dark, and he its only citizen. **Weatherbee?** At such moments Weatherbee did not count. He was a Caliban, a monstrous phantom, fettered to him for untold ages, the penalty of some forgotten crime. [...] (F.C.: 32)

Here the reflections about the world surrounding the character and the lack of existence of anything else are observed. This reflection is interrupted by his own dialogical exclamation "ha! ha!", which lies on the border with FIS, as it has no marks of a dialogue, but still the narrator claims that "his laughter split the void and shocked him (Cuthfert)"; this is why one may suppose that this "ha! ha!" was pronounced. A clearer example of FIS is given later in the same example, "Weatherbee?." By asking this question Cuthfert debates with himself whether he is the only citizen of the universe or he should count his companion as well.

The reflection may also be of a particular evaluative type, for instance, about one's personality, certain deeds, other people and their deeds and so on. In L.F. the protagonist not only remembers his life, as it has been showed in example (7), but

also ponders about the reasons of what has brought him to the situation where he encounters himself at the moment of narration (c.f. (19)).

Through his interior monologue, Subienkow remembers and analyses what happened in the last days of his life that has led him to the present situation. Here appears FIS, marked by the interjection “well,” which the protagonist uses in order to sum up all the discourses he has had with himself.

Thereby, FIS in the reflexive-retrospective narration takes upon itself the narrative and descriptive function, so that thanks to it a reader finds out about the appearance and personality of a character, their motives and the objectives of their deeds. The narrator speaks together with the character, mainly expressing disagreement, and, sometimes, agreement (as in the case of Koskoosh in *Law L.* (c.f. (111))).

11.2.4.2 Dramatizing Function of FIS

Besides the reflexive function of FIS, in the stories under analysis there is dramatized narration, such as the last paragraph from *Law L.* (c.f. (62)).

The protagonist asks himself about the use of living, and this is demonstrated by the question marks, so that the close connection between dialogue and narration can be seen. This connection leads to the intensification of the expression at the expense of the intense dramatic effect of the characters' utterances in FIS.

In example (112), the protagonist talks with himself about the tortures of his companion and those that await himself after his companion dies. FIS here appears at the beginning of the extract as a question “Why didn't Ivan die” and at the end, as an exclamatory interjection “ah!”

Another particular case of dramatizing FIS rather characteristic for the writer may be observed in *Love L.*

(115) [...] He followed the trail of the other man who dragged himself along, and soon came to the end of it – a few fresh-picked bones where the soggy moss was marked by the foot-pads of many wolves. He saw a squat moose-hide sack, mate to his own, which had been torn by sharp teeth. He picked it up, though its weight was almost too much for his feeble fingers. Bill had carried it to the last. **Ha! ha!** He would have the laugh on Bill. He would survive and carry it to the ship in the shining sea. His mirth was hoarse and ghastly, like a raven's croak, and the sick wolf joined him, howling lugubriously. The man ceased suddenly. **How could he have the laugh on Bill if that were Bill; if those bones, so pinky-white and clean, were Bill?** [...] (Love L.: 108)

In the given excerpt a reader observes how the protagonist finds the remains of his companion, who abandoned him at the beginning of the story. His feelings are strongly manifested through the entrusted narrative (he would have the laugh in Bill. He would survive and carry it to the ship in the shining sea), which is twice emphasized by the use of FIS, first by the exclamatory interjection “Ha! Ha!” and then by the rather extended question “How could he have the laugh on Bill if that were Bill, if those bones, so pinky-white and clean, were Bill?”

The dramatizing function also appears in F.C.

(116) [...] Hark! The wind-vane must be surely spinning. No; a mere singing in his ears. That was all, – a mere singing. The ice must have passed the latch by now. More likely the upper hinge was covered. Between the moss-chinked roof-poles, little points of frost began to appear. **How slowly they grew!** No; not so slowly. There was a new one, and there another. **Two – three – four;** they were coming too fast to count. There were two growing together. And there, a third had joined them. Why, there were no more spots. They had run together and formed a sheet. [...] (F.C.: 38)

According to the structure of this example and its vocabulary, FIS may be considered as a whole. This extract begins with the onomatopoeic “Hark!” as reproduced in the mind of Percy Cuthfert, and is followed by his reasoning about the origin of the sound. Here the narrator manages to transmit the peculiarities of the thought process of dying Percy Cuthfert, who is lying on the floor and watching the appearance of “points of frost.” The way he thinks about them takes the form of interior dialogue, but at the same time the narrator is always present as a sort of witness, which can be considered one of the brightest examples of dramatizing FIS.

11.3 Conclusions for Chapter 11

To sum it all, it is always the narrator who is in control of the stories. In all twelve stories the omniscient narrator is encountered, who is in charge of organizing the plot, controls and recounts the development of events. He is also the one responsible for the description of the setting and, in many cases, for the transmission of the characters’ thoughts.

In what refers to the appearance of various types of focalization, neutral focalisation appears especially in descriptions. Hence, the neutral focalization is the most used focalization-type. The peculiarities of this kind of focalisation are, on the one hand, the general narration and description, and on the other hand compacting a greater quantity of information. More than that, there are two stories (W.S., F.C.) where the narrator uses neutral focalization in order to express his own thoughts and feelings.

Neutral focalisation may often slide to internal focalization, as the narration tends to represent the positions of various characters in one and the same story. At some point this phenomenon occurs in all stories.

External focalization is not frequent in London’s stories. It appears in appropriate measure only in one story, S.K.

Nevertheless, there is a very particular phenomenon of imbrication of external and internal focalizations that may produce a strong effect.

In what refers to the way different points of view are presented, in the stories with only one character, some other point of view is also presented, like the dog in B.F., the Indians in L.F. or the scientists on a boat in Love L. As a general strategy in the corpus these other participants appear at the end, except in one story (F.C.), where the secondary characters are introduced at the beginning; this strategy allows the narrator to create a particular atmosphere and to give an evaluation of the protagonists, but, after that, they disappear, so that the story continues on the basis of the internal focalization of the protagonists.

The stories are very rich in polyphonic enunciation, which produces effects of various types. The author's narrative is closely connected with the detailed elaboration of the character's image. Narration and description are always guided by the specificity of this image and the approximation to the character.

This is why together with the omniscient narration, in the stories under analysis there also appears the entrusted narrative, especially the mix of omniscient and third person entrusted narration, which takes place in the majority of the stories (except for S.K). Entrusted narrative implies internal focalization. But internal focalization does not imply entrusted speech.

The character's speech is present in all stories. On the one hand, there is a very strong connection between dialogue and narration. This leads to the enforcement of the author's narration thanks to the tense dramatic effect of the character's speech in direct speech constructions. On the other hand, there are two stories, (Law L., L.F.); in these stories the interior speech occupies the major position and helps to transmit dramatic tension in the internal world of the protagonists.

The writer uses FIS to a great extent. It takes place in the majority of the stories. Through FIS, the memories and reasoning of the character are transmitted in the reflexive narration type. FIS then shows the character, the state, and the motives of the personages. In dramatized narration a strong connection of dialogue and narration may be observed. This enforces the expressiveness of the narrator's speech. This is carried out thanks to the tense dramatic effect of the personages' utterances. There are cases where the narrator connects with the character through FIS, speaks together with him and assumes his position (Law L., L.F.). But in other cases, the narrator disagrees with the character or even ironizes him.

In Jack London's stories, finally, there is a great diversity of forms, voices and points of view (c.f. 6.2.1). Inside the restricted but amazing world of the North, London manages to create a polyphonic novel, as described by Bakhtin, where different social levels are put on the same layer: "all were considered equal during carnival. Here, in the town square, a special form of free and familiar contact reigned among people who were usually divided by the barriers of caste, property, profession, and age" (1984a: 10).

12 TROPES AND STYLE IN LONDON'S DISCOURSE

Jack London took much care in editing his stories, which display a great number of stylistic devices. They make the stories more colourful and emotional, thus enabling the audience to perceive the author's attitude to issues and things he wanted to emphasize.

The short-story genre that Jack London chose to write predetermines to a certain extent the grammatical order and vocabulary of his discourse. But in this case the laconic tone of the stories is associated with special expressiveness of language thanks to the use of particular expressive means and stylistic devices.

In these stories complex syntactic constructions are found, an abundance of phraseological units and frequent use of figurative meanings, as well as the tendency to transmit the characters' phonetic peculiarities of sounds and speech. The basis of the vocabulary in the stories analysed is literary English, but a certain number of phenomena pertaining to heteroglossia is also to be noticed. These aspects are going to be studied in the following subsections.

First London's use of phonetic devices and expressive means should be examined, as long as they consist of the smallest stylistic units that can be analysed; then larger elements should be scrutinised (and lexical-syntactic stylistic devices and expressive means).

12.1 Phonemic Devices

In certain stories (for example, W.S., F.C., M.T., and others) the characters' actions are often not only described but made perceptible thanks to the use of different means. In this

subsection the focus is on the sound peculiarities transmitted throughout the stories. London tends to use these peculiarities frequently. Take for instance the *onomatopoeias* that occur in the majority of the stories:

(117) [...] **Crack! Crack!** – they heard the familiar music of the dogwhip, the whining howl of the Malemutes, and the crunch of a sled as it drew up to the cabin. [...] (M.T.: 3)

(118) [...] **“Snap!”** The lean brute flashed up, the white teeth just missing Mason’s throat. [...] (W.S.: 11)

(119) [...] He came upon a valley where rock ptarmigan rose on whirring wings from the ledges and muskegs. **“Ker-ker-ker”** was the cry they made. [...] (Love L.: 97)

The combination of sounds of this type is inevitably associated with whatever produces the natural sounds, in example (117) the sounds of a whip and teeth chattering is observed. The meaning of *onomatopoeias* here is not to name the phenomena, but to reproduce them in a written form. They might probably called these words “sound metaphors,” since they create the image, but, unlike the lexical metaphor, this image is not visual, but auditory. Nevertheless, the phonetic devices used by London are widespread, as it can be seen in the next subsections.

12.1.1 Graphons

A phonetic stylistic device that is widely used in the stories under analysis is the *graphon* (cf. 7.3.2). There is a large number of graphons in the stories, which are mostly represented in the direct speeches of the characters, as a graphon is highly useful when showing the genuine manner of the characters’ speech.

(120) [...] I couldn't believe my eyes when I **seen'm** just now. I thought I was **dreamin'** [...] His mother died, and I **brought'm** up on condensed milk at two dollars a can [...] (B.W.: 125)

This example, as well as the next ones, shows that one of the most important functions of a graphon is to reflect an individual or dialectal violation of a phonetic form. Here the characters' speech is very clearly transmitted as a reader can actually hear the way the characters are talking to each other, and understand their mood and national background.

More graphons can be observed in M.T. This story contains various characters of different origins and social status; this is why their speech is very colourful, such as the following

(121) [...] "Nope; Sal died **'fore** any come. **That's** why I'm here." Belden abstractedly began to light his pipe, which had failed to go out, and then brightened up with, "How **'bout yerself**, stranger, – married man?" [...] (M.T.: 5)

As in the previous example, graphons here are used in order to show the character's manner of speaking, who was once a North American citizen lacking a high social status, for the people from the higher circles do not tend to mispronounce the words.

Thus in the following example one can see that Mason is a rather simple man from Tennessee, who pretends to talk in a particular manner, the "macaronic jargone," as London calls it, so that his Indian wife, who doesn't speak English very well, can easily understand him.

(122) [...] "And then you step into a – a box, and pouf! Up you go... And biff! Down you come. Oh, great medicine men! You go Fort Yukon, I go Arctic City, – twenty-five sleep, – big string, all the time, – I catch him a string, – I say **'Hello, Ruth! How are ye?'** – and you say, 'No can bake good bread, no more soda', – then say, 'Look in in

cache, under flour; **good-by.**' You look and catch plenty soda. All the time you Fort Yukon, me Arctic City.**Hi-yu medicine man!**" [...] (W.S.: 13)

Since Indian characters are examined, it is necessary to provide some examples of graphon use in their speech. (c.f.(22)) In example (22), in order to evince the peculiarities of the Indian speech the writer uses obsolete English words, but he does it only when the Indians speak their language among themselves. This peculiarity may be observed in such stories as L.O.M. and S.K.

(123) [...] "**Thou hast** a wife, Ugh-Gluk," he said, "and for her **dost thou** speak. And **thou**, too, Massuk, a mother also, and for them **dost thou** speak. My mother has no one, save me; wherefore I speak." [...] (S.K.: 82)

(124) [...] The young men and young women are gone away, some to live with the Pellys, some with the Salmons, and more with the white men. I am very old, and very tired, and it being a vain fighting the Law, as **thou sayest**, Howkan, I am come seeking the Law."
"O Imber, **thou art** indeed a fool," said Howkan. [...] (L.O.M.: 80-81)

As one may see, in all three examples the writer tends to substitute such simple phrases as "you are," "you have," "you say" and "maybe" by their obsolete precedents, hence providing authenticity to the Indians' native speech.

On the other hand, in L.O.M. a reader may also observe the use of graphons in the dialogues between an Indian and a white man, which appears to be different.

(125) [...] "Him Whitefish man [...] Me **save um** talk no very much. Him want to look see chief white man [...] **I t'ink un** want **Cap'n** Alexander [...]". (L.O.M.: 67)

In contrast to example (123), (124), here the author uses graphons that transmit the real sound peculiarities of the

English language pronounced by the Indian. It is here to convey the idea that the Indian character is speaking with lexical and phonetic mistakes, as he is unable to use the language correctly.

There is one more type of graphons that is only used in the narrator's speech, that is, the italic types. Here it is necessary to mention that very often the italic type is employed in order to underline the use of everything that is heterogeneous when referring to a concrete text or it requires an unusual emphasis, as in the following example:

(126) [...] Though alone, he was not lost. Father on he knew he would come to where dead spruce and fir, very small and weazened, bordered the shore a little lake, the *titchin-nicillie*, in the tongue of the country, the "land of little sticks". [...] he would cross this divide to the first trickle of another stream [...] he would find a cache under an upturned canoe [...]. (Love L.: 94)

(127) [...] He was a newcomer in the land, a *checaquo*, and this was his first winter. The trouble with him was that he was without imagination. He was quick and alert in the things of life, but only in the things, and not in the significances. [...] (B.F.: 159)

(128) [...] Even Jaques Baptiste, born of Chippewa woman and a renegade *voyageur*. [...] (F.C.: 22)

In these examples the author uses the italic type to emphasize the peculiarity of the words themselves; that is to underline the unusual foreign words, used instead of simple ones; this is how Jack London shows that italicised words are alien when related to the text. In (126) he uses graphons in order to mark the native Indian words; here it should be also mention that *chechaquo* is actually a Chinook (Indian) jargon word for newcomer, while italicised "voyageur" is used to single out the fact that the character's father had French-speaking origins.

Nevertheless, there are also italicised graphons that do not mark any foreign words but are used to underline, emphasize and intensify the meaning itself of the marked word (c.f. (52)).

(129) [...] And through the long darkness the children wailed and died, and the women, and the old men; and not one in ten of the tribe lived to meet the sun when it came back in the spring. That was a famine! [...] (Law L.: 43)

In both examples the italicised “was” equals the use of an intensifying qualitative adjective or adverb, such as “extremely,” “big” or “horrible,” so that the sentences could sound as “that was a big famine” or “it was extremely cold.”

12.1.2 Alliterations and Morphemic Repetitions

As it has been already said, London tends to use a great deal of sound symbolism, which is why he often resorts to the use of *alliterations* as he tends to create some additional melodic result. In the stories under analysis there are several examples of alliterations of different size.

(130) [...] Day in and day out, they laboured with the bateaux and canoes, fought mosquitoes and other kindered pests, **or sweated and swore** at the portages. [...] (F.C.: 23)

In (130) the repletion of sounds contributes to intensifying the effect produced by environment descriptions. On the other hand, in example (131) the feeling of despair can be recognised, it is created by the repetition of the sounds “d” and “g” added to the atmosphere created by the plot of the story.

(131) [...] The teams were double-spanned; the sleds were under way again, the **dying dog dragging** herself along in the rear. [...] (W.S.: 15)

The same thing can be said about the following examples.

(132) [...] And, **dying, he declined to die.** [...] (Love L.: 109)

(133) [...] His **feet froze the faster**, and his exposed **fingers** numbed the **faster**, though they had not yet begun to **freeze.** [...] (B.F.: 167)

(134) [...] He unstrapped the tin **bucket and began to bale** the pool. [...] (Love L.: 98)

Alliteration here, as in many other cases, does not bear special lexical meaning. It serves as a means of additional emotional influence, or so-called musical arrangement of the main idea of the utterance that intensifies the emotional meaning of the text.

However, certain sounds, if repeated, may sometimes produce an effect that can be better specified. For example, in the sentences written above (c.f. (133)), the sound “f” in the last phrase produces a freezing effect that a reader can not only read about the frost, but actually feel it, thanks to the repetition of the sound. Therefore, one can see and feel that the alliteration may be regarded as a musically modulated statement, which is used in order to create some vague atmosphere that each reader interprets in his/her own way.

Finally, morphemic repetition also takes place in all the stories under analysis.

(135) [...] There was the fire, **snapping and crackling and promising** life with every **dancing** flame.[...] It flattered its ears down of the man’s voice and its restless, hunching movements and the **liftings and the shiftings** of its forefeet became more pronounced; [...] He sat down in the snow, and in this fashion held the dog, while it **sarled and whined and struggled.** [...] (B.F.: 167-172)

Here the morphemic repetition creates the sound atmosphere of happiness, which is realized with onomatopoeic participles imitating the sounds of burning fire. This repetition here, as in the following example, underlines the circular succession of actions.

(136) [...] The bull **snorted and leaped** away, his hoofs **rattling and clattering** as he fled across the ledges. [...] (Love L.: 96)

In example (136) the morphemic repetition of the ending “-ed” and “-ing” can be traced. They evidently have the same function as the previous one (intensification of emotional meaning, imitation of sounds, underlining the chain of actions). In these examples, as in other Jack London works, morphemic repetition comes along with enumeration; together they serve to emphasize and to promote the meaning of the utterance. More than that, in the last example (136), morphemic repetition also goes together with the alliteration of the sounds “r”, “l” and “t” in the phrase ‘rattling and clattering.’ The use of these three stylistic devices, alliteration, morphemic repetition and enumeration strengthens the effect of emotional intensification even more.

12.2 Lexical Expressive Means

The stories under analysis present a great deal of stylistic resources that are based on semantics. The most important ones are the tropes, especially metaphor, as most theorists admit. It is necessary to examine which of these resources are used in the corpus of short stories.

12.2.1 Metaphor

Jack London uses different kinds of *metaphors* in his works. On the one hand there are a lot of simple metaphors

embodied in various parts of speech, as in the example below.

(137) [...] El-Soo was quick, and deft, and intelligent; but above all she was **fire**, the **living flame of life**, a **blaze** of personality that was compounded of will, sweetness, and daring. Her father was a chief, and his blood ran in her veins. Obedience, on the part of El-Soo, was a matter of terms and arrangement. She had a passion for equity, and perhaps it was because of this that she excelled in mathematics. [...] (W.P.: 130-131)

There are cases when metaphors are expressed by both verbs and nouns, as in example (95) where sustained metaphors are expressed not by a single word but by the whole phrase, configuring small isotopies or extended metaphor. In example (95) two separate utterances are observed, thus there are two central metaphors, “the world,” in the first one, with the auxiliary “rang with the tale” and “the lure” where the phrase “gripped the heartstrings of men” helps to create additional meanings, such as to give an epic dimension to the “gold rush.” Moreover, in the very same example a reader also comes across a two word metaphor – “bondage of commerce,” which gives a moral evaluation of the protagonist’s occupation.

London’s metaphors tend in general to be very profound and unusual.

(138) [...] And then began the story, **the epic of bronze patriot**, which might itself **be wrought into bronze** for the generations unborn. [...] (L.O.M.: 73)

Here there are metaphors that emphasize the importance of the grand actions undertaken by the Indian and claim the Indian himself to be a heroic patriot, as the metaphor “bronze” is used to underline the solemnity and monumentality of what Imber did. This example may be seen as a hyperbole, while the metaphors used to describe the story of Imber are slightly

exaggerated. Very similar in its metaphoric structure is the following extract:

(139) [...] Then began **as grim a tragedy of existence as was ever played** – a sick man that crawled, a sick wolf that limped, two creatures dragging their **dying carcasses** across the desolation and hunting each other's lives. [...] (Love L.: 109)

In example (139), there is the extended metaphor, which underlines the extreme importance of the process of surviving, as it was perceived by the protagonist chased by the wolf. This metaphor is followed by a simple one, expressed by the noun “carcasses,” which underlines the fact that both man and wolf suffered from hunger and were very emaciated.

Some of the writer's metaphors are rather tough and brutal, like the following:

(140) [...] He had purchased his life with blood. [...] His comrades were Slavonian hunters and Russian adventurers, Mongols and Tatars and Siberian aborigines; and through **the savages of the new world they had cut a path of blood**. [...] Well, it had been **a sowing of blood**, and now was come **the harvest**. [...] (L.F.: 178-181)

These metaphors (purchase with blood, path of blood, sowing/harvest of blood) are used to describe the brutality of Subienkow's life and the cruelty of the protagonist himself and of his companions. The unusual antonomasia “savages of the new world,” used to denote Subienkow and his companions, intensifies the tension created by the other metaphors in this example.

12.2.2 Personification

Another trope, actually a variant of metaphor which is found in the corpus, is *personification*, which occurs in all the stories under analysis. Here the author always uses personification when talking about the North and all the notions connected to the world of the north.

(141) [...] It was the time to lie snug in a hole in the snow and wait for a curtain of cloud to be drawn across **the face of outer space** whence this cold came. [...] (B.F.: 163)

(142) [...] Strong man, brute as he was, capable of feeling an ox at a blow, he could not bear to beat the poor animals, but humoured them as a dog-driver rarely does, – nay, almost **wept with them in their misery**. [...] (W.S.: 13)

These two examples (140 and 141) contain personifications, like “the face of outer space,” where the qualities of a human being are transferred to the notion of “outer space,” and “wept with them in their misery,” where there are transpositions in which animals are endowed with feelings and actions characteristic for human beings. But they also contain the metaphor “curtain of cloud,” the epithet “strong man, brute as he was” and even the graphon “nay.”

In various cases the writer uses capitals to underline the significance, peculiarity and individuality of the notions related to the North. In this case a reader can find solemn examples of personification, such as example (58).

As it has already been said, Jack London always intends to underline the importance of the North, the cold and the Silence, their characteristics and all the feelings they provoke; in order to do that, he uses personification and endows them (the North, the cold and the Silence) with the traits of great and noble human beings, so that the reader can feel their greatness and power.

But the narrator tends to animate not only the notions in some ways connected with the North, but also he treats Death and Faith in the same way:

(143) [...] And in the end, **Death waited, ever hungry and hungriest** of them all. [...] (Law L.: 40)

(144) [...] From the beginning, when he dreamed the fiery dream of Poland's independence, he had become **a puppet in the hands of Fate**. [...] (L.F.: 176)

In the last example it should be noted that besides the personification of the notion of "fate" the writer also uses the metaphor "puppet in the hands of Fate" in order to underline the fact that the life of the protagonist did not depend on his will anymore.

12.2.3 Metonymy and Synecdoche

Metonymies are also frequent in the present stories, such as the example (97) where a reader deals with ordinary metonymy "white lord," which is used to denote the north-American husband of an Indian woman through her perception. As long as metonymy represents the events of reality in its subjective attitude, one may say that "her white lord" is a metonymic denomination of how Ruth perceived her husband. This metonymy expresses the emotive and evaluative attitude towards Mason of both Ruth and the narrator (thanks to internal focalization).

Here there is a very classical example of metonymy.

(145) [...] **The master of arts** was winking rapidly, now, shaping a skilful flank movement on the bed where his **Smith & Wesson** lay. [...] (F.C.: 37)

"Smith & Wesson" is a classic example of metonymy too; here the name of the famous trademark is used to denote the gun that is produced under it. The metonymies used in these two examples cannot be considered as original, created by

Jack London, for these notions are widely used in everyday language as well.

A different kind of metonymy is the designation of someone by his function (c.f. (6)). This metonymy (food-providers and fire-providers) is used to demonstrate the way the dog understands what people are. It is hard to say that it is a kind of standard metonymy. As in the previous case (example (145)), the writer created this metonymy in example (6), in order to describe and underline how the dog sees the people. This example of metonymy serves as a means of indirect characteristics of phenomenon (humans) by singling out one of the occasional signs of the humans' essence as seen by the dog.

Another example of metonymy has a different nature.

(146) [...] **And laughter and joke and song** went around, and Akoon told a story that made the refters echo. There were **no tears or sighs** at the table. [...] (W.P.: 135)

Here the phrases "laughter and joke and song" and "no tears no sighs" are used to denote the actions undertaken or not undertaken by the people.

Another metonymy appears in L.O.M. (c.f. (96)) where there is one of the typical types of metonymy, as the name of the place, "all Dawson," stands for Dawson inhabitants; hence it is a classic example where the whole is put for the part.

A particular example in B.W. concerns the naming of the object according to the place contiguity.

(147) [...] Mrs. Johnson, their nearest neighbour and the one who supplied them with milk, proclaimed him a **Klondike dog**. Her brother was burrowing for frozen pay-streaks in that far country, and so she constituted herself an authority on the subject. [...] Besides, he looked like the photographs of the **Alaskan dogs** they

saw published in magazines and newspapers.
[...] (B.W.: 116)

In example (147), “Alaskan dog” and “Klondike dog” are used to name the dogs that live and work in Klondike as if they were a kind of breed. A particular feature is transferred to the general notion of the species. In the given example a particular case of metonymy i.e. *synecdoche* is observed. Besides, the very name of the story, Brown Wolf, is actually a metonymy, for these two words are the names that two different masters of the dog gave to it, based on the colour of the dog and on its similarity with a wolf.

12.2.4 Epithet

In the present stories, as in any other literary work by Jack London, *epithets* of different types are frequent, beginning with those very simple ones, based on attributive relations, as in the following example:

(148) [...] The forest, which shouldered in upon them, from three sides, was **inexhaustible woodyard**. [...] (F.C.: 28)

The epithet is a simple attribute that bears evaluative meaning. In example (148) it is used to intensify the impression of the big size of the forest. This epithet has both logical and emotional meanings. The word “inexhaustible,” besides its logical denotation, expresses emotional colouring since it underlines the peculiarity of the word “woodyard.”

The example below contains complex epithets of a different nature.

(149) [...] The **pitiless night** crept slowly by, – Ruth’s portion, the **despairing stoicism** of her face, and Malemute Kid adding new lines to **his face of bronze**. [...] (W.S.: 17)

In (149) the epithet “pitiless night” is also a part of personification, for the night has the quality of a human being. It is a simple attributive epithet, which has strong emotional meaning and serves to manifest the state of misery in the characters and their perception of the world and the night under the given circumstances. The other epithet in this example, “despairing stoicism,” is used to transmit the courage of the Indian woman. In what refers to “the face of bronze,” a noun functions as an epithet; this phenomenon usually happens with the so-called “of-phrases.” It is also a metaphorical epithet, since “made of bronze” is used to describe the colour of the skin.

Another complex epithet reflects the gloomy mood of the protagonist:

(150) [...] Before he was dreamed of. It had been determined that **the quivering bundle of sensitiveness** that constituted him should **be doomed to live in a raw and howling savagery**, and to die in this **far land of night**, in this **dark place beyond the last boundaries of the world**. [...] (L.F.: 176)

Here there are four compound epithets (quivering bundle of sensitiveness, doomed to live in a raw and howling savagery, far land of night, dark place beyond the last boundaries of the world). As it has been said, epithets in example (150) transmit the emotional state of the character and they produce very depressive effects, for the words and phrases that the author chooses are very negative.

The last example of epithet use is one of the most impressive examples of sentence epithets (c.f. (35)). It begins with the simple descriptive epithet used to mark the peculiarities of the judge’s face. But it is followed by complex descriptive epithets (mighty phantasmagoria, steel-shod, mid-clad race, sullen seas, bloody and red (race), full and triumphant noon, blood-red sands). All these epithets create the sense of gloom, sorrow and danger and make the reader realize the strong

negative feelings of the judge towards the system in which he lives.

12.2.5 Antonomasia

Another stylistic device used by the writer is *antonomasia*. It is not as common as metaphor or metonymy, but still it takes place in several stories, for instance in this example from F.C.

(151) [...] The council, in which the two **Incapables** had whined to excellent disadvantage, was drawing to a close. [...] (F.C.: 25)

In this example the word “incapables” is used to substitute the names of Carter Weatherbee and Percy Cuthfert, who were “the two shrinks and chronic gumblers,” “never volunteered for the [...] duties of the camp” and “the whole party complained less of its aches and pains than did either of them.” Here the *antonomasia* is used to make the reader understand better the relation of the other characters towards the two protagonists. Their destiny can be predicted since the very beginning of the story (cf. (30)) and the use of the given *antonomasia* is just one more feature that completes the whole picture of what they are and how their lives and behaviour will develop. In the same story a reader comes across another *antonomasia* with a similar function.

(152) [...] And the removal of the cruel **whip-hand**, or in other words the bulldozing **half-breed**, had brought with it a joyous action. [...] (F.C.: 28)

Here the *antonomasia* “whip-hand” refers to Jacques Baptiste. This nickname is given to him through the perception of “the incapables,” who suffered from his behaviour towards them. Here it should be noticed that “the bulldozing half-breed” might also be considered as *antonomasia*, though it is not created by the author, the term

is already put in everyday use to denote the child of parents of different races.

The last example of antonomasia is the very title of the story, L.F., which stands for the name of the chief of the tribe who had been tricked into killing Subienkow without a torture.

(153) [...] The fur-thief had fooled him. He had **lost his face** before all his people. [...] He knew that thenceforth he would be no longer known as Makamuk. He would be **Lost Face**; the record of his shame would be with him until he died; and whenever the tribes gathered in the spring for the salmon or in the summer for the trading, the story would pass back and forth across the camp-fires of how the fur-thief died peaceably, at a single stroke, by the hand of **Lost Face**. [...] (L.F.: 189)

12.2.5 Hyperbole

London also uses the *hyperbole* to a great extent. It is very common in the stories due to the fact that the majority of the texts are written in a solemn manner, sometimes associated to exaggerations. It also presupposes that the reader realizes that it is used on purpose, that the utterance has a certain hidden message that is one of the forms to express the relation to the described situation in a bright and emotional way (c.f. (26)). Here the hyperbole is used to underline the greatness and the significance of a person who can survive all the harshness of the North. On the other hand in the example (154) below, there is a hyperbole which is used to demonstrate the way the character sees his present and past lives. He is so suppressed by the life he has in the cabin that the memories of his previous life cannot coexist with the present one. When used in hyperbole the words still have their logical meaning, but the use of analogues gives the utterance some kind of emotional colouring.

(154) [...] But the dim memories of a life he had long **centuries ago**? On some **other planet**. [...] (F.C.: 32)

These hyperboles (centuries ago, on other planet) intensify the feeling of separation of the old and new ways of the character's life, which is underlined by the use of these exaggerations.

One more example of hyperbole is used to underline the huge number of people who saw Imber the day he gave himself into the hands of the police:

(155) [...] **No end of men** remembered afterward that they had been struck by his extraordinary figure, and **forever after** prided themselves upon their swift discernment of the unusual. [...] (L.O.M.: 65)

Besides the hyperbole denoting the large number of people in example (155) there is also the hyperbole used to denote the time frame that is "forever after," which stands for "for a long time."

12.3 The Use of Syntactic SDs in Stories

The lexical expressive means and stylistic devices personalize the discourse; texts become more colourful and emotional. In a way they help the reader to perceive the author's attitude to the issues he wants to emphasize. It is possible to say that the lexical stylistic devices appeal to the reader's emotions. Syntax, on the contrary, is highly instrumental when appealing to the reader's mind, so that the syntactic stylistic devices help to preserve the coherence and keep the reader's attention.

12.3.1 Inversion

Jack London's syntax is characterized by both laconism and expressiveness. Several syntactic stylistic devices are frequently used in his works. Very typical for London is the use of *inversion*. It is common knowledge that inversion intentionally violates the standard rules of grammar, because of the change of the traditional order of words with the idea of pointing out the most essential elements of the utterance. This device is specifically noticeable and expressive in English with its fixed word order. Inversion appears in every story under analysis and emphasises a part of the utterance:

(156) [...] Not once did they volunteer for the thousand and one petty duties of the camp. [...] (F.C.: 23)

In the present example inversion intensifies the fact that the main characters of the story never tried to do anything to help their comrades. In order to do this intensification the word order at the beginning of the sentence is completely inverted. The same may be said about the following example.

(157) [...] **Him she remembered** – Klakee-Nah, the head-man of the village, the friend of the missionaries and the traders [...]. (W.P.: 131)

London uses inversion not only in the narrator's discourse. He also tends to use this trope abundantly in the speech of the Indian characters. In the following examples inversion serves to provide the feeling of authenticity in their speech:

(158) [...] "Hear me, ye men" he cried. "**Never shall I speak** in the council again, never again till the men come to me and say, **It's well, Keesh, that thou shouldst speak, it is well and it is our wish**'[...]" . (S.K.: 83)

(159) [...] "Those things thou speakest of be shadows," Koogah took up the strain. "**From the shadow-world thou hast brought them, and to the shadow-world thou must return them.** Thy

bidarka be ready, and the tribes people wait. They may not sleep until thou art gone." [...] (N. B.: 62)

In both examples ((158), (159)) the inversed word order in the speech of the Indianans is used together with the graphons (c.f. 12.1.1) in order to underline the peculiar manner of speaking. These inversions, as well as the graphons, represent a version of obsolete English, which is used by the writer to show the authentic speech of the Indian characters.

12.3.2 Repetition

In his stories the writer tends to use a number of *repetitions* of all kinds. Sometimes a reader comes across some really simple repetitions that are very often used in sentences where the author connects two phrases with the repeated word by the conjunction "and" as in the example (25), where on the one hand there is the repetition of the word "old," the main function of which is to intensify the emotional meaning. On the other hand, here one more repetition is observed, "he must," which has the same function that is to intensify the idea (i.e. the inevitable change of life values in the North) that the author is trying to bring to the reader. This repetition is used as crescendo: the author begins with the simple notions that must be forgotten in a far country and then develops them into "the very codes by which the conduct has been shaped." The repetition of words adds strength to the utterance and tension to the whole narration.

A distinct use of repetition can be observed in the following examples:

(160) [...] **He** did not stop. With a desperation that was madness, unmindful of the pain, **he** hurried up the slope to the crest of the hill over which his comrade had disappeared [...]. But at the crest **he** saw a shallow valley, empty of life. **He** fought with his fear again, overcame it, hitched the pack still farther over on his left shoulder [...]. Then **he**

proceeded, slowly and carefully, wincing with pain, to the bank. [...] (Love L.: 94)

(161) [...] As **he** turned to go, **he** spat speculatively [...] **he** spat again [...] **He** knew that at fifty below spittle crackled on the snow. But spittle crackled in the air. [...] (B.F.: 160)

In both examples the narrator repeats the pronoun “he” when he talks about the protagonists from the very beginning till the end of the stories. Repetition serves to reproduce the scrupulous succession of men’s actions. Here, in each of the two stories (Love L. and B.F.), the author uses the same type of repetition when describing the actions; the man’s actions in Love L., and the actions of the dog, called “it,” in B.F. The same thing happens in Love L., when the scientists find the protagonist and at the beginning they confuse him with some kind of animal (c.f. (63)).

(162) [...] **It** hung back until the man showed it forward. [...] Suddenly **it** broke through, floundered to one side and got away to firmer footing. **It** had wet its forefeet and legs. [...] **It** made quick efforts to lick ice of its legs. [...] **It** didn’t know this. **It** merely obeyed the mysterious prompting. [...] (B.F.: 163)

In example (162) the anaphora describes the succession of the dog’s actions. It also has the important function of giving rhythm to the discourse; the repetition of the same units favours the rhythmical organization of the text. This function may be applied in fact to all kinds of repetitions.

(163) [...] **Thrice** he **had** sailed east from Kamchatka. And **thrice**, after all manner of hardship and suffering, the survivors **had** come back to Kamchatka. [...] (L.F.: 178)

Here, besides the rhythmical organization created by the anaphora, the quantitative succession of action is underlined.

12.3.3 Parallel Construction

Word repetitions are often accompanied by another stylistic device, namely the *parallel construction*; the necessary condition in parallel constructions is identical or has a similar structure (in two or more sentences or its parts in close succession).

(164) [...] **She was the one Indian woman to whom white men** honourably made proposals of marriage. And **she was one Indian woman whom no white man** ever insulted. [...] (W.P.: 133)

In the given example there is a complete parallel construction where practically the whole sentence is repeated. This construction clearly singles out and underlines the status of the Indian woman in the society she happened to belong to. A different kind of parallel construction can be seen in the following example:

(165) [...] This dark hair-line was the trail – the mail trail – that **led south** five hundred miles to the Chillcoot Pass Dyea, and salt water; and that **led north** seventy miles to Dawson, and still on to the north a thousand miles to Nulato, and finally to St. Michael on Bering Sea, a thousand miles and a half a thousand more. [...] (B.F.: 159)

In example (165) the parallel construction comes along with the repetition of separate words and structures. Here, as in many other cases, parallelism is also used together with enumeration. In the given sentence the author describes the trail, and some geographical points that this trail crosses. By the use of parallel construction, the author manages to emphasize the greatness of the size of this trail. One more parallel construction is also used together with the repetitions (c.f. (26)).

These parallelisms (and of all deadening labors, that of the Northland is the worst [...] and of all hear-breaking labors, that of breaking trail is worst.) repeated in the second one. In

example (26) parallelism also contributes to the creation of emotional scenery for the emphasis of the necessary parts. Moreover, the parallelisms in all the given examples generate some kind of rhythm, because similar structures are repeated in close succession. The rhythmical effect is combined with the idea of the semantic equality of the parts, which contributes to the logical principle of arranging ideas.

12.4 Lexical- Syntactic SDs. Simile. Periphrasis.

Syntactic stylistic devices add logical, emotive, expressive information to the utterance regardless of the lexical meanings of sentence components. There are certain structures though, whose emphasis depends not only on the arrangement of the sentence members but also on their construction, with definite demands on the lexical-semantic aspect of the utterance; they are known as lexical- stylistic devices.

In the vocabulary area, London often uses special expressive means, one of the most frequently used being the *simile*. The characters of the following stories are compared to animals, which is a rather unnatural comparison but it reflects their state and behaviour pretty well.

(166) [...] So that thing before him was Big Ivan – Big Ivan the giant, the man without nerves, the man of iron, the Cossack turned freebooter of the seas, who was **as phlegmatic as an ox** [...].
(L.F.: 168)

(167) [...] The man watched him go, and though his face was expressionless as ever, **his eyes were like the eyes of a wounded deer**. [...]
(Love L.: 92)

(168) [...] Once, coming around a bend **he shied abruptly, like a startled horse**, curved away from the place where he had been walking and

retreated several paces back along the trail. [...] (B.F.: 162)

The simile here is used for purposes of expressive evaluation, emotive explanation and highly individual description. The given comparison adds to the whole picture of the man's reaction and intensifies it. At the same time in L.O.M. the old Indian has his way of describing the whites (c.f. (17)).

The similes one of the strongest language means used by London. Most of the stories are based on it and that makes the simile one of the author's main means of fleshing out his ideas. This is how in Law L. the story of the old Indian is being shown as compared to the appearance of an old moose.

(169) [...] Then on his darkened eyes was projected the vision of the moose – the old bull moose – the torn flanks and bloody sides, the riddled mane, and the great branching horns, down low and tossing to the last. He saw the flashing forms of gray, the gleaming eyes, the lolling tongues, the slavered fangs. [...] (Law L.: 45)

The same may be said about the image of the lonely goose that lost his flock, this simile unfolds the hidden sense of the story N.B. (c.f. (90)).

Periphrasis is a very peculiar stylistic device, which, as it has already been said, consists of using more or less complicated syntactic structure instead of a word. The use of periphrasis, the device that shortens the speech with the lesser harm for its figurativeness, is very characteristic for the writer as well.

(170) [...] He joined the issue with his riffle reversed, and the hoary **game of natural selection** was played out with a ruthlessness of its primeval environment. [...] (W.S.: 19)

Herethe periphrasis “game of natural selection” stands for the word “fight” and is used to underline the fact that Kid had no other option but to win the fight due to the fact that he was a

man and hence the “fittest” according to the Darwinian theory. Another example of periphrasis is used to describe a certain action.

(171) [...] But they have **lost the race with winter**, and one day they tried their rafts to the thick eddy-ice and hurried their gods ashore. [...] (F.C.: 25)

Here the periphrasis is used to emphasize the fact that the winter made the characters stop and change their plans. As one may see, the function of periphrasis is to convey a purely individual perception of the described objects. In order to achieve it the generally accepted nomination of the object is replaced by the description of one of the features more characteristic for the object.

12.5 Conclusions for Chapter 12

Jack London’s writing project mainly concerns the modes of narration, the imbrications of sequences and general configuration of his fictions. Besides, he carefully works out its style, i.e. its “diction” (cf. 7). Due to the use of a great number of various stylistic devices and expressive means the stories under analysis have an extremely literary character, but also a polyphonic character, since there are diverse styles and registers.

London works on phonetic, lexical and syntactic aspects of discourse, brilliantly using all the language means that help to configure his discourse system.

We have analysed in London’s discourse complicated syntactic constructions, idiomatic combinations and the frequent use of transferred meanings of words. In his vocabulary the writer relies on literary English language, which he combines with the speech of the characters, usually supplied with dialectisms and common language. London

tends to use the Northern American and Canadian vocabulary in order to transmit the local colouring.

Phonetic devices are used in the majority of the stories under analysis. The writer uses many graphons in order to show the individual and dialectal individualities of the characters' speech. In the case of Indian speech, he uses obsolete English words in the dialogues between them. And in the case of dialogues between the Indians and the white people, graphons are used to transmit the language peculiarities of Indian English. London also uses italicised words in order to emphasize what is being said and to point out a foreign word.

London also uses a great deal of morphemic repetitions, alliterations and onomatopoeias; they reflect the sound peculiarities of characters, animals and natural sounds, and they make the discourse of the narrator and of the characters sound more realistic, thus making the environment more alive. These devices create certain sound effects and serve as a sound arrangement to the main idea of the utterance and hence the stories are full of life.

In the vocabulary field, the lexical expressive means play a very important role. They personalize the message that the author tends to convey to the reader. London's discourse exhibits bright metaphors of different lengths, which are usually genuine since very often they are absolutely unexpected. Besides metaphors there are other kinds of lexical expressive means and stylistic devices, such as metonymies or epithets. All of them are rather unusual and powerful so that they leave an extremely strong impression. The similes that London creates are very unpredicted and bright; they can be considered one of the strongest language means that London resorts to.

All these means help the author to create a vivid live world of the North in which the reader immerses himself from the very beginning till the end of the story. The general functions of the tropes in the stories under analysis are to express the emotive and evaluative attitude of the writer towards the object described and to express philosophical concepts

through his literary texts. Epithets contribute to giving a colour or a tonus to the created world, either euphoric or dysphoric.

The syntax of these stories makes an impact on the reader's emotions. London likes brevity and expressiveness of discourse. The writer uses a large amount of repetitions, parallel constructions and enumerations that make his speech very expressive and often help produce the effect of tension. In the speech of his characters, especially the Indians, the use of inversions underlines their language.

To sum it all up, it may be said that the stylistic devices and expressive means in the corpus of stories create a world full of liveliness. They produce very strong dramatic effects and often give the reader the sense of surprise.

**PART IV
GENERAL CONCLUSIONS
AND FURTHER
DEVELOPMENT OF THE
RESEARCH**

13 GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The analysis that has been done permits to answer the main question that has been put forward and to identify the discursive strategies and the general configuration of the twelve stories of the corpus.

The liveliness, emotionality, intensity and activity of the stories arise from the strategies pointed out in this research work, which shall be summarized in the narrative features listed below.

1. Action is dominant in the stories. It takes place in all the discourse organizations of these stories and can be characterized by elevated tension

The stories are always based on actions, and this phenomenon can be observed in different parts of the plot development. These actions are usually represented through a certain movement of the characters and are always based on struggle and conflicts, though to a different extent in each story.

The majority of incipits present the characters already in a progressing action (or in an extreme situation); these beginnings announce a further and stronger development of actions. Moreover, some of the stories are entirely based on description of actions and are characterized by a progressive growth of tension.

The stories based on interior monologues also contain description of actions; they are presented in the form of memory of characters' previous deeds; descriptions of actions take place in dialogues too.

As for the general narrative composition, different features concerning all the narrative parts have been found. The plots

as a rule are complex. In several cases the narrator resorts to a story within the main story structure. Other stories may be characterized by the complexity of their organization, at the level of both sequences plot.

In what refers to the organization of exposition, the following types have been singled out:

- simple exposition (including indirect exposition);
- mixed exposition (prolegomena of the rising action);
- progressive exposition (in the form of a separate story);
- complex flashback exposition.

Complication is always well detached and the rising action is characterized by strong increase of action. The stronger are the contradictions the more intense are the circumstances.

In nine of the twelve stories the protagonist's "life and death" situation takes place. It is always caused by some conflict brought about by the characters or / and an accident (W.S.).

Tension is one of the most characteristic features of the stories. It continues from the very beginning till the very end of the stories and increases after each new climax. Tension is based, on the one hand, on the personages' actions, and is shown through the conflicts between the characters' interests or between characters and the general situation. On the other hand, the environmental stress of the situation also creates tension (struggle with nature, utmost cold, physical and mental condition of characters).

Climax is well detached (like complication). It is very strong in all the stories. In several of them there are various climaxes, the following is always stronger than the previous one, which results in a definite dénouement.

2. Discourse organizations and narrative composition are characterized by vast heterogeneity and imbrication.

In what refers to the textual composition of the stories, all of them are characterized by heterogeneity in both the organization of the story and the composition of the sequences.

Narration, as it generally occurs in narrative texts, alternates with dialogues. Besides, these organizations also alternate with argumentation and explanation; dialogues help the characters find a certain solution to their problems. In all these cases the transition between the sequences is very quick.

Argumentation is very frequent in the stories under analysis. It not only occurs in dialogues, but also in the characters' speech and thoughts. As a rule, argumentation is shown in progress and is interconnected with the tension growth.

Moreover, argumentation is reflected in the narrator's speech. Then it appears in digressions, which in the corpus are used either as a reason for telling a story or as a generalization of the story. The narrator's argumentation may also be transmitted through short commentaries that accompany the recounting of events. In this case, argumentation mostly bears a gnomic character (a sort of proverb) and also modalizes the narrated events in addition; some of the narrator's points of view may also be transmitted through FIS (in this case the narrator sometimes associates himself with the characters and in other cases, he, on the contrary, mocks at the antagonists).

Another case of heterogeneity is the story within the main story; this strategy takes place in seven stories. It is either based on a flashback structure (through interior speech – L.F., Law L. or narration – B.W.) or is expressed through dialogical form (L.O.M., N.B., M.T., S.K.).

3. Dialogues are always meaningful and they accomplish peculiar functions.

In all stories there are always some dialogues. But, besides the two long discourses of the protagonists in N.B. and L.O.M., direct speech of the characters does not play the primary role for the construction of meaning. Nonetheless, they are rarely used as an addition to the plot events, as in most cases they bear meaningful functions.

The functions that have been established by means of the present analysis are the following:

- increase of tension through argumentation or intensification of the general description of the situation;
- intertextual function, which establishes the connection between two stories;
- prognostic function or “*myse and abîme*,” which predicts the final outcome of the story;
- presenting a point of view;
- framing of the stories, i.e. indicating the transition from one part to another by either introducing narration in a flashback or bringing the reader back to the current situation, showing the current situation after explaining the pre-story and / or creating scenery for the following development;
- and, finally, dialogues are also used to characterize the characters and to complete the actions.

4. Dysphoria and struggle dominate in these stories

General dysphoria is common in these stories by Jack London. It occurs in all parts of the stories, but is most clearly visible in expositions and dénouements. Eight of the twelve

stories under analysis have dysphoric expositions, which are characterized by certain unstable situations. Two types of dysphoric exposition have been identified: "on the trail" (in the middle of a journey, surrounded by the wilderness of nature and / or utmost cold) and extreme situation (facing approximate death, extreme poverty).

At the same time four stories have neutral exposition, but only two (W.P., S.K.) of them have standard expositions, where the characters are being described and the scenery is presented.

In nine of the twelve stories the reader is immediately put in the middle of the situation, mostly dysphoric. Like the exposition, the dénouement is dysphoric in the majority of cases. In five stories it results in the death of the protagonist (or at least one of them). In three more stories the dénouement is ambiguous but rather dysphoric.

The rest of the stories have a neutral dénouement. The only completely euphoric dénouement is the one in S.K. (because it is a legend and the Indians finally understand Keesh's hunting secrets, thus he proves to his tribe his wit and abilities).

In the following table the different tendencies of the twelve stories are presented, following the more or less dysphoric character of their expositions and dénouements.

Story	Exposition				Dénouement			
	Dysphoric		Euphoric / neutral		Euphoric/ambiguous		dysphoric	
	on the trail	extreme	neutral	Euphoric	euphoric	ambiguous	death	Nodeath
W.S.	+						+	
M.T.				+		+		
F.C.	+						+	
Love L.	+				+			
B.F.	+						+	
L.O.M.		+						+
S.K.		+			+			
L.F.		+					+	
B.W.			+			+		
Law L.		+					+	
N.B.				+				+
W.P.			+			+		+

We may conclude that, in general, London's stories are difficult to ascribe to a happy or unhappy ending due to the fact that there is often some kind of ambiguity in the final situation. When the ending of the story is seemingly good, it is either bad for some of the characters (e.g. B.W.) or it implies a solution of the conflict, which is both good and bad at the same time (e.g. W.P.). Even in the cases, which end with the death of the protagonists, dysphoria can be perceived in different ways, depending on the situation the characters encountered during the whole story (e.g. Law L., L.F.).

5. Characters behave as either Heroes or Antagonists

London's characters are quite prototypical and at the same time polarized. Since they mingle with a harsh reality, they have acquired various peculiarities as a response to the surrounding environment. The main four character types have been established: the hero, the Indians, the woman and the antagonist. London's presentations of the characters' appearance are always very laconic; personage description is usually performed through the illustration of their internal world.

The hero is always a strong man, adept at survival in the North, which he loves and respects. He is always honest, fair and helpful. He is kind to animals and people. He does not look for selfish ends. He probably comes to Klondike in search of gold, but in the end it is the process of looking for it that he enjoys the most.

Heroes are characterized by their love of liberty, craving for adventure, yearning for testing themselves in the combat with the hostile nature, which checks them for durability.

Women have quite the same characteristics as the hero, and therefore they are also heroines; they are strong, active, and courageous and they can't stand cowardice and greed. To these characteristics the physical beauty is added, which serves as a reflection of their internal world.

London pictures the Indians as morally superior to the whites. Nonetheless, he does not idealize them, he demonstrates that they are too naïve and as a rule reluctant to novelties. Due to this naivety and reluctance they are often as cruel as the North itself (with the whites and with each other too); this characteristic, on the one hand, contradicts London's basic promotion of comradeship and kindness and may be seen as a reason for their extinction, but on the other hand, in some cases he shows that the Indians' cruelty can be justified, as it is a natural reaction to invasion or a natural law of life.

When raising the problem of the interaction between the Indians and the whites, London not only opposes the natural world of the natives to that of the white people, but also correlates these two worlds, demonstrating the commonness of human nature independently of skin colour: both races are bent on cruelty, self-interest and fraud (e.g. Porportuk).

The antagonist is in most cases a newcomer; he is looking for ways to grow rich. He does not accept the rules of the North; this is why he always ends dying in some stupid or ridiculous way.

Nature is always presented in interaction with the humans. The theme of struggle between Nature and man is present in the majority of stories. This is why very often Nature plays the role of an antagonist.

London tends to describe nature as a dreadful and at the same time beautiful force. He gives it heroic traits, which are directly proportional to the heroic traits of his protagonists. Landscape is a background of the action. It is also used to reflect the internal world and the moral statement of the characters.

6. Complex and polyphonic narrative enunciation creates a multiplicity of points of view

In the corpus the narrator's speech always occupies a major position and it is the omniscient narration that the writer mostly resorts to. Thus the most common focalization he uses is the neutral one. It takes place in all stories and bears a general narrative and descriptive function.

The pure external focalization only appears in two stories (at the beginning of *Love L.* and in *S.K.*). In *S.K.* external focalization plays the major part, because of the form of a legend.

Internal focalization is never fixed. It always changes from character to character. Even in the stories with one protagonist (except *Law L.*), in the end, there is always a change of internal focalizer, in a quick transition between points of view; these changes produce particular effects, as the change of landscape, perspective and discourse.

In several stories there is also an imbrication or sliding of focalizations, which means that the situations described in the stories can be seen from the inside and outside at the same time.

The same focalization formula never refers to the whole story, but to a certain fragment. The writer does not stick to any concrete focalization type. He slides from one focalization to another and changes the angles of seeing the story.

London always tries to make the reader understand the position of the narrator, but he does it through the point of view of the character; this is why the Londonian narrator tends to entrust his characters with the task of telling a story as seen from the point of view of these characters. The entrusted narrative appears in all stories under analysis. The type of entrusted narrative that he uses the most is the third person entrusted narration.

The stories are an inseparable mix of omniscient and third person entrusted narration – it is a very characteristic device, which contributes to a better understanding of the character's opinion without changing the manner of narrating. In the stories under analysis entrusted narrative is always accompanied by internal focalization; however, internal focalization is not always accompanied by entrusted speech.

FIS takes place in the majority of stories. Through FIS, the narrator transmits the state, motives and points of view of the characters and also their internal argumentations. Besides, through FIS, the narrator connects with the characters in order to either take their position or, on the contrary, demonstrate his detachment.

Imbrication of narrative voices may be seen as a feature parallel to imbrication of sequences. Besides the fact that the setting of the stories is restricted by the fact that they take place in Northland, in the corpus diversity of forms, voices and points of view is one of the most characteristic features. London creates polyphonic stories in the classical Bakhtin sense. He mixes narrators, focalizations and characters' speech, thus creating a world where different points of view and ideas are presented.

7. London's style is characterized by its coherence and laconic richness

Style, as indicated, is not to be seen as added or separated from the properties of discourse, but is the logical consequence of the described project of writing and the strategies shaped through the analysis. Therefore, it covers all the narrative elements that have been studied and serves as an additional contribution to the creation of an extremely rich polyphonic character of the stories.

London uses complicated syntactic constructions, idiomatic phrases and relies a lot on transferred meanings of words. The general narration is always based on a neutral language but the characters' speech is often full of dialectisms and colloquial language: when transmitting the Indians' speech, the writer uses either obsolete English vocabulary or peculiar graphons that underline the pronunciation mistakes made by them. When presenting the non-vital conversations between the characters, he always dilutes them with the dialectal characteristics of the personages.

The range of poetic means of expression is aimed towards the expression of the narrator's relation to what is being depicted. Style is homologue of the narrative strategies created: the liveliness and high level of emotionality are manifested in the style of these stories. The stylistic devices London uses are always unpredictable; they on the one hand contribute to the creation of a realistic and live environment. On the other hand, they personalize and modulate the discourse of the narrator.

The axis of the artistic system created in London's stories is a man, whose life on the one hand is conditioned by social conflicts, which seems to reflect the main tendencies of situations that took place at the turn of the twentieth century. On the other hand, London centered his attention on the idea

of the survival of a personality in the harsh conditions of the North. The indifference and hostility of Nature give rise to the idea of the perishable nature of the human being and the illusiveness of his material ideas. In these stories a man is a connecting link between Nature and civilization.

The writer also turns to a problem of interracial relationships conjugated with the conflict of national mentalities that lead to "political" catastrophes. From some of the stories (for instance, L.O.M.) one can perceive the appealing idea that peaceful coexistence of different races is a necessary condition for the proper life of a community.

London insists on the idea of the ambiguity and difficulties of life (and ambiguity of human personality), which can be proved by the fact that on the one hand through his art he always portrays a certain pessimism (dysphoria), which may be seen as a reflection of the cruelty and great depression of the epoch in which he lived and created. Besides, this pessimism may be also related to London's personal story, full of poverty and misery.

On the other hand, he promotes the idea of life in the North because in there people are valued by their courage, unselfishness, commitment to comradeship, faithfulness in love, while commercialism is looked down upon. The analysis of these 12 stories tends to demonstrate the necessity of man's struggling for the achievement of his goals; they also show the importance of resistance. Through his stories the writer promotes the value of love of Nature, brotherhood, assistance (collaboration), friendship and love. London, when creating his peculiar world, promotes certain ethics of action.

To these ideas the fact can be added that they may be illustrated by the "survival of the fittest" theme, which by some scholars was considered as the main philosophical trend in London's works. Nevertheless, the analysis demonstrates that this idea is too simple for the reflection of the philosophy of his stories. It can only be applied in the case while it is underlined that, for London, "the fittest" is a complex notion, which would be seen as an ethical proposal. According to the

analysis, “the survival of the fittest” is characterized by the following points:

- “Fittest” always implies the sense of comradeship, knowledge, intelligence, wit and solidarity;
- success of the morally strong people, possessed with a strong will to live;
- the ability of the characters to work in order to improve themselves, learning to adapt to new circumstances and setting, even if this adaptation must be paid with scars;
- incapacity to survive of the morally weak (lack of foresight, excessive self-confidence), who only look for personal gain;
- Poor survival capacities of the Indians as people because of their inability to resist the “invasion” of the whites.

Even though as a rule there is no epilogue, in all the stories under analysis a moral lesson is always implicit and it requires reflection. Even though the stories are based on action and struggle, they always represent a certain vision of the world and clear ideas. These ideas transmitted through the stories are always emotional. They catch the reader’s attention and reveal to him a completely new world of wild, frozen and deserted spaces.

London’s stories are not prototypical. There is much variability in both story organization and the expression of ideas. They do not coincide with the classical story scheme. This results from the fact that London chooses to present different positions and points of view. But he always does it through the characters’ perception, making the reader see the situation with the characters’ eyes. Actions, tension, characteristic imbrications of voices and sequences, and the corresponding heterogeneity of stylistic means of expression are used to show variations of life rhythms, which are manifested in both the macro-structure of the stories composition (fiction) and the micro-structure of the style (diction). This investigation allows underscoring the literarity and meaningfulness of the twelve Klondike stories that have been analysed in this thesis. In short, I hope to have been able to demonstrate that Discourse Linguistics offers

appropriate theoretical means for the adequate understanding and interpretation of narrative texts. This is the reason why I project to deepen into the analyses and also to apply the results of my research in the didactic field.

14 FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE RESEARCH

My future research will focus on various ways of applying discourse analysis. On the one hand, it will deepen the discourse analysis of London's works by analysing his discourse strategies in constructing various notions such as the "North" within his fictional worlds. For that purpose I will undertake an advanced analysis of a larger number of works (both stories and novels), and will try to systematize the discourse strategies that allow him to create his very particular worlds. While performing this task of systematizing and modelling, I can also trace the evolution of London's discursive skills by comparing his early works to his later ones.

On the other hand, I will apply the skills I have acquired during this research to authors whose works have completely different discursive features, e.g. J. R. R. Tolkien seems particularly interesting due to his outstanding linguistic skills, his formation and the literary genre he used for his writing. In this case I will focus on the polyphonic peculiarities of the three primary works Tolkien's (*The Silmarillion*, *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings*), which reflect Bakhtin's comprehension of the epic, novel and the culture of folk humour. While reading Bakhtin's *Epic and Novel* (1975) I started thinking of the relations between Tolkien's *The Silmarillion* and *The Lord of the Rings*. *The Silmarillion* has all the characteristics of the epic ("national epic past," "absolute epic distance" that separate it from the present). This book is based on a memory, which is the source for the creative impulse, while *The Lord of the Rings* is determined by experience and knowledge. These peculiarities seem to be a very interesting object for analysis.

Between the epic, which Tolkien started writing as a young man, and the novel, which is seen as a coronation of his maturity as a writer, there lies another book - *The Hobbit*, which, in Bakhtin's words, reflects the transition to the culture

of folk humour; here the adventures of a seemingly comic character, a hobbit by the name of Bilbo Baggins, serve as a transition from the epic genre (*The Silmarillion*) to the novel (*The Lord of the Rings*). The latter has all the classical characteristics of the novelistic genre (to the same extent as *The Silmarillion* has the peculiarities of the epic) and it can be characterized by outstanding polyphony and heteroglossia: the elves, the hobbits, the dunadians, the orcs, etc. each have their own languages (created by the writer) and their own styles, which create polyphony or “stylistic three-dimensionality” (Bakhtin, 1981: 9). I find the use of these languages particularly interesting and I see numerous possibilities for analysis in this field.

My future professional development deals with education and I plan to work, among other aspects, on the educational side of literary works. As long as I am planning to work in the educational sphere, I would like to concentrate on the elaboration of didactic activities for teaching and learning English as a foreign language in Spain. These activities can be connected with the development of such skills as reading, writing, and various tasks that aim for the broadening of socio-cultural competence in both children and adults.

There has been frequent discussion about what kind of reading texts are suitable for English language students. The greatest controversy has centred on whether the texts should be “authentic” or “adapted.” If you give low-level students a short story by Jack London, they will probably not be able to understand it at all. However, it doesn’t mean that an ELT (English Language Teacher) can’t use the extracts or examples from Jack London’s short stories in order to teach vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, as well as pronunciation. Reading texts also provides good models for English writing. When a teacher focuses on the skill of writing, he/she needs to show students models of what he/she is encouraging them to do. It is common knowledge that reading texts can introduce interesting topics, stimulate discussions, excite imaginative responses and be a source of fascinating lessons.

In advanced classes I need to prepare students for the kind of English used by and for native speakers. For this reason, there is less use of simplified material, which is made easy for the learner; there is more use of material intended for speakers of English. Jack London's short stories are a perfect tool to motivate and teach upper-intermediate and advanced students thus giving them a chance to soak up the language and plunge into the world of English Grammar.

There are basically two ways of teaching grammar: the deductive way (rule-driven) and the inductive way (rule-discovery). In the former, the grammar rule is presented and a student learns it through the study and manipulation of example. A teacher can find many grammar examples in Jack London's stories and plan a "grammar" part of the lesson based on them. In an inductive approach, on the other hand, without the rule, the learner studies the examples and from these examples derives an understanding of the rule. Here the teacher can also use Jack London's short stories to lead the students into a new grammar structure or grammar tense.

The following extract from a short story W.S. can be used to practice grammar tenses. For example, a teacher can ask students to put the verbs in brackets into a proper form.

"I never _____ (see) a dog with a highfalutin' name that ever was worth a rap," he said, as he _____(conclude) his task and _____(shove) her aside. "They just _____(fade away) and _____(die) under the responsibility. Did ye ever _____(see) one go wrong with a sensible name like Cassiar, Siwash, or Husky? No, sir! [...]"

This short story is full of phrasal verbs, collocations and set phrases, which turn out to be the most difficult part to study. Often an example sentence given in context can help the student more than a definition. For example:

Ruth smiled so ingenuously at the fairy story that both men burst into laughter.

She's been a good wife to me, always at my shoulder in the pinch.

Talking about teaching pronunciation or accent training, a native English-speaking teacher is able to use sentences and phrases from the above mentioned short story for drilling intonation patterns, word stress and sentence stress, as well as other important phonetic elements, for example the pronunciation of regular past tense endings.

In short, my future research projects will deepen the analysis of narrative texts and the application of such texts to English learning.

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Appendix

12 Klondike Stories by Jack London

To The Man On Trail (1899)

"Dump it in."

"But I say, Kid, isn't that going it a little too strong? Whiskey and alcohol's bad enough; but when it comes to brandy and pepper-sauce and" –

"Dump it in. Who's making this punch, anyway?" And Malemute Kid smiled benignantly through the clouds of steam. "By the time you've been in this country as long as I have, my son, and lived on rabbit-tracks and salmon-belly, you'll learn that Christmas comes only once per annum. And a Christmas without punch is sinking a hole to bedrock with nary a pay-streak."

"Stack up on that fer a high card," approved Big Jim Belden, who had come down from his claim on Mazy May to spend Christmas, and who, as every one knew, had been living the two months past on straight moose-meat. "Hain't fergot the *hooch* we-uns made on the Tanana, hev yeh?"

"Well, I guess yes. Boys, it would have done your hearts good to see that whole tribe fighting drunk – and all because of a glorious ferment of sugar and sour dough. That was before your time," Malemute Kid said as he turned to Stanley Prince, a young mining expert who had been in two years. "No white women in the country then, and Mason wanted to get married. Ruth's father was chief of the Tananas, and objected, like the rest of the tribe. Stiff? Why, I used my last pound of sugar; finest work in that line I ever did in my life. You should have seen the chase, down the river and across the portage."

"But the squaw?" asked Louis Savoy, the tall French-Canadian, becoming interested; for he had heard of this wild deed, when at Forty Mile the preceding winter.

Then Malemute Kid, who was a born raconteur, told the unvarnished tale of the Northland Lochinvar. More than one rough adventurer of the North felt his heartstrings draw closer, and experienced vague yearnings for the sunnier pastures of the Southland, where life promised something more than a barren struggle with cold and death.

"We struck the Yukon just behind the first ice-run," he concluded, "and the tribe only a quarter of an hour behind. But that saved us; for the second run broke the jam above and shut them out. When they finally got into Nuklukyeto, the whole Post was ready for them. And as to the foregathering, ask Father Roubeau here: he performed the ceremony."

The Jesuit took the pipe from his lips, but could only express his gratification with patriarchal smiles, while Protestant and Catholic vigorously applauded.

"By gar!" ejaculated Louis Savoy, who seemed overcome by the romance of it. "*La petite squaw; mon Mason brav.* By gar!" Then, as the first tin cups of punch went round, Bettles the Unquenchable sprang to his feet and struck up his favorite drinking song:

*"There's Henry Ward Beecher
And Sunday-school teachers,
All drink of the sassafras root;
But you bet all the same,
If it had its right name,
It's the juice of the forbidden fruit."*

"O the juice of the forbidden fruit,"

roared out the Bacchanalian chorus, —

*"O the juice of the forbidden fruit;
But you bet all the same,
If it had its right name,
It's the juice of the forbidden fruit."*

Malemute Kid's frightful concoction did its work; the men of the camps and trails unbent in its genial glow, and jest and song and tales of past adventure went round the board. Aliens from a dozen lands, they toasted each and all. It was the Englishman, Prince, who pledged "Uncle Sam, the precocious infant of the New World;" the Yankee, Bettles, who drank to "The Queen, God bless her;" and together, Savoy and Meyers, the German trader, clanged their cups to Alsace and Lorraine.

Then Malemute Kid arose, cup in hand, and glanced at the greased-paper window, where the frost stood full three inches thick. "A health to the man on trail this night; may his grub hold out; may his dogs keep their legs; may his matches never miss fire."

Crack! Crack! – they heard the familiar music of the dogwhip, the whining howl of the Malemutes, and the crunch of a sled as it drew up to the cabin. Conversation languished while they waited the issue.

"An old-timer; cares for his dogs and then himself," whispered Malemute Kid to Prince, as they listened to the snapping jaws and the wolfish snarls and yelps of pain which proclaimed to their practiced ears that the stranger was beating back their dogs while he fed his own.

Then came the expected knock, sharp and confident, and the stranger entered. Dazzled by the light, he hesitated a moment at the door, giving to all a chance for scrutiny. He was a striking personage, and a most picturesque one, in his Arctic dress of wool and fur. Standing six foot two or three, with proportionate breadth of shoulders and depth of chest, his smooth-shaven face nipped by the cold to a gleaming pink, his long lashes and eyebrows white with ice, and the ear and neck flaps of his great wolf skin cap loosely raised, he seemed, of a verity, the Frost King, just stepped in out of the night. Clashed outside his mackinaw jacket, a beaded belt held two large Colt's revolvers and a hunting-knife, while he carried, in addition to the inevitable dog whip, a smokeless rifle of the largest bore and latest pattern. As he came

forward, for all his step was firm and elastic, they could see that fatigue bore heavily upon him.

An awkward silence had fallen, but his hearty "What cheer, my lads?" put them quickly at ease, and the next instant Malemute Kid and he had gripped hands. Though they had never met, each had heard of the other, and the recognition was mutual. A sweeping introduction and a mug of punch were forced upon him before he could explain his errand.

"How long since that basket-sled, with three men and eight dogs, passed?" he asked.

"An even two days ahead. Are you after them?"

"Yes; my team. Run them off under my very nose, the cusses. I've gained two days on them already, – pick them up on the next run."

"Reckon they'll show spunk?" asked Belden, in order to keep up the conversation, for Malemute Kid already had the coffee-pot on and was busily frying bacon and moose-meat.

The stranger significantly tapped his revolvers.

"When 'd yeh leave Dawson?"

"Twelve o'clock."

"Last night?" – as a matter of course.

"To-day."

A murmur of surprise passed round the circle. And well it might; for it was just midnight, and seventy-five miles of rough river trail was not to be sneered at for a twelve hours' run.

The talk soon became impersonal, however, harking back to the trails of childhood. As the young stranger ate of the rude fare, Malemute Kid attentively studied his face. Nor was he

long in deciding that it was fair, honest, and open, and that he liked it. Still youthful, the lines had been firmly traced by toil and hardship. Though genial in conversation, and mild when at rest, the blue eyes gave promise of the hard steel-glitter which comes when called into action, especially against odds. The heavy jaw and square-cut chin demonstrated rugged pertinacity and indomitability. Nor, though the attributes of the lion were there, was there wanting the certain softness, the hint of womanliness, which bespoke the emotional nature.

"So thet's how me an' the ol' woman got spliced," said Belden, concluding the exciting tale of his courtship." `Here we be, dad, 'sez she. `An' may yeh be damned,' sez he to her, an' then to me, `Jim, yeh – yeh git outen them good duds o' yourn; I want a right peart slice o' thet forty acre ploughed 'fore dinner.' An' then he turns on her an' sez, `An' yeh, Sal; yeh sail inter them dishes.' An' then he sort o' sniffled an' kissed her. An' I was thet happy, – but he seen me an' roars out, `Yeh, Jim!' An' yeh bet I dusted fer the barn."

"Any kids waiting for you back in the States?" asked the stranger.

"Nope; Sal died 'fore any come. Thet's why I'm here." Belden abstractedly began to light his pipe, which had failed to go out, and then brightened up with, "How 'bout yerself, stranger, – married man?"

For reply, he opened his watch, slipped it from the thong which served for a chain, and passed it over. Belden pricked up the slush-lamp, surveyed the inside of the case critically, and swearing admiringly to himself, handed it over to Louis Savoy. With numerous "By gars!" he finally surrendered it to Prince, and they noticed that his hands trembled and his eyes took on a peculiar softness. And so it passed from horny hand to horny hand – the pasted photograph of a woman, the clinging kind that such men fancy, with a babe at the breast. Those who had not yet seen the wonder were keen with curiosity; those who had, became silent and retrospective. They could face the pinch of famine, the grip of scurvy, or the quick death by field or flood; but the pictured semblance of a

stranger woman and child made women and children of them all.

"Never have seen the youngster yet, – he 's a boy, she says, and two years old," said the stranger as he received the treasure back. A lingering moment he gazed upon it, then snapped the case and turned away, but not quick enough to hide the restrained rush of tears.

Malemute Kid led him to a bunk and bade him turn in.

"Call me at four, sharp. Don't fail me," were his last words, and a moment later he was breathing in the heaviness of exhausted sleep.

"By Jove! he's a plucky chap," commented Prince. "Three hours' sleep after seventy-five miles with the dogs, and then the trail again. Who is he, Kid?"

"Jack Westondale. Been in going on three years, with nothing but the name of working like a horse, and any amount of bad luck to his credit. I never knew him, but Sitka Charley told me about him."

"It seems hard that a man with a sweet young wife like his should be putting in his years in this God-forsaken hole, where every year counts two on the outside."

"The trouble with him is clean grit and stubbornness. He 's cleaned up twice with a stake, but lost it both times."

Here the conversation was broken off by an uproar from Bettles, for the effect had begun to wear away. And soon the bleak years of monotonous grub and deadening toil were being forgotten in rough merriment. Malemute Kid alone seemed unable to lose himself, and cast many an anxious look at his watch. Once he put on his mittens and beaver-skin cap, and leaving the cabin, fell to rummaging about in the cache.

Nor could he wait the hour designated; for he was fifteen minutes ahead of time in rousing his guest. The young giant had stiffened badly, and brisk rubbing was necessary to bring him to his feet. He tottered painfully out of the cabin, to find his dogs harnessed and everything ready for the start. The company wished him good luck and a short chase, while Father Roubeau, hurriedly blessing him, led the stampede for the cabin; and small wonder, for it is not good to face seventy-four degrees below zero with naked ears and hands.

Malemute Kid saw him to the main trail, and there, gripping his hand heartily, gave him advice.

"You'll find a hundred pounds of salmon-eggs on the sled," he said. "The dogs will go as far on that as with one hundred and fifty of fish, and you can't get dog-food at Pelly, as you probably expected." The stranger started, and his eyes flashed, but he did not interrupt. "You can't get an ounce of food for dog or man till you reach Five Fingers, and that 's a stiff two hundred miles. Watch out for open water on the Thirty Mile River, and be sure you take the big cut-off above Le Barge."

"How did you know it? Surely the news can't be ahead of me already?"

"I don't know it; and what's more, I don't want to know it. But you never owned that team you're chasing. Sitka Charley sold it to them last spring. But he sized you up to me as square once, and believe him. I've seen your face; I like it. And I've seen – why, damn you, hit the high places for salt water and that wife of yours, and" – Here the Kid unmittened and jerked out his sack.

"No; I don't need it," and the tears froze on his cheeks as he convulsively gripped Malemute Kid's hand.

"Then don't spare the dogs; cut them out of the traces as fast as they drop; buy them, and think they 're cheap at ten dollars a pound. You can get them at Five Fingers, Little Salmon, and the Hootalinqua. And watch out for wet feet," was his

parting advice. "Keep a-traveling up to twenty-five, but if it gets below that, build a fire and change your socks."

Fifteen minutes had barely elapsed when the jingle of bells announced new arrivals. The door opened, and a mounted policeman of the Northwest Territory entered, followed by two half-breed dog-drivers. Like Westondale, they were heavily armed and showed signs of fatigue. The half-breeds had been born to the trail, and bore it easily; but the young policeman was badly exhausted. Still, the dogged obstinacy of his race held him to the pace he had set, and would hold him till he dropped in his tracks.

"When did Westondale pull out?" he asked. "He stopped here, didn't he?" This was supererogatory, for the tracks told their own tale too well.

Malemute Kid had caught Belden's eye, and he, scenting the wind, replied evasively, "A right part while back."

"Come, my man; speak up," the policeman admonished.

"Yeh seem to want him right smart. Hez he ben gittin' cantankerous down Dawson way?"

"Held up Harry McFarland's for forty thousand; exchanged it at the P. C. store for a check on Seattle; and who's to stop the cashing of it if we don't overtake him? When did he pull out?"

Every eye suppressed its excitement, for Malemute Kid had given the cue, and the young officer encountered wooden faces on every hand.

Striding over to Prince, he put the question to him. Though it hurt him, gazing into the frank, earnest face of his fellow countryman, he replied inconsequentially on the state of the trail.

Then he espied Father Roubeau, who could not lie. "A quarter of an hour ago," the priest answered; "but he had four hours' rest for himself and dogs."

"Fifteen minutes' start, and he's fresh! My God!" The poor fellow staggered back, half fainting from exhaustion and disappointment, murmuring something about the run from Dawson in ten hours and the dogs being played out.

Malemute Kid forced a mug of punch upon him; then he turned for the door, ordering the dog-drivers to follow. But the warmth and promise of rest were too tempting, and they objected strenuously. The Kid was conversant with their French patois, and followed it anxiously.

They swore that the dogs were gone up; that Siwash and Babette would have to be shot before the first mile was covered; that the rest were almost as bad; and that it would be better for all hands to rest up.

"Lend me five dogs?" he asked, turning to Malemute Kid.

But the Kid shook his head.

"I'll sign a check on Captain Constantine for five thousand, – here's my papers, – I'm authorized to draw at my own discretion."

Again the silent refusal.

"Then I'll requisition them in the name of the Queen."

Smiling incredulously, the Kid glanced at his well-stocked arsenal, and the Englishman, realizing his impotency, turned for the door. But the dog-drivers still objecting, he whirled upon them fiercely, calling them women and curs. The swart face of the older half-breed flushed angrily, as he drew himself up and promised in good, round terms that he would travel his leader off his legs, and would then be delighted to plant him in the snow.

The young officer – and it required his whole will – walked steadily to the door, exhibiting a freshness he did not possess. But they all knew and appreciated his proud effort; nor could he veil the twinges of agony that shot across his face. Covered with frost, the dogs were curled up in the snow, and it was almost impossible to get them to their feet. The poor brutes whined under the stinging lash, for the dog-drivers were angry and cruel; nor till Babette, the leader, was cut from the traces, could they break out the sled and get under way.

"A dirty scoundrel and a liar!" "By gar! him no good!" "A thief!" "Worse than an Indian!" It was evident that they were angry – first, at the way they had been deceived; and second, at the outraged ethics of the Northland, where honesty, above all, was man's prime jewel. "An' we gave the cuss a hand, after knowin' what he'd did." All eyes were turned accusingly upon Malemute Kid, who rose from the corner where he had been making Babette comfortable, and silently emptied the bowl for a final round of punch.

"It's a cold night, boys, – a bitter cold night," was the irrelevant commencement of his defense. "You've all traveled trail, and know what that stands for. Don't jump a dog when he's down. You've only heard one side. A whiter man than Jack Westondale never ate from the same pot nor stretched blanket with you or me. Last fall he gave his whole clean-up, forty thousand, to Joe Castrell, to buy in on Dominion. To-day he'd be a millionaire. But while he stayed behind at Circle City, taking care of his partner with the scurvy, what does Castrell do? Goes into McFarland's, jumps the limit, and drops the whole sack. Found him dead in the snow the next day. And poor Jack laying his plans to go out this winter to his wife and the boy he's never seen. You'll notice he took exactly what his partner lost, – forty thousand. Well, he's gone out; and what are you going to do about it?"

The Kid glanced round the circle of his judges, noted the softening of their faces, then raised his mug aloft. "So a health to the man on trail this night; may his grub hold out;

may his dogs keep their legs; may his matches never miss fire. God prosper him; good luck go with him; and—"

"Confusion to the Mounted Police!" interpolated Bettles, to the crash of the empty cups.

The White Silence (1899)

Carmen won't last more than a couple of days. "Mason spat out a chunk of ice and surveyed the poor animal ruefully, then put her foot in his mouth and proceeded to bite out the ice which clustered cruelly between the toes.

"I never saw a dog with a highfalutin' name that ever was worth a rap," he said, as he concluded his task and shoved her aside. "They just fade away and die under the responsibility. Did ye ever see one go wrong with a sensible name like Cassiar, Siwash, or Husky? No, sir! Take a look at Shookum here, he's —; "

Snap! The lean brute flashed up, the white teeth just missing Mason's throat.

"Ye will, will ye?" A shrewd clout behind the ear with the butt of the dogwhip stretched the animal in the snow, quivering softly, a yellow slaver dripping from its fangs.

"As I was saying, just look at Shookum, here – he 's got the spirit. Bet ye he eats Carmen before the week's out."

"I'll bank another proposition against that," replied Malemute Kid, reversing the frozen bread placed before the fire to thaw. "We'll eat Shookum before the trip is over. What d' ye say, Ruth?"

The Indian woman settled the coffee with a piece of ice, glanced from Malemute Kid to her husband, then at the dogs, but vouchsafed no reply. It was such a palpable truism that

none was necessary. Two hundred miles of unbroken trail in prospect, with a scant six days' grub for themselves and none for the dogs, could admit no other alternative. The two men and the woman grouped about the fire and began their meagre meal. The dogs lay in their harnesses, for it was a midday halt, and watched each mouthful enviously.

"No more lunches after to-day," said Malemute Kid. "And we've got to keep a close eye on the dogs, – they're getting vicious. They'd just as soon pull a fellow down as not, if they get a chance."

"And I was president of an Epworth once, and taught in the Sunday school." Having irrelevantly delivered himself of this, Mason fell into a dreamy contemplation of his steaming moccasins, but was aroused by Ruth filling his cup. "Thank God, we've got slathers of tea! I've seen it growing, down in Tennessee. What wouldn't I give for a hot corn pone just now! Never mind, Ruth; you won't starve much longer, nor wear moccasins either."

The woman threw off her gloom at this, and in her eyes welled up a great love for her white lord, – the first white man she had ever seen, – the first man whom she had known to treat a woman as something better than a mere animal or beast of burden.

"Yes, Ruth," continued her husband, having recourse to the macaronic jargon in which it was alone possible for them to understand each other; "wait till we clean up and pull for the Outside. We'll take the White Man's canoe and go to the Salt Water. Yes, bad water, rough water, – great mountains dance up and down all the time. And so big, so far, so far away, – you travel ten sleep, twenty sleep, forty sleep" (he graphically enumerated the days on his fingers), "all the time water, bad water. Then you come to great village, plenty people, just the same mosquitoes next summer. Wigwams oh, so high, – ten, twenty pines. Hi-yu skookum!"

He paused impotently, cast an appealing glance at Malemute Kid, then laboriously placed the twenty pines, end on end, by

sign language. Malemute Kid smiled with cheery cynicism; but Ruth's eyes were wide with wonder, and with pleasure; for she half believed he was joking, and such condescension pleased her poor woman's heart.

"And then you step into a – a box, and pouf! up you go." He tossed his empty cup in the air by way of illustration, and as he deftly caught it, cried: "And biff! down you come. Oh, great medicine-men! You go Fort Yukon, I go Arctic City, – twenty-five sleep, – big string, all the time, – I catch him string, – I say, 'Hello, Ruth! How are ye?' – and you say, 'Is that my good husband?' – and I say 'Yes,' – and you say, 'No can bake good bread, no more soda,' – then say, 'Look in cache, under flour; good-by.' You look and catch plenty soda. All the time you Fort Yukon, me Arctic City. Hi-yu medicine-man!"

Ruth smiled so ingenuously at the fairy story, that both men burst into laughter. A row among the dogs cut short the wonders of the Outside, and by the time the snarling combatants were separated, she had lashed the sleds and all was ready for the trail.

"Mush! Baldy! Hi! Mush on!" Mason worked his whip smartly, and as the dogs whined low in the traces, broke out the sled with the gee-pole. Ruth followed with the second team, leaving Malemute Kid, who had helped her start, to bring up the rear. Strongman, brute that he was, capable of felling an ox at a blow, he could not bear to beat the poor animals, but humored them as a dog-driver rarely does, – nay, almost wept with them in their misery.

"Come, mush on there, you poor sore-footed brutes!" he murmured, after several ineffectual attempts to start the load. But his patience was at last rewarded, and though whimpering with pain, they hastened to join their fellows.

No more conversation; the toil of the trail will not permit such extravagance. And of all deadening labors, that of the Northland trail is the worst. Happy is the man who can weather a day's travel at the price of silence, and that on a beaten track.

And of all heart-breaking labors, that of breaking trail is the worst. At every step the great webbed shoe sinks till the snow is level with the knee. Then up, straight up, the deviation of a fraction of an inch being a certain precursor of disaster, the snowshoe must be lifted till the surface is cleared; then forward, down, and the other foot is raised perpendicularly for the matter of half a yard. He who tries this for the first time, if haply he avoids bringing his shoes in dangerous propinquity and measures not his length on the treacherous footing, will give up exhausted at the end of a hundred yards; he who can keep out of the way of the dogs for a whole day may well crawl into his sleeping-bag with a clear conscience and a pride which passeth all understanding; and he who travels twenty sleeps on the Long Trail is a man whom the gods may envy.

The afternoon wore on, and with the awe, born of the White Silence, the voiceless travelers bent to their work. Nature has many tricks wherewith she convinces man of his finity, – the ceaseless flow of the tides, the fury of the storm, the shock of the earthquake, the long roll of heaven's artillery, – but the most tremendous, the most stupefying of all, is the passive phase of the White Silence. All movement ceases, the sky clears, the heavens are as brass; the slightest whisper seems sacrilege, and man becomes timid, affrighted at the sound of his own voice. Sole speck of life journeying across the ghostly wastes of a dead world, he trembles at his audacity, realizes that his is a maggot's life, nothing more. Strange thoughts arise unsummoned, and the mystery of all things strives for utterance. And the fear of death, of God, of the universe, comes over him, – the hope of the Resurrection and the Life, the yearning for immortality, the vain striving of the imprisoned essence, – it is then, if ever, man walks alone with God.

So wore the day away. The river took a great bend, and Mason headed his team for the cut-off across the narrow neck of land. But the dogs balked at the high bank. Again and again, though Ruth and Malemute Kid were shoving on the sled, they slipped back. Then came the concerted effort. The miserable creatures, weak from hunger, exerted their last

strength. Up – up – the sled poised on the top of the bank; but the leader swung the string of dogs behind him to the right, fouling Mason's snowshoes. The result was grievous. Mason was whipped off his feet; one of the dogs fell in the traces; and the sled toppled back, dragging everything to the bottom again.

Slash! the whip fell among the dogs savagely, especially upon the one which had fallen.

"Don't, Mason," entreated Malemute Kid; "the poor devil 's on its last legs. Wait and we 'll put my team on."

Mason deliberately withheld the whip till the last word had fallen, then out flashed the long lash, completely curling about the offending creature's body. Carmen – for it was Carmen – cowered in the snow, cried piteously, then rolled over on her side.

It was a tragic moment, a pitiful incident of the trail, – a dying dog, two comrades in anger. Ruth glanced solicitously from man to man. But Malemute Kid restrained himself, though there was a world of reproach in his eyes, and bending over the dog, cut the traces. No word was spoken. The teams were double-spanned and the difficulty overcome; the sleds were under way again, the dying dog dragging herself along in the rear. As long as an animal can travel, it is not shot, and this last chance is accorded it, – the crawling into camp, if it can, in the hope of a moose being killed.

Already penitent for his angry action, but too stubborn to make amends, Mason toiled on at the head of the cavalcade, little dreaming that danger hovered in the air. The timber clustered thick in the sheltered bottom, and through this they threaded their way. Fifty feet or more from the trail towered a lofty pine. For generations it had stood there, and for generations destiny had had this one end in view, – perhaps the same had been decreed of Mason.

He stooped to fasten the loosened thong of his moccasin. The sleds came to a halt and the dogs lay down in the snow

without a whimper. The stillness was weird; not a breath rustled the frost-encrusted forest; the cold and silence of outer space had chilled the heart and smote the trembling lips of nature. A sigh pulsed through the air, – they did not seem to actually hear it, but rather felt it, like the premonition of movement in a motionless void. Then the great tree, burdened with its weight of years and snow, played its last part in the tragedy of life. He heard the warning crash and attempted to spring up, but almost erect, caught the blow squarely on the shoulder.

The sudden danger, the quick death, – how often had Malemute Kid faced it! The pine needles were still quivering as he gave his commands and sprang into action. Nor did the Indian girl faint or raise her voice in idle wailing, as might many of her white sisters. At his order, she threw her weight on the end of a quickly extemporized handspike, easing the pressure and listening to her husband's groans, while Malemute Kid attacked the tree with his axe. The steel rang merrily as it bit into the frozen trunk, each stroke being accompanied by a forced, audible respiration, the "Huh!" "Huh!" of the woodsman. At last the Kid laid the pitiable thing that was once a man in the snow. But worse than his comrade's pain was the dumb anguish in the woman's face, the blended look of hopeful, hopeless query. Little was said; those of the Northland are early taught the futility of words and the inestimable value of deeds. With the temperature at sixty-five below zero, a man cannot lie many minutes in the snow and live. So the sled-lashings were cut, and the sufferer, rolled in furs, laid on a couch of boughs. Before him roared a fire, built of the very wood which wrought the mishap. Behind and partially over him was stretched the primitive fly, – a piece of canvas, which caught the radiating heat and threw it back and down upon him, – a trick which men may know who study physics at the fount.

And men who have shared their bed with death know when the call is sounded. Mason was terribly crushed. The most cursory examination revealed it. His right arm, leg, and back, were broken; his limbs were paralyzed from the hips; and the

likelihood of internal injuries was large. An occasional moan was his only sign of life.

No hope; nothing to be done. The pitiless night crept slowly by, – Ruth's portion, the despairing stoicism of her race, and Malemute Kid adding new lines to his face of bronze. In fact, Mason suffered least of all, for he spent his time in Eastern Tennessee, in the Great Smoky Mountains, living over the scenes of his childhood. And most pathetic was the melody of his long-forgotten Southern vernacular, as he raved of swimming-holes and coon-hunts and watermelon raids. It was as Greek to Ruth, but the Kid understood and felt, – felt as only one can feel who has been shut out for years from all that civilization means.

Morning brought consciousness to the stricken man, and Malemute Kid bent closer to catch his whispers.

"You remember when we foregathered on the Tanana, four years come next ice-run? I didn't care so much for her then. It was more like she was pretty, and there was a smack of excitement about it, think. But d' ye know, I've come to think a heap of her. She's been a good wife to me, always at my shoulder in the pinch. And when it comes to trading, you know there isn't her equal. D'ye recollect the time she shot the Moosehorn Rapids to pull you and me off that rock, the bullets whipping the water like hailstones? – and the time of the famine at Nuklukyeto? – or when she raced the ice-run to bring the news? Yes, she's been a good wife to me, better'n that other one. Didn't know I 'd been there? Never told you, eh? Well, I tried it once, down in the States. That's why I'm here. Been raised together, too. I came away to give her a chance for divorce. She got it.

"But that's got nothing to do with Ruth. I had thought of cleaning up and pulling for the Outside next year, – her and I, – but it's too late. Don't send her back to her people, Kid. It's beastly hard for a woman to go back. Think of it! – nearly four years on our bacon and beans and flour and dried fruit, and then to go back to her fish and cariboo. It's not good for her to have tried our ways, to come to know they're better'n her

people's, and then return to them. Take care of her, Kid, – why don't you, – but no, you always fought shy of them, – and you never told me why you came to this country. Be kind to her, and send her back to the States as soon as you can. But fix it so as she can come back, – liable to get homesick, you know.

"And the youngster – it's drawn us closer, Kid. I only hope it is a boy. Think of it! – flesh of my flesh, Kid. He mustn't stop in this country. And if it's a girl, why she can't. Sell my furs; they'll fetch at least five thousand, and I've got as much more with the company. And handle my interests with yours. I think that bench claim will show up. See that he gets a good schooling; and Kid, above all, don't let him come back. This country was not made for white men. "I'm a gone man, Kid. Three or four sleeps at the best. You've got to go on. You must go on! Remember, it's my wife, it's my boy, – O God! I hope it's a boy! You can't stay by me, – and charge you, a dying man, to pull on."

"Give me three days," pleaded Malemute Kid. "You may change for the better; something may turn up."

"No."

"Just three days."

"You must pull on."

"Two days."

"It's my wife and my boy, Kid. You would not ask it."

"One day."

"No, no! I charge" —

"Only one day. We can shave it through on the grub, and might knock over a moose."

"No, – all right; one day, but not a minute more. And Kid, don't – don't leave me to face it alone. Just a shot, one pull on the trigger. You understand. Think of it! Think of it! Flesh of my flesh, and I'll never live to see him!

"Send Ruth here. I want to say good-by and tell her that she must think of the boy and not wait till I'm dead. She might refuse to go with you if I didn't. Good-by, old man; good-by.

"Kid! I say – a – sink a hole above the pup, next to the slide. I panned out forty cents on my shovel there.

"And Kid!" he stooped lower to catch the last faint words, the dying man's surrender of his pride. "I'm sorry – for – you know – Carmen."

Leaving the girl crying softly over her man, Malemute Kid slipped into his parka and snowshoes, tucked his rifle under his arm, and crept away into the forest. He was no tyro in the stern sorrows of the Northland, but never had he faced so stiff a problem as this. In the abstract, it was a plain, mathematical proposition, – three possible lives as against one doomed one. But now he hesitated. For five years, shoulder to shoulder, on the rivers and trails, in the camps and mines, facing death by field and flood and famine, had they knitted the bonds of their comradeship. So close was the tie, that he had often been conscious of a vague jealousy of Ruth, from the first time she had come between. And now it must be severed by his own hand.

Though he prayed for a moose, just one moose, all game seemed to have deserted the land, and nightfall found the exhausted man crawling into camp, light-handed, heavy-hearted. An uproar from the dogs and shrill cries from Ruth hastened him.

Bursting into the camp, he saw the girl in the midst of the snarling pack, laying about her with an axe. The dogs had broken the iron rule of their masters and were rushing the grub. He joined the issue with his rifle reversed, and the hoary game of natural selection was played out with all the

ruthlessness of its primeval environment. Rifle and axe went up and down, hit or missed with monotonous regularity; lithe bodies flashed, with wild eyes and dripping fangs; and man and beast fought for supremacy to the bitterest conclusion. Then the beaten brutes crept to the edge of the firelight, licking their wounds, voicing their misery to the stars.

The whole stock of dried salmon had been devoured, and perhaps five pounds of flour remained to tide them over two hundred miles of wilderness. Ruth returned to her husband, while Malemute Kid cut up the warm body of one of the dogs, the skull of which had been crushed by the axe. Every portion was carefully put away, save the hide and offal, which were cast to his fellows of the moment before.

Morning brought fresh trouble. The animals were turning on each other. Carmen, who still clung to her slender thread of life, was downed by the pack. The lash fell among them unheeded. They cringed and cried under the blows, but refused to scatter till the last wretched bit had disappeared, – bones, hide, hair, everything.

Malemute Kid went about his work, listening to Mason, who was back in Tennessee, delivering tangled discourses and wild exhortations to his brethren of other days.

Taking advantage of neighboring pines, he worked rapidly, and Ruth watched him make a cache similar to those sometimes used by hunters to preserve their meat from the wolverines and dogs. One after the other, he bent the tops of two small pines toward each other and nearly to the ground, making them fast with thongs of moosehide. Then he beat the dogs into submission and harnessed them to two of the sleds, loading the same with everything but the furs which enveloped Mason. These he wrapped and lashed tightly about him, fastening either end of the robes to the bent pines. A single stroke of his hunting knife would release them and send the body high in the air.

Ruth had received her husband's last wishes and made no struggle. Poor girl, she had learned the lesson of obedience

well. From a child, she had bowed, and seen all women bow, to the lords of creation, and it did not seem in the nature of things for woman to resist. The Kid permitted her one outburst of grief, as she kissed her husband – her won people had no such custom – then led her to the foremost sled and helped her into her snowshoes. Blindly, instinctively, she took the gee pole and whip, and "mushed" the dogs out on the trail. Then he returned to Mason, who had fallen into a come, and long after she was out of sight crouched by the fire, waiting, hoping, praying for his comrade to die.

It is not pleasant to be alone with painful thoughts in the White Silence. The silence of gloom is merciful, shrouding one as with protection and breathing a thousand intangible sympathies; but the bright White Silence, clear and cold, under steely skies, is pitiless.

An hour passed – two hours – but the man would not die. At high noon the sun, without raising its rim above the southern horizon, threw a suggestion of fire athwart the heavens, then quickly drew it back. Malemute Kid roused and dragged himself to his comrade's side. He cast one glance about him. The White Silence seemed to sneer, and a great fear came upon him. There was a sharp report; mason swung into his aerial sepulcher, and Malemute Kid lashed the dogs into a wild gallop as he fled across the snow.

In A Far Country (1899)

When a man journeys into a far country, he must be prepared to forget many of the things he has learned, and to acquire such customs as are inherent with existence in the new land; he must abandon the old ideals and the old gods, and oftentimes he must reverse the very codes by which his conduct has hitherto been shaped. To those who have the protean faculty of adaptability, the novelty of such change may even be a source of pleasure; but to those who happen to be hardened to the ruts in which they were created, the

pressure of the altered environment is unbearable, and they chafe in body and in spirit under the new restrictions which they do not understand. This chafing is bound to act and react, producing divers evils and leading to various misfortunes. It were better for the man who cannot fit himself to the new groove to return to his own country; if he delay too long, he will surely die.

The man who turns his back upon the comforts of an elder civilization, to face the savage youth, the primordial simplicity of the North, may estimate success at an inverse ratio to the quantity and quality of his hopelessly fixed habits. He will soon discover, if he be a fit candidate, that the material habits are the less important. The exchange of such things as a dainty menu for rough fare, of the stiff leather shoe for the soft, shapeless moccasin, of the feather bed for a couch in the snow, is after all a very easy matter. But his pinch will come in learning properly to shape his mind's attitude toward all things, and especially toward his fellow man. For the courtesies of ordinary life, he must substitute unselfishness, forbearance, and tolerance. Thus, and thus only, can he gain that pearl of great price, – true comradeship. He must not say "Thank you;" he must mean it without opening his mouth, and prove it by responding in kind. In short, he must substitute the deed for the word, the spirit for the letter.

When the world rang with the tale of Arctic gold, and the lure of the North gripped the heartstrings of men, Carter Weatherbee threw up his snug clerkship, turned the half of his savings over to his wife, and with the remainder bought an outfit. There was no romance in his nature, – the bondage of commerce had crushed all that; he was simply tired of the ceaseless grind, and wished to risk great hazards in view of corresponding returns. Like many another fool, disdaining the old trails used by the Northland pioneers for a score of years, he hurried to Edmonton in the spring of the year; and there, unluckily for his soul's welfare, he allied himself with a party of men.

There was nothing unusual about this party, except its plans. Even its goal, like that of all other parties, was the Klondike.

But the route it had mapped out to attain that goal took away the breath of the hardiest native, born and bred to the vicissitudes of the Northwest. Even Jacques Baptiste, born of a Chippewa woman and a renegade *voyageur* (having raised his first whimpers in a deerskin lodge north of the sixty-fifth parallel, and had the same hushed by blissful sucks of raw tallow), was surprised. Though he sold his services to them and agreed to travel even to the never-opening ice, he shook his head ominously whenever his advice was asked.

Percy Cuthfert's evil star must have been in the ascendant, for he, too, joined this company of argonauts. He was an ordinary man, with a bank account as deep as his culture, which is saying a good deal. He had no reason to embark on such a venture, – no reason in the world, save that he suffered from an abnormal development of sentimentality. He mistook this for the true spirit of romance and adventure. Many another man has done the like, and made as fatal a mistake.

The first break-up of spring found the party following the ice-run of Elk River. It was an imposing fleet, for the outfit was large, and they were accompanied by a disreputable contingent of half-breed *voyageurs* with their women and children. Day in and day out, they labored with the bateaux and canoes, fought mosquitoes and other kindred pests, or sweated and swore at the portages. Severe toil like this lays a man naked to the very roots of his soul, and ere Lake Athabasca was lost in the south, each member of the party had hoisted his true colors.

The two shirks and chronic grumblers were Carter Weatherbee and Percy Cuthfert. The whole party complained less of its aches and pains than did either of them. Not once did they volunteer for the thousand and one petty duties of the camp. A bucket of water to be brought, an extra armful of wood to be chopped, the dishes to be washed and wiped, a search to be made through the outfit for some suddenly indispensable article, – and these two effete scions of civilization discovered sprains or blisters requiring instant attention. They were the first to turn in at night, with a score of

tasks yet undone; the last to turn out in the morning, when the start should be in readiness before the breakfast was begun. They were the first to fall to at meal-time, the last to have a hand in the cooking; the first to dive for a slim delicacy, the last to discover they had added to their own another man's share. If they toiled at the oars, they slyly cut the water at each stroke and allowed the boat's momentum to float up the blade. They thought nobody noticed; but their comrades swore under their breaths and grew to hate them, while Jacques Baptiste sneered openly and damned them from morning till night. But Jacques Baptiste was no gentleman.

At the Great Slave, Hudson Bay dogs were purchased, and the fleet sank to the guards with its added burden of dried fish and pemmican. Then canoe and bateau answered to the swift current of the Mackenzie, and they plunged into the Great Barren Ground. Every likely-looking "feeder" was prospected, but the elusive "pay-dirt" danced ever to the north. At the Great Bear, overcome by the common dread of the Unknown Lands, their *voyageurs* began to desert, and Fort of Good Hope saw the last and bravest bending to the tow-lines as they bucked the current down which they had so treacherously glided. Jacques Baptiste alone remained. Had he not sworn to travel even to the never-opening ice?

The lying charts, compiled in main from hearsay, were now constantly consulted. And they felt the need of hurry, for the sun had already passed its northern solstice and was leading the winter south again. Skirting the shores of the bay, where the Mackenzie disembogues into the Arctic Ocean, they entered the mouth of the Little Peel River. Then began the arduous up-stream toil, and the two Incapables fared worse than ever. Tow-line and pole, paddle and tump-line, rapids and portages, – such tortures served to give the one a deep disgust for great hazards, and printed for the other a fiery text on the true romance of adventure. One day they waxed mutinous, and being vilely cursed by Jacques Baptiste, turned, as worms sometimes will. But the half-breed thrashed the twain, and sent them, bruised and bleeding, about their work. It was the first time either had been man-handled.

Abandoning their river craft at the head-waters of the Little Peel, they consumed the rest of the summer in the great portage over the Mackenzie watershed to the West Rat. This little stream fed the Porcupine, which in turn joined the Yukon where that mighty highway of the North countermarches on the Arctic Circle. But they had lost in the race with winter, and one day they tied their rafts to the thick eddy-ice and hurried their goods ashore. That night the river jammed and broke several times; the following morning it had fallen asleep for good.

"We can't be more 'n four hundred miles from the Yukon," concluded Sloper, multiplying his thumb nails by the scale of the map. The council, in which the two Incapables had whined to excellent disadvantage, was drawing to a close. "Hudson Bay Post, long time ago. No use um now." Jacques Baptiste's father had made the trip for the Fur Company in the old days, incidentally marking the trail with a couple of frozen toes.

"Sufferin' cracky!" cried another of the party. "No whites?"

"Nary white," Sloper sententiously affirmed; "but it 's only five hundred more up the Yukon to Dawson. Call it a rough thousand from here."

Weatherbee and Cuthfert groaned in chorus.

"How long 'll that take, Baptiste?"

The half-breed figured for a moment. "Workum like hell, no man play out, ten – twenty – forty – fifty days. Um babies come" (designating the Incapables), "no can tell. Mebbe when hell freeze over; mebbe not then."

The manufacture of snowshoes and moccasins ceased. Somebody called the name of an absent member, who came out of an ancient cabin at the edge of the camp-fire and joined them. The cabin was one of the many mysteries which lurk in the vast recesses of the North. Built when and by whom, no man could tell. Two graves in the open, piled high

with stones, perhaps contained the secret of those early wanderers. But whose hand had piled the stones?

The moment had come. Jacques Baptiste paused in the fitting of a harness and pinned the struggling dog in the snow. The cook made mute protest for delay, threw a handful of bacon into a noisy pot of beans, then came to attention. Sloper rose to his feet. His body was a ludicrous contrast to the healthy physiques of the Incapables. Yellow and weak, fleeing from a South American fever-hole, he had not broken his flight across the zones, and was still able to toil with men. His weight was probably ninety pounds, with the heavy hunting-knife thrown in, and his grizzled hair told of a prime which had ceased to be. The fresh young muscles of either Weatherbee or Cuthfert were equal to ten times the endeavor of his; yet he could walk them into the earth in a day's journey. And all this day he had whipped his stronger comrades into venturing a thousand miles of the stiffest hardship man can conceive. He was the incarnation of the unrest of his race, and the old Teutonic stubbornness, dashed with the quick grasp and action of the Yankee, held the flesh in the bondage of the spirit.

"All those in favor of going on with the dogs as soon as the ice sets, say ay."

"Ay!" rang out eight voices, – voices destined to string a trail of oaths along many a hundred miles of pain.

"Contrary minded?"

"No!" For the first time the Incapables were united without some compromise of personal interests.

"And what are you going to do about it?" Weatherbee added belligerently.

"Majority rule! Majority rule!" clamored the rest of the party.

"I know the expedition is liable to fall through if you don't come," Sloper replied sweetly; "but I guess, if we try real hard, we can manage to do without you. What do you say, boys?"

The sentiment was cheered to the echo.

"But I say, you know," Cuthfert ventured apprehensively; "what 's a chap like me to do?"

"Ain't you coming with us?"

"No-o."

"Then do as you damn well please. We won't have nothing to say."

"Kind o' calkilate yuh might settle it with that canoodlin' pardner of yourn," suggested a heavy-going Westerner from the Dakotas, at the same time pointing out Weatherbee. "He 'll be shore to ask yuh what yur a-goin' to do when it comes to cookin' an' gatherin' the wood."

"Then we 'll consider it all arranged," concluded Sloper. "We 'll pull out to-morrow, if we camp within five miles, – just to get everything in running order and remember if we 've forgotten anything."

The sleds groaned by on their steel-shod runners, and the dogs strained low in the harnesses in which they were born to die. Jacques Baptiste paused by the side of Sloper to get a last glimpse of the cabin. The smoke curled up pathetically from the Yukon stove-pipe. The two Incapables were watching them from the doorway.

Sloper laid his hand on the other's shoulder.

"Jacques Baptiste, did you ever hear of the Kilkenny cats?"

The half-breed shook his head.

"Well, my friend and good comrade, the Kilkenny cats fought till neither hide, nor hair, nor yowl, was left. You understand? – till nothing was left. Very good. Now, these two men don't like work. They won't work. We know that. They 'll be all alone in that cabin all winter, – a mighty long, dark winter. Kilkenny cats, – well?"

The Frenchman in Baptiste shrugged his shoulders, but the Indian in him was silent. Nevertheless, it was an eloquent shrug, pregnant with prophecy.

Things prospered in the little cabin at first. The rough badinage of their comrades had made Weatherbee and Cuthfert conscious of the mutual responsibility which had devolved upon them; besides, there was not so much work after all for two healthy men. And the removal of the cruel whip-hand, or in other words the bulldozing half-breed, had brought with it a joyous reaction. At first, each strove to outdo the other, and they performed petty tasks with an unction which would have opened the eyes of their comrades who were now wearing out bodies and souls on the Long Trail.

All care was banished. The forest, which shouldered in upon them from three sides, was an inexhaustible woodyard. A few yards from their door slept the Porcupine, and a hole through its winter robe formed a bubbling spring of water, crystal clear and painfully cold. But they soon grew to find fault with even that. The hole would persist in freezing up, and thus gave them many a miserable hour of ice-chopping. The unknown builders of the cabin had extended the side-logs so as to support a cache at the rear. In this was stored the bulk of the party's provisions. Food there was, without stint, for three times the men who were fated to live upon it. But the most of it was of the kind which built up brawn and sinew, but did not tickle the palate. True, there was sugar in plenty for two ordinary men; but these two were little else than children. They early discovered the virtues of hot water judiciously saturated with sugar, and they prodigally swam their flapjacks and soaked their crusts in the rich, white syrup. Then coffee and tea, and especially the dried fruits, made disastrous inroads upon it. The first words they had were over the sugar

question. And it is a really serious thing when two men, wholly dependent upon each other for company, begin to quarrel.

Weatherbee loved to discourse blatantly on politics, while Cuthfert, who had been prone to clip his coupons and let the commonwealth jog on as best it might, either ignored the subject or delivered himself of startling epigrams. But the clerk was too obtuse to appreciate the clever shaping of thought, and this waste of ammunition irritated Cuthfert. He had been used to blinding people by his brilliancy, and it worked him quite a hardship, this loss of an audience. He felt personally aggrieved and unconsciously held his mutton-head companion responsible for it.

Save existence, they had nothing in common, – came in touch on no single point. Weatherbee was a clerk who had known naught but clerking all his life; Cuthfert was a master of arts, a dabbler in oils, and had written not a little. The one was a lower-class man who considered himself a gentleman, and the other was a gentleman who knew himself to be such. From this it may be remarked that a man can be a gentleman without possessing the first instinct of true comradeship. The clerk was as sensuous as the other was aesthetic, and his love adventures, told at great length and chiefly coined from his imagination, affected the supersensitive master of arts in the same way as so many whiffs of sewer gas. He deemed the clerk a filthy, uncultured brute, whose place was in the muck with the swine, and told him so; and he was reciprocally informed that he was a milk-and-water sissy and a cad. Weatherbee could not have defined "cad" for his life; but it satisfied its purpose, which after all seems the main point in life.

Weatherbee flatted every third note and sang such songs as "The Boston Burglar" and "The Handsome Cabin Boy," for hours at a time, while Cuthfert wept with rage, till he could stand it no longer and fled into the outer cold. But there was no escape. The intense frost could not be endured for long at a time, and the little cabin crowded them – beds, stove, table, and all – into a space of ten by twelve. The very presence of either became a personal affront to the other, and they lapsed

into sullen silences which increased in length and strength as the days went by. Occasionally, the flash of an eye or the curl of a lip got the better of them, though they strove to wholly ignore each other during these mute periods. And a great wonder sprang up in the breast of each, as to how God had ever come to create the other.

With little to do, time became an intolerable burden to them. This naturally made them still lazier. They sank into a physical lethargy which there was no escaping, and which made them rebel at the performance of the smallest chore. One morning when it was his turn to cook the common breakfast, Weatherbee rolled out of his blankets, and to the snoring of his companion, lighted first the slush-lamp and then the fire. The kettles were frozen hard, and there was no water in the cabin with which to wash. But he did not mind that. Waiting for it to thaw, he sliced the bacon and plunged into the hateful task of bread-making. Cuthfert had been slyly watching through his half-closed lids. Consequently there was a scene, in which they fervently blessed each other, and agreed, thenceforth, that each do his own cooking. A week later, Cuthfert neglected his morning ablutions, but none the less complacently ate the meal which he had cooked. Weatherbee grinned. After that the foolish custom of washing passed out of their lives.

As the sugar-pile and other little luxuries dwindled, they began to be afraid they were not getting their proper shares, and in order that they might not be robbed, they fell to gorging themselves. The luxuries suffered in this gluttonous contest, as did also the men. In the absence of fresh vegetables and exercise, their blood became impoverished, and a loathsome, purplish rash crept over their bodies. Yet they refused to heed the warning. Next, their muscles and joints began to swell, the flesh turning black, while their mouths, gums, and lips took on the color of rich cream. Instead of being drawn together by their misery, each gloated over the other's symptoms as the scurvy took its course.

They lost all regard for personal appearance, and for that matter, common decency. The cabin became a pigpen, and

never once were the beds made or fresh pine boughs laid underneath. Yet they could not keep to their blankets, as they would have wished; for the frost was inexorable, and the fire box consumed much fuel. The hair of their heads and faces grew long and shaggy, while their garments would have disgusted a ragpicker. But they did not care. They were sick, and there was no one to see; besides, it was very painful to move about.

To all this was added a new trouble, – the Fear of the North. This Fear was the joint child of the Great Cold and the Great Silence, and was born in the darkness of December, when the sun dipped below the southern horizon for good. It affected them according to their natures. Weatherbee fell prey to the grosser superstitions, and did his best to resurrect the spirits which slept in the forgotten graves. It was a fascinating thing, and in his dreams they came to him from out of the cold, and snuggled into his blankets, and told him of their toils and troubles ere they died. He shrank away from the clammy contact as they drew closer and twined their frozen limbs about him, and when they whispered in his ear of things to come, the cabin rang with his frightened shrieks. Cuthfert did not understand, – for they no longer spoke, – and when thus awakened he invariably grabbed for his revolver. Then he would sit up in bed, shivering nervously, with the weapon trained on the unconscious dreamer. Cuthfert deemed the man going mad, and so came to fear for his life.

His own malady assumed a less concrete form. The mysterious artisan who had laid the cabin, log by log, had pegged a wind-vane to the ridge-pole. Cuthfert noticed it always pointed south, and one day, irritated by its steadfastness of purpose, he turned it toward the east. He watched eagerly, but never a breath came by to disturb it. Then he turned the vane to the north, swearing never again to touch it till the wind did blow. But the air frightened him with its unearthly calm, and he often rose in the middle of the night to see if the vane had veered, – ten degrees would have satisfied him. But no, it poised above him as unchangeable as fate. His imagination ran riot, till it became to him a fetich. Sometimes he followed the path it pointed across the dismal

dominions, and allowed his soul to become saturated with the Fear. He dwelt upon the unseen and the unknown till the burden of eternity appeared to be crushing him. Everything in the Northland had that crushing effect, – the absence of life and motion; the darkness; the infinite peace of the brooding land; the ghastly silence, which made the echo of each heart-beat a sacrilege; the solemn forest which seemed to guard an awful, inexpressible something, which neither word nor thought could compass.

The world he had so recently left, with its busy nations and great enterprises, seemed very far away. Recollections occasionally obtruded, – recollections of marts and galleries and crowded thoroughfares, of evening dress and social functions, of good men and dear women he had known, – but they were dim memories of a life he had lived long centuries ago, on some other planet. This phantasm was the Reality. Standing beneath the wind-vane, his eyes fixed on the polar skies, he could not bring himself to realize that the Southland really existed, that at that very moment it was a-roar with life and action. There was no Southland, no men being born of women, no giving and taking in marriage. Beyond his bleak sky-line there stretched vast solitudes, and beyond these still vaster solitudes. There were no lands of sunshine, heavy with the perfume of flowers. Such things were only old dreams of paradise. The sunlands of the West and the spicelands of the East, the smiling Arcadias and blissful Islands of the Blest, – ha! ha! His laughter split the void and shocked him with its unwonted sound. There was no sun. This was the Universe, dead and cold and dark, and he its only citizen. Weatherbee? At such moments Weatherbee did not count. He was a Caliban, a monstrous phantom, fettered to him for untold ages, the penalty of some forgotten crime.

He lived with Death among the dead, emasculated by the sense of his own insignificance, crushed by the passive mastery of the slumbering ages. The magnitude of all things appalled him. Everything partook of the superlative save himself, – the perfect cessation of wind and motion, the immensity of the snow-covered wilderness, the height of the sky and the depth of the silence. That wind-vane, – if it would

only move. If a thunderbolt would fall, or the forest flare up in flame. The rolling up of the heavens as a scroll, the crash of Doom – anything, anything! But no, nothing moved; the Silence crowded in, and the Fear of the North laid icy fingers on his heart.

Once, like another Crusoe, by the edge of the river he came upon a track, – the faint tracery of a snowshoe rabbit on the delicate snow-crust. It was a revelation. There was life in the Northland. He would follow it, look upon it, gloat over it. He forgot his swollen muscles, plunging through the deep snow in an ecstasy of anticipation. The forest swallowed him up, and the brief midday twilight vanished; but he pursued his quest till exhausted nature asserted itself and laid him helpless in the snow. There he groaned and cursed his folly, and knew the track to be the fancy of his brain; and late that night he dragged himself into the cabin on hands and knees, his cheeks frozen and a strange numbness about his feet. Weatherbee grinned malevolently, but made no offer to help him. He thrust needles into his toes and thawed them out by the stove. A week later mortification set in.

But the clerk had his own troubles. The dead men came out of their graves more frequently now, and rarely left him, waking or sleeping. He grew to wait and dread their coming, never passing the twin cairns without a shudder. One night they came to him in his sleep and led him forth to an appointed task. Frightened into inarticulate horror, he awoke between the heaps of stones and fled wildly to the cabin. But he had lain there for some time, for his feet and cheeks were also frozen.

Sometimes he became frantic at their insistent presence, and danced about the cabin, cutting the empty air with an axe, and smashing everything within reach. During these ghostly encounters, Cuthfert huddled into his blankets and followed the madman about with a cocked revolver, ready to shoot him if he came too near. But, recovering from one of these spells, the clerk noticed the weapon trained upon him. His suspicions were aroused, and thenceforth he, too, lived in fear of his life. They watched each other closely after that, and faced about

in startled fright whenever either passed behind the other's back. This apprehensiveness became a mania which controlled them even in their sleep. Through mutual fear they tacitly let the slush-lamp burn all night, and saw to a plentiful supply of bacon-grease before retiring. The slightest movement on the part of one was sufficient to arouse the other, and many a still watch their gazes countered as they shook beneath their blankets with fingers on the trigger-guards.

What with the Fear of the North, the mental strain, and the ravages of the disease, they lost all semblance of humanity, taking on the appearance of wild beasts, hunted and desperate. Their cheeks and noses, as an aftermath of the freezing, had turned black. Their frozen toes had begun to drop away at the first and second joints. Every movement brought pain, but the fire box was insatiable, wringing a ransom of torture from their miserable bodies. Day in, day out, it demanded its food, – a veritable pound of flesh, – and they dragged themselves into the forest to chop wood on their knees. Once, crawling thus in search of dry sticks, unknown to each other they entered a thicket from opposite sides. Suddenly, without warning, two peering death's-heads confronted each other. Suffering had so transformed them that recognition was impossible. They sprang to their feet, shrieking with terror, and dashed away on their mangled stumps; and falling at the cabin door, they clawed and scratched like demons till they discovered their mistake.

Occasionally they lapsed normal, and during one of these sane intervals, the chief bone of contention, the sugar, had been divided equally between them. They guarded their separate sacks, stored up in the cache, with jealous eyes; for there were but a few cupfuls left, and they were totally devoid of faith in each other. But one day Cuthfert made a mistake. Hardly able to move, sick with pain, with his head swimming and eyes blinded, he crept into the cache, sugar canister in hand, and mistook Weatherbee's sack for his own.

January had been born but a few days when this occurred. The sun had some time since passed its lowest southern

declination, and at meridian now threw flaunting streaks of yellow light upon the northern sky. On the day following his mistake with the sugar-bag, Cuthfert found himself feeling better, both in body and in spirit. As noontime drew near and the day brightened, he dragged himself outside to feast on the evanescent glow, which was to him an earnest of the sun's future intentions. Weatherbee was also feeling somewhat better, and crawled out beside him. They propped themselves in the snow beneath the moveless wind-vane, and waited.

The stillness of death was about them. In other climes, when nature falls into such moods, there is a subdued air of expectancy, a waiting for some small voice to take up the broken strain. Not so in the North. The two men had lived seeming aeons in this ghostly peace. They could remember no song of the past; they could conjure no song of the future. This unearthly calm had always been, – the tranquil silence of eternity.

Their eyes were fixed upon the north. Unseen, behind their backs, behind the towering mountains to the south, the sun swept toward the zenith of another sky than theirs. Sole spectators of the mighty canvas, they watched the false dawn slowly grow. A faint flame began to glow and smoulder. It deepened in intensity, ringing the changes of reddish-yellow, purple, and saffron. So bright did it become that Cuthfert thought the sun must surely be behind it, – a miracle, the sun rising in the north! Suddenly, without warning and without fading, the canvas was swept clean. There was no color in the sky. The light had gone out of the day. They caught their breaths in half-sobs. But lo! the air was a-glint with particles of scintillating frost, and there, to the north, the wind-vane lay in vague outline on the snow. A shadow! A shadow! It was exactly midday. They jerked their heads hurriedly to the south. A golden rim peeped over the mountain's snowy shoulder, smiled upon them an instant, then dipped from sight again.

There were tears in their eyes as they sought each other. A strange softening came over them. They felt irresistibly drawn

toward each other. The sun was coming back again. It would be with them to-morrow, and the next day, and the next. And it would stay longer every visit, and a time would come when it would ride their heaven day and night, never once dropping below the sky-line. There would be no night. The ice-locked winter would be broken; the winds would blow and the forests answer; the land would bathe in the blessed sunshine, and life renew. Hand in hand, they would quit this horrid dream and journey back to the Southland. They lurched blindly forward, and their hands met, – their poor maimed hands, swollen and distorted beneath their mittens.

But the promise was destined to remain unfulfilled. The Northland is the Northland, and men work out their souls by strange rules, which other men, who have not journeyed into far countries, cannot come to understand.

An hour later, Cuthfert put a pan of bread into the oven, and fell to speculating on what the surgeons could do with his feet when he got back. Home did not seem so very far away now. Weatherbee was rummaging in the cache. Of a sudden, he raised a whirlwind of blasphemy, which in turn ceased with startling abruptness. The other man had robbed his sugar-sack. Still, things might have happened differently, had not the two dead men come out from under the stones and hushed the hot words in his throat. They led him quite gently from the cache, which he forgot to close. That consummation was reached; that something they had whispered to him in his dreams was about to happen. They guided him gently, very gently, to the woodpile, where they put the axe in his hands. Then they helped him shove open the cabin door, and he felt sure they shut it after him, – at least he heard it slam and the latch fall sharply into place. And he knew they were waiting just without, waiting for him to do his task.

"Carter! I say, Carter!"

Percy Cuthfert was frightened at the look on the clerk's face, and he made haste to put the table between them.

Carter Weatherbee followed, without haste and without enthusiasm. There was neither pity nor passion in his face, but rather the patient, stolid look of one who has certain work to do and goes about it methodically.

"I say, what 's the matter?"

The clerk dodged back, cutting off his retreat to the door, but never opening his mouth.

"I say, Carter, I say; let 's talk. There 's a good chap."

The master of arts was thinking rapidly, now, shaping a skillful flank movement on the bed where his Smith & Wesson lay. Keeping his eyes on the madman, he rolled backward on the bunk, at the same time clutching the pistol.

"Carter!"

The powder flashed full in Weatherbee's face, but he swung his weapon and leaped forward. The axe bit deeply at the base of the spine, and Percy Cuthfert felt all consciousness of his lower limbs leave him. Then the clerk fell heavily upon him, clutching him by the throat with feeble fingers. The sharp bite of the axe had caused Cuthfert to drop the pistol, and as his lungs panted for release, he fumbled aimlessly for it among the blankets. Then he remembered. He slid a hand up the clerk's belt to the sheath-knife; and they drew very close to each other in that last clinch.

Percy Cuthfert felt his strength leave him. The lower portion of his body was useless. The inert weight of Weatherbee crushed him, – crushed him and pinned him there like a bear under a trap. The cabin became filled with a familiar odor, and he knew the bread to be burning. Yet what did it matter? He would never need it. And there were all of six cupfuls of sugar in the cache, – if he had foreseen this he would not have been so saving the last several days. Would the wind-vane ever move? It might even be veering now. Why not? Had he not seen the sun to-day? He would go and see. No; it was

impossible to move. He had not thought the clerk so heavy a man.

How quickly the cabin cooled! The fire must be out. The cold was forcing in. It must be below zero already, and the ice creeping up the inside of the door. He could not see it, but his past experience enabled him to gauge its progress by the cabin's temperature. The lower hinge must be white ere now. Would the tale of this ever reach the world? How would his friends take it? They would read it over their coffee, most likely, and talk it over at the clubs. He could see them very clearly. "Poor Old Cuthfert," they murmured; "not such a bad sort of a chap, after all." He smiled at their eulogies, and passed on in search of a Turkish bath. It was the same old crowd upon the streets. Strange, they did not notice his moosehide moccasins and tattered German socks! He would take a cab. And after the bath a shave would not be bad. No; he would eat first. Steak, and potatoes, and green things, – how fresh it all was! And what was that? Squares of honey, streaming liquid amber! But why did they bring so much? Ha! ha! he could never eat it all. Shine! Why certainly. He put his foot on the box. The bootblack looked curiously up at him, and he remembered his moosehide moccasins and went away hastily.

Hark! The wind-vane must be surely spinning. No; a mere singing in his ears. That was all, – a mere singing. The ice must have passed the latch by now. More likely the upper hinge was covered. Between the moss-chinked roof-poles, little points of frost began to appear. How slowly they grew! No; not so slowly. There was a new one, and there another. Two – three – four; they were coming too fast to count. There were two growing together. And there, a third had joined them. Why, there were no more spots. They had run together and formed a sheet.

Well, he would have company. If Gabriel ever broke the silence of the North, they would stand together, hand in hand, before the great White Throne. And God would judge them, God would judge them!

Then Percy Cuthfert closed his eyes and dropped off to sleep.

The Law Of Life (1901)

Old Koskoosh listened greedily. Though his sight had long since faded, his hearing was still acute, and the slightest sound penetrated to the glimmering intelligence which yet abode behind the withered forehead, but which no longer gazed forth upon the things of the world. Ah! that was Sit-cum-to-ha, shrilly anathematizing the dogs as she cuffed and beat them into the harnesses. Sit-cum-to-ha was his daughter's daughter, but she was too busy to waste a thought upon her broken grandfather, sitting alone there in the snow, forlorn and helpless. Camp must be broken. The long trail waited while the short day refused to linger. Life called her, and the duties of life, not death. And he was very close to death now.

The thought made the old man panicky for the moment, and he stretched forth a palsied hand which wandered tremblingly over the small heap of dry wood beside him. Reassured that it was indeed there, his hand returned to the shelter of his mangy furs, and he again fell to listening. The sulky crackling of half-frozen hides told him that the chief's moose-skin lodge had been struck, and even then was being rammed and jammed into portable compass. The chief was his son, stalwart and strong, head man of the tribesmen, and a mighty hunter. As the women toiled with the camp luggage, his voice rose, chiding them for their slowness. Old Koskoosh strained his ears. It was the last time he would hear that voice. There went Geehow's lodge! And Tusken's! Seven, eight, nine; only the shaman's could be still standing. There! They were at work upon it now. He could hear the shaman grunt as he piled it on the sled. A child whimpered, and a woman soothed it with soft, crooning gutturals. Little Koo-tee, the old man thought, a fretful child, and not overstrong. It would die soon, perhaps, and they would burn a hole through the frozen tundra and pile rocks above to keep the wolverines away.

Well, what did it matter? A few years at best, and as many an empty belly as a full one. And in the end, Death waited, ever-hungry and hungriest of them all.

What was that? Oh, the men lashing the sleds and drawing tight the thongs. He listened, who would listen no more. The whip-lashes snarled and bit among the dogs. Hear them whine! How they hated the work and the trail! They were off! Sled after sled churned slowly away into the silence. They were gone. They had passed out of his life, and he faced the last bitter hour alone. No. The snow crunched beneath a moccasin; a man stood beside him; upon his head a hand rested gently. His son was good to do this thing. He remembered other old men whose sons had not waited after the tribe. But his son had. He wandered away into the past, till the young man's voice brought him back.

"Is it well with you?" he asked.

And the old man answered, "It is well."

"There be wood beside you," the younger man continued, "and the fire burns bright. The morning is gray, and the cold has broken. It will snow presently. Even now is it snowing."

"My voice is become like an old woman's."

"Ay, even now is it snowing."

"The tribesmen hurry. Their bales are heavy, and their bellies flat with lack of feasting. The trail is long and they travel fast. go now. It is well?"

"It is well. I am as a last year's leaf, clinging lightly to the stem. The first breath that blows, and I fall. My voice is become like an old woman's. My eyes no longer show me the way of my feet, and my feet are heavy, and I am tired. It is well."

He bowed his head in content till the last noise of the complaining snow had died away, and he knew his son was beyond recall. Then his hand crept out in haste to the wood. It alone stood between him and the eternity that yawned in upon him. At last the measure of his life was a handful of fagots. One by one they would go to feed the fire, and just so, step by step, death would creep upon him. When the last stick had surrendered up its heat, the frost would begin to gather strength. First his feet would yield, then his hands; and the numbness would travel, slowly, from the extremities to the body. His head would fall forward upon his knees, and he would rest. It was easy. All men must die.

He did not complain. It was the way of life, and it was just. He had been born close to the earth, close to the earth had he lived, and the law thereof was not new to him. It was the law of all flesh. Nature was not kindly to the flesh. She had no concern for that concrete thing called the individual. Her interest lay in the species, the race. This was the deepest abstraction old Koskoosh's barbaric mind was capable of, but he grasped it firmly. He saw it exemplified in all life. The rise of the sap, the bursting greenness of the willow bud, the fall of the yellow leaf – in this alone was told the whole history. But one task did Nature set the individual. Did he not perform it, he died. Did he perform it, it was all the same, he died. Nature did not care; there were plenty who were obedient, and it was only the obedience in this matter, not the obedient, which lived and lived always. The tribe of Koskoosh was very old. The old men he had known when a boy, had known old men before them. Therefore it was true that the tribe lived, that it stood for the obedience of all its members, way down into the forgotten past, whose very resting-places were unremembered. They did not count; they were episodes. They had passed away like clouds from a summer sky. He also was an episode, and would pass away. Nature did not care. To life she set one task, gave one law. To perpetuate was the task of life, its law was death. A maiden was a good creature to look upon, full-breasted and strong, with spring to her step and light in her eyes. But her task was yet before her. The light in her eyes brightened, her step quickened, she was now bold with the young men, now timid, and she gave

them of her own unrest. And ever she grew fairer and yet fairer to look upon, till some hunter, able no longer to withhold himself, took her to his lodge to cook and toil for him and to become the mother of his children. And with the coming of her offspring her looks left her. Her limbs dragged and shuffled, her eyes dimmed and bleared, and only the little children found joy against the withered cheek of the old squaw by the fire. Her task was done. But a little while, on the first pinch of famine or the first long trail, and she would be left, even as he had been left, in the snow, with a little pile of wood. Such was the law. He placed a stick carefully upon the fire and resumed his meditations. It was the same everywhere, with all things. The mosquitoes vanished with the first frost. The little tree-squirrel crawled away to die. When age settled upon the rabbit it became slow and heavy, and could no longer outfoot its enemies. Even the big bald-face grew clumsy and blind and quarrelsome, in the end to be dragged down by a handful of yelping huskies. He remembered how he had abandoned his own father on an upper reach of the Klondike one winter, the winter before the missionary came with his talk-books and his box of medicines. Many a time had Koskoosh smacked his lips over the recollection of that box, though now his mouth refused to moisten. The "painkiller" had been especially good. But the missionary was a bother after all, for he brought no meat into the camp, and he ate heartily, and the hunters grumbled. But he chilled his lungs on the divide by the Mayo, and the dogs afterwards nosed the stones away and fought over his bones.

Koskoosh placed another stick on the fire and harked back deeper into the past. There was the time of the Great Famine, when the old men crouched empty-bellied to the fire, and let fall from their lips dim traditions of the ancient day when the Yukon ran wide open for three winters, and then lay frozen for three summers. He had lost his mother in that famine. In the summer the salmon run had failed, and the tribe looked forward to the winter and the coming of the caribou. Then the winter came, but with it there were no caribou. Never had the like been known, not even in the lives of the old men. But the

caribou did not come, and it was the seventh year, and the rabbits had not replenished, and the dogs were naught but bundles of bones. And through the long darkness the children wailed and died, and the women, and the old men; and not one in ten of the tribe lived to meet the sun when it came back in the spring. That was a famine!

But he had seen times of plenty, too, when the meat spoiled on their hands, and the dogs were fat and worthless with overeating – times when they let the game go unkilld, and the women were fertile, and the lodges were cluttered with sprawling men-children and women-children. Then it was the men became high-stomached, and revived ancient quarrels, and crossed the divides to the south to kill the Pellys, and to the west that they might sit by the dead fires of the Tananas. He remembered, when a boy, during a time of plenty, when he saw a moose pulled down by the wolves. Zing-ha lay with him in the snow and watched – Zing-ha, who later became the craftiest of hunters, and who, in the end, fell through an air-hole on the Yukon. They found him, a month afterward, just as he had crawled halfway out and frozen stiff to the ice.

But the moose. Zing-ha and he had gone out that day to play at hunting after the manner of their fathers. On the bed of the creek they struck the fresh track of a moose, and with it the tracks of many wolves. "An old one," Zing-ha, who was quicker at reading the sign, said – "an old one who cannot keep up with the herd. The wolves have cut him out from his brothers, and they will never leave him." And it was so. It was their way. By day and by night, never resting, snarling on his heels, snapping at his nose, they would stay by him to the end. How Zing-ha and he felt the blood-lust quicken! The finish would be a sight to see!

Eager-footed, they took the trail, and even he, Koskoosh, slow of sight and an unversed tracker, could have followed it blind, it was so wide. Hot were they on the heels of the chase, reading the grim tragedy, fresh-written, at every step. Now they came to where the moose had made a stand. Thrice the length of a grown man's body, in every direction, had the snow been stamped about and uptossed. In the midst were

the deep impressions of the splay-hoofed game, and all about, everywhere, were the lighter footmarks of the wolves. Some, while their brothers harried the kill, had lain to one side and rested. The full-stretched impress of their bodies in the snow was as perfect as though made the moment before. One wolf had been caught in a wild lunge of the maddened victim and trampled to death. A few bones, well picked, bore witness.

Again, they ceased the uplift of their snowshoes at a second stand. Here the great animal had fought desperately. Twice had he been dragged down, as the snow attested, and twice had he shaken his assailants clear and gained footing once more. He had done his task long since, but none the less was life dear to him. Zing-ha said it was a strange thing, a moose once down to get free again; but this one certainly had. The shaman would see signs and wonders in this when they told him.

And yet again, they come to where the moose had made to mount the bank and gain the timber. But his foes had laid on from behind, till he reared and fell back upon them, crushing two deep into the snow. It was plain the kill was at hand, for their brothers had left them untouched. Two more stands were hurried past, brief in time-length and very close together. The trail was red now, and the clean stride of the great beast had grown short and slovenly. Then they heard the first sounds of the battle – not the full-throated chorus of the chase, but the short, snappy bark which spoke of close quarters and teeth to flesh. Crawling up the wind, Zing-ha bellied it through the snow, and with him crept he, Koskoosh, who was to be chief of the tribesmen in the years to come. Together they shoved aside the under branches of a young spruce and peered forth. It was the end they saw.

The picture, like all of youth's impressions, was still strong with him, and his dim eyes watched the end played out as vividly as in that far-off time. Koskoosh marvelled at this, for in the days which followed, when he was a leader of men and a head of councillors, he had done great deeds and made his

name a curse in the mouths of the Pellys, to say naught of the strange white man he had killed, knife to knife, in open fight.

For long he pondered on the days of his youth, till the fire died down and the frost bit deeper. He replenished it with two sticks this time, and gauged his grip on life by what remained. If Sit-cum-to-ha had only remembered her grandfather, and gathered a larger armful, his hours would have been longer. It would have been easy. But she was ever a careless child, and honored not her ancestors from the time the Beaver, son of the son of Zing-ha, first cast eyes upon her. Well, what mattered it? Had he not done likewise in his own quick youth? For a while he listened to the silence. Perhaps the heart of his son might soften, and he would come back with the dogs to take his old father on with the tribe to where the caribou ran thick and the fat hung heavy upon them.

He strained his ears, his restless brain for the moment stilled. Not a stir, nothing. He alone took breath in the midst of the great silence. It was very lonely. Hark! What was that? A chill passed over his body. The familiar, long-drawn howl broke the void, and it was close at hand. Then on his darkened eyes was projected the vision of the moose – the old bull moose – the torn flanks and bloody sides, the riddled mane, and the great branching horns, down low and tossing to the last. He saw the flashing forms of gray, the gleaming eyes, the lolling tongues, the slavered fangs. And he saw the inexorable circle close in till it became a dark point in the midst of the stamped snow.

A cold muzzle thrust against his cheek, and at its touch his soul leaped back to the present. His hand shot into the fire and dragged out a burning faggot. Overcome for the nonce by his hereditary fear of man, the brute retreated, raising a prolonged call to his brothers; and greedily they answered, till a ring of crouching, jaw-slobbered gray was stretched round about. The old man listened to the drawing in of this circle. He waved his brand wildly, and sniffs turned to snarls; but the panting brutes refused to scatter. Now one wormed his chest forward, dragging his haunches after, now a second, now a third; but never a one drew back. Why should he cling to life?

he asked, and dropped the blazing stick into the snow. It sizzled and went out. The circle grunted uneasily, but held its own. Again he saw the last stand of the old bull moose, and Koskoosh dropped his head wearily upon his knees. What did it matter after all? Was it not the law of life?

Nam-Bok, The Unveracious (1902)

"A bidarka, is it not so? Look! a bidarka, and one man who drives clumsily with a paddle!"

Old Bask-Wah-Wan rose to her knees, trembling with weakness and eagerness, and gazed out over the sea.

"Nam-Bok was ever clumsy at the paddle," she maundered reminiscently, shading the sun from her eyes and staring across the silver-spilled water. "Nam-Bok was ever clumsy. I remember...."

But the women and children laughed loudly, and there was a gentle mockery in their laughter, and her voice dwindled till her lips moved without sound.

Koogah lifted his grizzled head from his bone-carving and followed the path of her eyes. Except when wide yaws took it off its course, a bidarka was heading in for the beach. Its occupant was paddling with more strength than dexterity, and made his approach along the zigzag line of most resistance. Koogah's head dropped to his work again, and on the ivory tusk between his knees he scratched the dorsal fin of a fish the like of which never swam in the sea.

"It is doubtless the man from the next village," he said finally, "come to consult with me about the marking of things on bone. And the man is a clumsy man. He will never know how."

"It is Nam-Bok," old Bask-Wah-Wan repeated. "Should I not know my son?" she demanded shrilly. "I say, and I say again, it is Nam-Bok."

"And so thou hast said these many summers," one of the women chided softly. "Ever when the ice passed out of the sea hast thou sat and watched through the long day, saying at each chance canoe, 'This is Nam-Bok.' Nam-Bok is dead, O Bask-Wah-Wan, and the dead do not come back. It cannot be that the dead come back."

"Nam-Bok!" the old woman cried, so loud and clear that the whole village was startled and looked at her.

She struggled to her feet and tottered down the sand. She stumbled over a baby lying in the sun, and the mother hushed its crying and hurled harsh words after the old woman, who took no notice. The children ran down the beach in advance of her, and as the man in the bidarka drew closer, nearly capsizing with one of his ill-directed strokes, the women followed. Koogah dropped his walrus tusk and went also, leaning heavily upon his staff, and after him loitered the men in twos and threes.

The bidarka turned broadside and the ripple of surf threatened to swamp it, only a naked boy ran into the water and pulled the bow high up on the sand. The man stood up and sent a questing glance along the line of villagers. A rainbow sweater, dirty and the worse for wear, clung loosely to his broad shoulders, and a red cotton handkerchief was knotted in sailor fashion about his throat. A fisherman's tam-o'-shanter on his close-clipped head, and dungaree trousers and heavy brogans, completed his outfit.

But he was none the less a striking personage to these simple fisherfolk of the great Yukon Delta, who, all their lives, had stared out on Bering Sea and in that time seen but two white men,—the census enumerator and a lost Jesuit priest. They were a poor people, with neither gold in the ground nor valuable furs in hand, so the whites had passed them afar. Also, the Yukon, through the thousands of years, had shoaled

that portion of the sea with the detritus of Alaska till vessels grounded out of sight of land. So the sodden coast, with its long inside reaches and huge mud-land archipelagoes, was avoided by the ships of men, and the fisherfolk knew not that such things were.

Koogah, the Bone-Scratcher, retreated backward in sudden haste, tripping over his staff and falling to the ground. "Nam-Bok!" he cried, as he scrambled wildly for footing. "Nam-Bok, who was blown off to sea, come back!"

The men and women shrank away, and the children scuttled off between their legs. Only Opee-Kwan was brave, as befitted the head man of the village. He strode forward and gazed long and earnestly at the new-comer.

"It *is* Nam-Bok," he said at last, and at the conviction in his voice the women wailed apprehensively and drew farther away.

The lips of the stranger moved indecisively, and his brown throat writhed and wrestled with unspoken words.

"La la, it is Nam-Bok," Bask-Wah-Wan croaked, peering up into his face. "Ever did I say Nam-Bok would come back."

"Ay, it is Nam-Bok come back." This time it was Nam-Bok himself who spoke, putting a leg over the side of the bidarka and standing with one foot afloat and one ashore. Again his throat writhed and wrestled as he grappled after forgotten words. And when the words came forth they were strange of sound and a spluttering of the lips accompanied the gutturals. "Greeting, O brothers," he said, "brothers of old time before I went away with the off-shore wind."

He stepped out with both feet on the sand, and Opee-Kwan waved him back.

"Thou art dead, Nam-Bok," he said.

Nam-Bok laughed. "I am fat."

"Dead men are not fat," Opee-Kwan confessed. "Thou hast fared well, but it is strange. No man may mate with the off-shore wind and come back on the heels of the years."

"I have come back," Nam-Bok answered simply.

"Mayhap thou art a shadow, then, a passing shadow of the Nam-Bok that was. Shadows come back."

"I am hungry. Shadows do not eat."

But Opee-Kwan doubted, and brushed his hand across his brow in sore puzzlement. Nam-Bok was likewise puzzled, and as he looked up and down the line found no welcome in the eyes of the fisherfolk. The men and women whispered together. The children stole timidly back among their elders, and bristling dogs fawned up to him and sniffed suspiciously.

"I bore thee, Nam-Bok, and I gave thee suck when thou wast little," Bask-Wah-Wan whimpered, drawing closer; "and shadow though thou be, or no shadow, I will give thee to eat now."

Nam-Bok made to come to her, but a growl of fear and menace warned him back. He said something in a strange tongue which sounded like "Goddam," and added, "No shadow am I, but a man."

"Who may know concerning the things of mystery?" Opee-Kwan demanded, half of himself and half of his tribespeople. "We are, and in a breath we are not. If the man may become shadow, may not the shadow become man? Nam-Bok was, but is not. This we know, but we do not know if this be Nam-Bok or the shadow of Nam-Bok."

Nam-Bok cleared his throat and made answer. "In the old time long ago, thy father's father, Opee-Kwan, went away and came back on the heels of the years. Nor was a place by the

fire denied him. It is said ..." He paused significantly, and they hung on his utterance. "It is said," he repeated, driving his point home with deliberation, "that Sipsip, his *klooch*, bore him two sons after he came back."

"But he had no doings with the off-shore wind," Opee-Kwan retorted. "He went away into the heart of the land, and it is in the nature of things that a man may go on and on into the land."

"And likewise the sea. But that is neither here nor there. It is said . . . that thy father's father told strange tales of the things he saw."

"Ay, strange tales he told."

"I, too, have strange tales to tell," Nam-Bok stated insidiously. And, as they wavered, "And presents likewise."

He pulled from the bidarka a shawl, marvellous of texture and color, and flung it about his mother's shoulders. The women voiced a collective sigh of admiration, and old Bask-Wah-Wan ruffled the gay material and patted it and crooned in childish joy.

"He has tales to tell," Koogah muttered. "And presents," a woman seconded.

And Opee-Kwan knew that his people were eager, and further, he was aware himself of an itching curiosity concerning those untold tales. "The fishing has been good," he said judiciously, "and we have oil in plenty. So come, Nam-Bok, let us feast."

Two of the men hoisted the bidarka on their shoulders and carried it up to the fire. Nam-Bok walked by the side of Opee-Kwan, and the villagers followed after, save those of the women who lingered a moment to lay caressing fingers on the shawl.

There was little talk while the feast went on, though many and curious were the glances stolen at the son of Bask-Wah-Wan. This embarrassed him—not because he was modest of spirit, however, but for the fact that the stench of the seal-oil had robbed him of his appetite, and that he keenly desired to conceal his feelings on the subject.

"Eat; thou art hungry," Opee-Kwan commanded, and Nam-Bok shut both his eyes and shoved his fist into the big pot of putrid fish.

"La la, be not ashamed. The seal were many this year, and strong men are ever hungry." And Bask-Wah-Wan sopped a particularly offensive chunk of salmon into the oil and passed it fondly and dripping to her son.

In despair, when premonitory symptoms warned him that his stomach was not so strong as of old, he filled his pipe and struck up a smoke. The people fed on noisily and watched. Few of them could boast of intimate acquaintance with the precious weed, though now and again small quantities and abominable qualities were obtained in trade from the Eskimos to the northward. Koogah, sitting next to him, indicated that he was not averse to taking a draw, and between two mouthfuls, with the oil thick on his lips, sucked away at the amber stem. And thereupon Nam-Bok held his stomach with a shaky hand and declined the proffered return. Koogah could keep the pipe, he said, for he had intended so to honor him from the first. And the people licked their fingers and approved of his liberality.

Opee-Kwan rose to his feet "And now, O Nam-Bok, the feast is ended, and we would listen concerning the strange things you have seen."

The fisherfolk applauded with their hands, and gathering about them their work, prepared to listen. The men were busy fashioning spears and carving on ivory, while the women scraped the fat from the hides of the hair seal and made them pliable or sewed muclucs with threads of sinew. Nam-Bok's eyes roved over the scene, but there was not the charm

about it that his recollection had warranted him to expect. During the years of his wandering he had looked forward to just this scene, and now that it had come he was disappointed. It was a bare and meagre life, he deemed, and not to be compared to the one to which he had become used. Still, he would open their eyes a bit, and his own eyes sparkled at the thought.

"Brothers," he began, with the smug complacency of a man about to relate the big things he has done, "it was late summer of many summers back, with much such weather as this promises to be, when I went away. You all remember the day, when the gulls flew low, and the wind blew strong from the land, and I could not hold my bidarka against it. I tied the covering of the bidarka about me so that no water could get in, and all of the night I fought with the storm. And in the morning there was no land,—only the sea,—and the off-shore wind held me close in its arms and bore me along. Three such nights whitened into dawn and showed me no land, and the off-shore wind would not let me go.

"And when the fourth day came, I was as a madman. I could not dip my paddle for want of food; and my head went round and round, what of the thirst that was upon me. But the sea was no longer angry, and the soft south wind was blowing, and as I looked about me I saw a sight that made me think I was indeed mad."

Nam-Bok paused to pick away a sliver of salmon lodged between his teeth, and the men and women, with idle hands and heads craned forward, waited.

"It was a canoe, a big canoe. If all the canoes I have ever seen were made into one canoe, it would not be so large."

There were exclamations of doubt, and Koogah, whose years were many, shook his head.

"If each bidarka were as a grain of sand," Nam-Bok defiantly continued, "and if there were as many bidarkas as there be grains of sand in this beach, still would they not make so big a

canoe as this I saw on the morning of the fourth day. It was a very big canoe, and it was called a *schooner*. I saw this thing of wonder, this great schooner, coming after me, and on it I saw men—"

"Hold, O Nam-Bok!" Opee-Kwan broke in. "What manner of men were they?—big men?"

"Nay, mere men like you and me."

"Did the big canoe come fast?"

"Ay."

"The sides were tall, the men short." Opee-Kwan stated the premises with conviction. "And did these men dip with long paddles?"

Nam-Bok grinned. "There were no paddles," he said.

Mouths remained open, and a long silence dropped down. Opee-Kwan borrowed Koogah's pipe for a couple of contemplative sucks. One of the younger women giggled nervously and drew upon herself angry eyes.

"There were no paddles?" Opee-Kwan asked softly, returning the pipe.

"The south wind was behind," Nam-Bok explained.

"But the wind-drift is slow."

"The schooner had wings—thus." He sketched a diagram of masts and sails in the sand, and the men crowded around and studied it. The wind was blowing briskly, and for more graphic elucidation he seized the corners of his mother's shawl and spread them out till it bellied like a sail. Bask-Wah-Wan scolded and struggled, but was blown down the beach for a score of feet and left breathless and stranded in a heap

of driftwood. The men uttered sage grunts of comprehension, but Koogah suddenly tossed back his hoary head.

"Ho! Ho!" he laughed. "A foolish thing, this big canoe! A most foolish thing! The plaything of the wind! Wheresoever the wind goes, it goes too. No man who journeys therein may name the landing beach, for always he goes with the wind, and the wind goes everywhere, but no man knows where."

"It is so," Opee-Kwan supplemented gravely. "With the wind the going is easy, but against the wind a man striveth hard; and for that they had no paddles these men on the big canoe did not strive at all."

"Small need to strive," Nam-Bok cried angrily. "The schooner went likewise against the wind."

"And what said you made the sch—sch—schooner go?" Koogah asked, tripping craftily over the strange word.

"The wind," was the impatient response.

"Then the wind made the sch—sch—schooner go against the wind." Old Koogah dropped an open leer to Opee-Kwan, and, the laughter growing around him, continued: "The wind blows from the south and blows the schooner south. The wind blows against the wind. The wind blows one way and the other at the same time. It is very simple. We understand, Nam-Bok. We clearly understand."

"Thou art a fool!"

"Truth falls from thy lips," Koogah answered meekly. "I was over-long in understanding, and the thing was simple."

But Nam-Bok's face was dark, and he said rapid words which they had never heard before. Bone-scratching and skin-scraping were resumed, but he shut his lips tightly on the tongue that could not be believed.

"This sch—sch—schooner," Koogah imperturbably asked; "it was made of a big tree?"

"It was made of many trees," Nam-Bok snapped shortly. "It was very big."

He lapsed into sullen silence again, and Opee-Kwan nudged Koogah, who shook his head with slow amazement and murmured, "It is very strange."

Nam-bok took the bait. "That is nothing," he said airily; "you should see the *steamer*. As the grain of sand is to the bidarka, as the bidarka is to the schooner, so the schooner is to the steamer. Further, the steamer is made of iron. It is all iron."

"Nay, nay, Nam-Bok," cried the head man; "how can that be? Always iron goes to the bottom. For behold, I received an iron knife in trade from the head man of the next village, and yesterday the iron knife slipped from my fingers and went down, down, into the sea. To all things there be law. Never was there one thing outside the law. This we know. And, moreover, we know that things of a kind have the one law, and that all iron has the one law. So unsay thy words, Nam-Bok, that we may yet honor thee."

"It is so," Nam-Bok persisted. "The steamer is all iron and does not sink."

"Nay, nay; this cannot be."

"With my own eyes I saw it."

"It is not in the nature of things."

"But tell me, Nam-Bok," Koogah interrupted, for fear the tale would go no farther, "tell me the manner of these men in finding their way across the sea when there is no land by which to steer."

"The sun points out the path."

"But how?"

"At midday the head man of the schooner takes a thing through which his eye looks at the sun, and then he makes the sun climb down out of the sky to the edge of the earth."

"Now this be evil medicine!" cried Opee-Kwan, aghast at the sacrilege. The men held up their hands in horror, and the women moaned. "This be evil medicine. It is not good to misdirect the great sun which drives away the night and gives us the seal, the salmon, and warm weather."

"What if it be evil medicine?" Nam-Bok demanded truculently. "I, too, have looked through the thing at the sun and made the sun climb down out of the sky."

Those who were nearest drew away from him hurriedly, and a woman covered the face of a child at her breast so that his eye might not fall upon it.

"But on the morning of the fourth day, O Nam-Bok," Koogah suggested; "on the morning of the fourth day when the sch—sch—schooner came after thee?"

"I had little strength left in me and could not run away. So I was taken on board and water was poured down my throat and good food given me. Twice, my brothers, you have seen a white man. These men were all white and as many as have I fingers and toes. And when I saw they were full of kindness, I took heart, and I resolved to bring away with me report of all that I saw. And they taught me the work they did, and gave me good food and a place to sleep.

"And day after day we went over the sea, and each day the head man drew the sun down out of the sky and made it tell where we were. And when the waves were kind, we hunted the fur seal and I marvelled much, for always did they fling the meat and the fat away and save only the skin."

Opee-Kwan's mouth was twitching violently, and he was about to make denunciation of such waste when Koogah kicked him to be still.

"After a weary time, when the sun was gone and the bite of the frost come into the air, the head man pointed the nose of the schooner south. South and east we travelled for days upon days, with never the land in sight, and we were near to the village from which hailed the men—"

"How did they know they were near?" Opee-Kwan, unable to contain himself longer, demanded. "There was no land to see."

Nam-Bok glowered on him wrathfully. "Did I not say the head man brought the sun down out of the sky?"

Koogah interposed, and Nam-Bok went on.

"As I say, when we were near to that village a great storm blew up, and in the night we were helpless and knew not where we were—"

"Thou hast just said the head man knew—"

"Oh, peace, Opee-Kwan! Thou art a fool and cannot understand. As I say, we were helpless in the night, when I heard, above the roar of the storm, the sound of the sea on the beach. And next we struck with a mighty crash and I was in the water, swimming. It was a rock-bound coast, with one patch of beach in many miles, and the law was that I should dig my hands into the sand and draw myself clear of the surf. The other men must have pounded against the rocks, for none of them came ashore but the head man, and him I knew only by the ring on his finger.

"When day came, there being nothing of the schooner, I turned my face to the land and journeyed into it that I might get food and look upon the faces of the people. And when I came to a house I was taken in and given to eat, for I had

learned their speech, and the white men are ever kindly. And it was a house bigger than all the houses built by us and our fathers before us."

"It was a mighty house," Koogah said, masking his unbelief with wonder.

"And many trees went into the making of such a house," Opee-Kwan added, taking the cue.

"That is nothing." Nam-Bok shrugged his shoulders in belittling fashion. "As our houses are to that house, so that house was to the houses I was yet to see."

"And they are not big men?"

"Nay; mere men like you and me," Nam-Bok answered. "I had cut a stick that I might walk in comfort, and remembering that I was to bring report to you, my brothers, I cut a notch in the stick for each person who lived in that house. And I stayed there many days, and worked, for which they gave me *money*—a thing of which you know nothing, but which is very good.

"And one day I departed from that place to go farther into the land. And as I walked I met many people, and I cut smaller notches in the stick, that there might be room for all. Then I came upon a strange thing. On the ground before me was a bar of iron, as big in thickness as my arm, and a long step away was another bar of iron—"

"Then wert thou a rich man," Opee-Kwan asserted; "for iron be worth more than anything else in the world. It would have made many knives."

"Nay, it was not mine."

"It was a find, and a find be lawful."

"Not so; the white men had placed it there And further, these bars were so long that no man could carry them away—so long that as far as I could see there was no end to them."

"Nam-Bok, that is very much iron," Opee-Kwan cautioned.

"Ay, it was hard to believe with my own eyes upon it; but I could not gainsay my eyes. And as I looked I heard...." He turned abruptly upon the head man. "Opee-Kwan, thou hast heard the sea-lion bellow in his anger. Make it plain in thy mind of as many sea-lions as there be waves to the sea, and make it plain that all these sea-lions be made into one sea-lion, and as that one sea-lion would bellow so bellowed the thing I heard."

The fisherfolk cried aloud in astonishment, and Opee-Kwan's jaw lowered and remained lowered.

"And in the distance I saw a monster like unto a thousand whales. It was one-eyed, and vomited smoke, and it snorted with exceeding loudness. I was afraid and ran with shaking legs along the path between the bars. But it came with the speed of the wind, this monster, and I leaped the iron bars with its breath hot on my face. . . ."

Opee-Kwan gained control of his jaw again. "And—and then, O Nam-Bok?"

"Then it came by on the bars, and harmed me not; and when my legs could hold me up again it was gone from sight. And it is a very common thing in that country. Even the women and children are not afraid. Men make them to do work, these monsters."

"As we make our dogs do work?" Koogah asked, with sceptic twinkle in his eye.

"Ay, as we make our dogs do work."

"And how do they breed these—these things?" Opee-Kwan questioned.

"They breed not at all. Men fashion them cunningly of iron, and feed them with stone, and give them water to drink. The stone becomes fire, and the water becomes steam, and the steam of the water is the breath of their nostrils, and—"

"There, there, O Nam-Bok," Opee-Kwan interrupted. "Tell us of other wonders. We grow tired of this which we may not understand."

"You do not understand?" Nam-Bok asked despairingly.

"Nay, we do not understand," the men and women wailed back. "We cannot understand."

Nam-Bok thought of a combined harvester, and of the machines wherein visions of living men were to be seen, and of the machines from which came the voices of men, and he knew his people could never understand.

"Dare I say I rode this iron monster through the land?" he asked bitterly.

Opee-Kwan threw up his hands, palms outward, in open incredulity. "Say on; say anything. We listen."

"Then did I ride the iron monster, for which I gave money—"

"Thou saidst it was fed with stone."

"And likewise, thou fool, I said money was a thing of which you know nothing. As I say, I rode the monster through the land, and through many villages, until I came to a big village on a salt arm of the sea. And the houses shoved their roofs among the stars in the sky, and the clouds drifted by them, and everywhere was much smoke. And the roar of that village was like the roar of the sea in storm, and the people were so

many that I flung away my stick and no longer remembered the notches upon it."

"Hadst thou made small notches," Koogah reproved, "thou mightst have brought report."

Nam-Bok whirled upon him in anger. "Had I made small notches! Listen, Koogah, thou scratcher of bone! If I had made small notches, neither the stick, nor twenty sticks, could have borne them—nay, not all the driftwood of all the beaches between this village and the next. And if all of you, the women and children as well, were twenty times as many, and if you had twenty hands each, and in each hand a stick and a knife, still the notches could not be cut for the people I saw, so many were they and so fast did they come and go."

"There cannot be so many people in all the world," Opee-Kwan objected, for he was stunned and his mind could not grasp such magnitude of numbers.

"What dost thou know of all the world and how large it is?" Nam-Bok demanded.

"But there cannot be so many people in one place."

"Who art thou to say what can be and what cannot be?"

"It stands to reason there cannot be so many people in one place. Their canoes would clutter the sea till there was no room. And they could empty the sea each day of its fish, and they would not all be fed."

"So it would seem," Nam-Bok made final answer; "yet it was so. With my own eyes I saw, and flung my stick away." He yawned heavily and rose to his feet. "I have paddled far. The day has been long, and I am tired. Now I will sleep, and tomorrow we will have further talk upon the things I have seen."

Bask-Wah-Wan, hobbling fearfully in advance, proud indeed, yet awed by her wonderful son, led him to her igloo and

stowed him away among the greasy, ill-smelling furs. But the men lingered by the fire, and a council was held wherein was there much whispering and low-voiced discussion.

An hour passed, and a second, and Nam-Bok slept, and the talk went on. The evening sun dipped toward the northwest, and at eleven at night was nearly due north. Then it was that the head man and the bone-scratcher separated themselves from the council and aroused Nam-Bok. He blinked up into their faces and turned on his side to sleep again. Opee-Kwan gripped him by the arm and kindly but firmly shook his senses back into him.

"Come, Nam-Bok, arise!" he commanded. "It be time."

"Another feast?" Nam-Bok cried. "Nay, I am not hungry. Go on with the eating and let me sleep."

"Time to be gone!" Koogah thundered.

But Opee-Kwan spoke more softly. "Thou wast bidarka-mate with me when we were boys," he said. "Together we first chased the seal and drew the salmon from the traps. And thou didst drag me back to life, Nam-Bok, when the sea closed over me and I was sucked down to the black rocks. Together we hungered and bore the chill of the frost, and together we crawled beneath the one fur and lay close to each other. And because of these things, and the kindness in which I stood to thee, it grieves me sore that thou shouldst return such a remarkable liar. We cannot understand, and our heads be dizzy with the things thou hast spoken. It is not good, and there has been much talk in the council. Wherefore we send thee away, that our heads may remain clear and strong and be not troubled by the unaccountable things."

"These things thou speakest of be shadows," Koogah took up the strain. "From the shadow-world thou hast brought them, and to the shadow-world thou must return them. Thy bidarka be ready, and the tribespeople wait. They may not sleep until thou art gone."

Nam-Bok was perplexed, but hearkened to the voice of the head man.

"If thou art Nam-Bok," Opee-Kwan was saying, "thou art a fearful and most wonderful liar; if thou art the shadow of Nam-Bok, then thou speakest of shadows, concerning which it is not good that living men have knowledge. This great village thou hast spoken of we deem the village of shadows. Therein flutter the souls of the dead; for the dead be many and the living few. The dead do not come back. Never have the dead come back—save thou with thy wonder-tales. It is not meet that the dead come back, and should we permit it, great trouble may be our portion."

Nam-Bok knew his people well and was aware that the voice of the council was supreme. So he allowed himself to be led down to the water's edge, where he was put aboard his bidarka and a paddle thrust into his hand. A stray wild-fowl honked somewhere to seaward, and the surf broke limply and hollowly on the sand. A dim twilight brooded over land and water, and in the north the sun smouldered, vague and troubled, and draped about with blood-red mists. The gulls were flying low. The off-shore wind blew keen and chill, and the black-massed clouds behind it gave promise of bitter weather.

"Out of the sea thou earnest," Opee-Kwan chanted oracularly, "and back into the sea thou goest. Thus is balance achieved and all things brought to law."

Bask-Wah-Wan limped to the froth-mark and cried, "I bless thee, Nam-Bok, for that thou remembered me."

But Koogah, shoving Nam-Bok clear of the beach, tore the shawl from her shoulders and flung it into the bidarka.

"It is cold in the long nights," she wailed; "and the frost is prone to nip old bones."

"The thing is a shadow," the bone-scratcher answered, "and shadows cannot keep thee warm."

Nam-Bok stood up that his voice might carry. "O Bask-Wah-Wan, mother that bore me!" he called. "Listen to the words of Nam-Bok, thy son. There be room in his bidarka for two, and he would that thou camest with him. For his journey is to where there are fish and oil in plenty. There the frost comes not, and life is easy, and the things of iron do the work of men. Wilt thou come, O Bask-Wah-Wan?"

She debated a moment, while the bidarka drifted swiftly from her, then raised her voice to a quavering treble. "I am old, Nam-Bok, and soon I shall pass down among the shadows. But I have no wish to go before my time. I am old, Nam-Bok, and I am afraid."

A shaft of light shot across the dim-lit sea and wrapped boat and man in a splendor of red and gold. Then a hush fell upon the fisherfolk, and only was heard the moan of the off-shore wind and the cries of the gulls flying low in the air.

The League Of The Old Men (1902)

At the Barracks a man was being tried for his life. He was an old man, a native from the Whitefish River, which empties into the Yukon below Lake Le Barge. All Dawson was wrought up over the affair, and likewise the Yukon-dwellers for a thousand miles up and down. It has been the custom of the land-robbing and sea-robbing Anglo-Saxon to give the law to conquered peoples, and oftentimes this law is harsh. But in the case of Imber the law for once seemed inadequate and weak. In the mathematical nature of things, equity did not reside in the punishment to be accorded him. The punishment was a foregone conclusion, there could be no doubt of that; and though it was capital, Imber had but one life, while the tale against him was one of scores.

In fact, the blood of so many was upon his hands that the killings attributed to him did not permit of precise enumeration. Smoking a pipe by the trailside or lounging

around the stove, men made rough estimates of the numbers that had perished at his hand. They had been whites, all of them, these poor murdered people, and they had been slain singly, in pairs, and in parties. And so purposeless and wanton had been these killings, that they had long been a mystery to the mounted police, even in the time of the captains, and later, when the creeks realized, and a governor came from the Dominion to make the land pay for its prosperity. But more mysterious still was the coming of Imber to Dawson to give himself up. It was in the late spring, when the Yukon was growling and writhing under its ice, that the old Indian climbed painfully up the bank from the river trail and stood blinking on the main street. Men who had witnessed his advent, noted that he was weak and tottery, and that he staggered over to a heap of cabin-logs and sat down. He sat there a full day, staring straight before him at the unceasing tide of white men that flooded past. Many a head jerked curiously to the side to meet his stare, and more than one remark was dropped anent the old Siwash with so strange a look upon his face. No end of men remembered afterward that they had been struck by his extraordinary figure, and forever afterward prided themselves upon their swift discernment of the unusual.

But it remained for Dickensen, Little Dickensen, to be the hero of the occasion. Little Dickensen had come into the land with great dreams and a pocketful of cash; but with the cash the dreams vanished, and to earn his passage back to the States he had accepted a clerical position with the brokerage firm of Holbrook and Mason. Across the street from the office of Holbrook and Mason was the heap of cabin-logs upon which Imber sat. Dickensen looked out of the window at him before he went to lunch; and when he came back from lunch he looked out of the window, and the old Siwash was still there.

Dickensen continued to look out of the window, and he, too, forever afterward prided himself upon his swiftness of discernment. He was a romantic little chap, and he likened the immobile old heathen to the genius of the Siwash race, gazing calm-eyed upon the hosts of the invading Saxon. The

hours swept along, but Imber did not vary his posture, did not by a hair's-breadth move a muscle; and Dickensen remembered the man who once sat upright on a sled in the main street where men passed to and fro. They thought the man was resting, but later, when they touched him, they found him stiff and cold, frozen to death in the midst of the busy street. To undouble him, that he might fit into a coffin, they had been forced to lug him to a fire and thaw him out a bit. Dickensen shivered at the recollection.

Later on, Dickensen went out on the sidewalk to smoke a cigar and cool off; and a little later Emily Travis happened along. Emily Travis was dainty and delicate and rare, and whether in London or Klondike she gowned herself as befitted the daughter of a millionaire mining engineer. Little Dickensen deposited his cigar on an outside window ledge where he could find it again, and lifted his hat.

They chatted for ten minutes or so, when Emily Travis, glancing past Dickensen's shoulder, gave a startled little scream. Dickensen turned about to see, and was startled, too. Imber had crossed the street and was standing there, a gaunt and hungry-looking shadow, his gaze riveted upon the girl.

"What do you want?" Little Dickensen demanded, tremulously plucky.

Imber grunted and stalked up to Emily Travis. He looked her over, keenly and carefully, every square inch of her. Especially did he appear interested in her silky brown hair, and in the color of her cheek, faintly sprayed and soft, like the downy bloom of a butterfly wing. He walked around her, surveying her with the calculating eye of a man who studies the lines upon which a horse or a boat is builded. In the course of his circuit the pink shell of her ear came between his eye and the westering sun, and he stopped to contemplate its rosy transparency. Then he returned to her face and looked long and intently into her blue eyes. He grunted and laid a hand on her arm midway between the shoulder and elbow. With his other hand he lifted her forearm

and doubled it back. Disgust and wonder showed in his face, and he dropped her arm with a contemptuous grunt. Then he muttered a few guttural syllables, turned his back upon her, and addressed himself to Dickensen.

Dickensen could not understand his speech, and Emily Travis laughed. Imber turned from one to the other, frowning, but both shook their heads. He was about to go away, when she called out:

"Oh, Jimmy! Come here!"

Jimmy came from the other side of the street. He was a big, hulking Indian clad in approved white-man style, with an Eldorado king's sombrero on his head. He talked with Imber, haltingly, with throaty spasms. Jimmy was a Sitkan, possessed of no more than a passing knowledge of the interior dialects.

"Him Whitefish man," he said to Emily Travis. "Me savve um talk no very much. Him want to look see chief white man."

"The Governor," suggested Dickensen.

Jimmy talked some more with the Whitefish man, and his face went grave and puzzled.

"I t'ink um want Cap'n Alexander," he explained. "Him say um kill white man, white woman, white boy, plenty kill um white people. Him want to die."

"Insane, I guess," said Dickensen.

"What you call dat?" queried Jimmy.

Dickensen thrust a finger figuratively inside his head and imparted a rotary motion thereto.

"Mebbe so, mebbe so," said Jimmy, returning to Imber, who still demanded the chief man of the white men.

A mounted policeman (unmounted for Klondike service) joined the group and heard Imber's wish repeated. He was a stalwart young fellow, broad-shouldered, deep-chested, legs cleanly built and stretched wide apart, and tall though Imber was, he towered above him by half a head. His eyes were cool, and gray, and steady, and he carried himself with the peculiar confidence of power that is bred of blood and tradition. His splendid masculinity was emphasized by his excessive boyishness, – he was a mere lad, – and his smooth cheek promised a blush as willingly as the cheek of a maid.

Imber was drawn to him at once. The fire leaped into his eyes at sight of a sabre slash that scarred his cheek. He ran a withered hand down the young fellow's leg and caressed the swelling thw. He smote the broad chest with his knuckles, and pressed and prodded the thick muscle-pads that covered the shoulders like a cuirass. The group had been added to by curious passers-by – husky miners, mountaineers, and frontiersmen, sons of the long-legged and broad-shouldered generations. Imber glanced from one to another, then he spoke aloud in the Whitefish tongue.

"What did he say?" asked Dickensen.

"Him say um all the same one man, dat p'liceman," Jimmy interpreted.

Little Dickensen was little, and what of Miss Travis, he felt sorry for having asked the question. The policeman was sorry for him and stepped into the breach. "I fancy there may be something in his story. I'll take him up to the captain for examination. Tell him to come along with me, Jimmy."

Jimmy indulged in more throaty spasms, and Imber grunted and looked satisfied.

"But ask him what he said, Jimmy, and what he meant when he took hold of my arm."

So spoke Emily Travis, and Jimmy put the question and received the answer.

"Him say you no afraid," said Jimmy.

Emily Travis looked pleased.

"Him say you no *skookum*, no strong, all the same very soft like little baby. Him break you, in um two hands, to little pieces. Him t'ink much funny, very strange, how you can be mother of men so big, so strong, like dat p'liceman."

Emily Travers kept her eyes up and unfaltering, but her cheeks were sprayed with scarlet. Little Dickensen blushed and was quite embarrassed. The policeman's face blazed with his boy's blood.

"Come along, you," he said gruffly, setting his shoulder to the crowd and forcing a way.

Thus it was that Imber found his way to the Barracks, where he made full and voluntary confession, and from the precincts of which he never emerged.

Imber looked very tired. The fatigue of hopelessness and age was in his face. His shoulders drooped depressingly, and his eyes were lack-lustre. His mop of hair should have been white, but sun and weatherbeat had burned and bitten it so that it hung limp and lifeless and colorless. He took no interest in what went on around him. The courtroom was jammed with the men of the creeks and trails, and there was an ominous note in the rumble and grumble of their low-pitched voices, which came to his ears like the growl of the sea from deep caverns.

He sat close by a window, and his apathetic eyes rested now and again on the dreary scene without. The sky was overcast, and a gray drizzle was falling. It was flood-time on the Yukon. The ice was gone, and the river was up in the town. Back and forth on the main street, in canoes and poling-boats, passed the people that never rested. Often he saw these boats turn aside from the street and enter the flooded square that marked the Barracks' parade-ground. Sometimes they disappeared beneath him, and he heard them jar against the

house-logs and their occupants scramble in through the window. After that came the slush of water against men's legs as they waded across the lower room and mounted the stairs. Then they appeared in the doorway, with doffed hats and dripping sea-boots, and added themselves to the waiting crowd.

And while they centred their looks on him, and in grim anticipation enjoyed the penalty he was to pay, Imber looked at them, and mused on their ways, and on their Law that never slept, but went on unceasing, in good times and bad, in flood and famine, through trouble and terror and death, and which would go on unceasing, it seemed to him, to the end of time. A man rapped sharply on a table, and the conversation droned away into silence. Imber looked at the man. He seemed one in authority, yet Imber divined the square-browed man who sat by a desk farther back to be the one chief over them all and over the man who had rapped. Another man by the same table uprose and began to read aloud from many fine sheets of paper. At the top of each sheet he cleared his throat, at the bottom moistened his fingers. Imber did not understand his speech, but the others did, and he knew that it made them angry. Sometimes it made them very angry, and once a man cursed him, in single syllables, stinging and tense, till a man at the table rapped him to silence.

For an interminable period the man read. His monotonous, sing-song utterance lured Imber to dreaming, and he was dreaming deeply when the man ceased. A voice spoke to him in his own Whitefish tongue, and he roused up, without surprise, to look upon the face of his sister's son, a young man who had wandered away years ago to make his dwelling with the whites.

"Thou dost not remember me," he said by way of greeting.

"Nay," Imber answered. "Thou art Howkan who went away. Thy mother be dead."

"She was an old woman," said Howkan.

But Imber did not hear, and Howkan, with hand upon his shoulder, roused him again.

"I shall speak to thee what the man has spoken, which is the tale of the troubles thou hast done and which thou hast told, O fool, to the Captain Alexander. And thou shalt understand and say if it be true talk or talk not true. It is so commanded."

Howkan had fallen among the mission folk and been taught by them to read and write. In his hands he held the many fine sheets from which the man had read aloud, and which had been taken down by a clerk when Imber first made confession, through the mouth of Jimmy, to Captain Alexander. Howkan began to read. Imber listened for a space, when a wonderment rose up in his face and he broke in abruptly.

"That be my talk, Howkan. Yet from thy lips it comes when thy ears have not heard."

Howkan smirked with self-appreciation. His hair was parted in the middle. "Nay, from the paper it comes, O Imber. Never have my ears heard. From the paper it comes, through my eyes, into my head, and out of my mouth to thee. Thus it comes."

"Thus it comes? It be there in the paper?" Imber's voice sank in whisperful awe as he crackled the sheets "twixt thumb and finger and stared at the charactery scrawled thereon. "It be a great medicine, Howkan, and thou art a worker of wonders."

"It be nothing, it be nothing," the young man responded carelessly and pridefully. He read at hazard from the document: *"In that year, before the break of the ice, came an old man, and a boy who was lame of one foot. These also did I kill, and the old man made much noise – "*

"It be true," Imber interrupted breathlessly. "He made much noise and would not die for a long time. But how dost thou know, Howkan? The chief man of the white men told thee, mayhap? No one beheld me, and him alone have I told."

Howkan shook his head with impatience. "Have I not told thee it be there in the paper, O fool?"

Imber stared hard at the ink-scrawled surface. "As the hunter looks upon the snow and says, Here but yesterday there passed a rabbit; and here by the willow scrub it stood and listened, and heard, and was afraid; and here it turned upon its trail; and here it went with great swiftness, leaping wide; and here, with greater swiftness and wider leapings, came a lynx; and here, where the claws cut deep into the snow, the lynx made a very great leap; and here it struck, with the rabbit under and rolling belly up; and here leads off the trail of the lynx alone, and there is no more rabbit, – as the hunter looks upon the markings of the snow and says thus and so and here, dost thou, too, look upon the paper and say thus and so and here be the things old Imber hath done?"

"Even so," said Howkan. "And now do thou listen, and keep thy woman's tongue between thy teeth till thou art called upon for speech."

Thereafter, and for a long time, Howkan read to him the confession, and Imber remained musing and silent. At the end, he said:

"It be my talk, and true talk, but I am grown old, Howkan, and forgotten things come back to me which were well for the head man there to know. First, there was the man who came over the Ice Mountains, with cunning traps made of iron, who sought the beaver of the Whitefish. Him I slew. And there were three men seeking gold on the Whitefish long ago. Them also I slew, and left them to the wolverines. And at the Five Fingers there was a man with a raft and much meat."

At the moments when Imber paused to remember, Howkan translated and a clerk reduced to writing. The courtroom listened stolidly to each unadorned little tragedy, till Imber told of a red-haired man whose eyes were crossed and whom he had killed with a remarkably long shot.

"Hell," said a man in the forefront of the onlookers. He said it soulfully and sorrowfully. He was red-haired. "Hell," he repeated. "That was my brother Bill." And at regular intervals throughout the session, his solemn "Hell" was heard in the courtroom; nor did his comrades check him, nor did the man at the table rap him to order.

Imber's head drooped once more, and his eyes went dull, as though a film rose up and covered them from the world. And he dreamed as only age can dream upon the colossal futility of youth.

Later, Howkan roused him again, saying: "Stand up, O Imber. It be commanded that thou tellest why you did these troubles, and slew these people, and at the end journeyed here seeking the Law."

Imber rose feebly to his feet and swayed back and forth. He began to speak in a low and faintly rumbling voice, but Howkan interrupted him.

"This old man, he is damn crazy," he said in English to the square-browed man. "His talk is foolish and like that of a child."

"We will hear his talk which is like that of a child," said the square-browed man. "And we will hear it, word for word, as he speaks it. Do you understand?"

Howkan understood, and Imber's eyes flashed, for he had witnessed the play between his sister's son and the man in authority. And then began the story, the epic of a bronze patriot which might well itself be wrought into bronze for the generations unborn. The crowd fell strangely silent, and the square-browed judge leaned head on hand and pondered his soul and the soul of his race. Only was heard the deep tones of Imber, rhythmically alternating with the shrill voice of the interpreter, and now and again, like the bell of the Lord, the wondering and meditative "Hell" of the red-haired man.

"I am Imber of the Whitefish people." So ran the interpretation of Howkan, whose inherent barbarism gripped hold of him, and who lost his mission culture and veneered civilization as he caught the savage ring and rhythm of old Imber's tale. "My father was Otsbaok, a strong man. The land was warm with sunshine and gladness when I was a boy. The people did not hunger after strange things, nor hearken to new voices, and the ways of their fathers were their ways. The women found favor in the eyes of the young men, and the young men looked upon them with content. Babes hung at the breasts of the women, and they were heavy-hipped with increase of the tribe. Men were men in those days. In peace and plenty, and in war and famine, they were men.

"At that time there was more fish in the water than now, and more meat in the forest. Our dogs were wolves, warm with thick hides and hard to the frost and storm. And as with our dogs so with us, for we were likewise hard to the frost and storm. And when the Pellys came into our land we slew them and were slain. For we were men, we Whitefish, and our fathers and our fathers' fathers had fought against the Pellys and determined the bounds of the land.

"As I say, with our dogs, so with us. And one day came the first white man. He dragged himself, so, on hand and knee, in the snow. And his skin was stretched tight, and his bones were sharp beneath. Never was such a man, we thought, and we wondered of what strange tribe he was, and of its land. And he was weak, most weak, like a little child, so that we gave him a place by the fire, and warm furs to lie upon, and we gave him food as little children are given food.

"And with him was a dog, large as three of our dogs, and very weak. The hair of this dog was short, and not warm, and the tail was frozen so that the end fell off. And this strange dog we fed, and bedded by the fire, and fought from it our dogs, which else would have killed him. And what of the moose meat and the sun-dried salmon, the man and dog took strength to themselves; and what of the strength they became big and unafraid. And the man spoke loud words and laughed at the old men and young men, and looked boldly upon the

maidens. And the dog fought with our dogs, and for all of his short hair and softness slew three of them in one day.

"When we asked the man concerning his people, he said, 'I have many brothers,' and laughed in a way that was not good. And when he was in his full strength he went away, and with him went Noda, daughter to the chief. First, after that, was one of our bitches brought to pup. And never was there such a breed of dogs, – big-headed, thick-jawed, and short-haired, and helpless. Well do I remember my father, Otsbaok, a strong man. His face was black with anger at such helplessness, and he took a stone, so, and so, and there was no more helplessness. And two summers after that came Noda back to us with a man-child in the hollow of her arm.

"And that was the beginning. Came a second white man, with short-haired dogs, which he left behind him when he went. And with him went six of our strongest dogs, for which, in trade, he had given Koo-So-Tee, my mother's brother, a wonderful pistol that fired with great swiftness six times. And Koo-So-Tee was very big, what of the pistol, and laughed at our bows and arrows. 'Woman's things,' he called them, and went forth against the bald-face grizzly, with the pistol in his hand. Now it be known that it is not good to hunt the bald-face with a pistol, but how were we to know? and how was Koo-So-Tee to know? So he went against the bald-face, very brave, and fired the pistol with great swiftness six times; and the bald-face but grunted and broke in his breast like it were an egg, and like honey from a bee's nest dripped the brains of Koo-So-Tee upon the ground. He was a good hunter, and there was no one to bring meat to his squaw and children. And we were bitter, and we said, 'That which for the white men is well, is for us not well.' And this be true. There be many white men and fat, but their ways have made us few and lean.

"Came the third white man, with great wealth of all manner of wonderful foods and things. And twenty of our strongest dogs he took from us in trade. Also, what of presents and great promises, ten of our young hunters did he take with him on a journey which fared no man knew where. It is said they died

in the snow of the Ice Mountains where man has never been, or in the Hills of Silence which are beyond the edge of the earth. Be that as it may, dogs and young hunters were seen never again by the Whitefish people.

"And more white men came with the years, and ever, with pay and presents, they led the young men away with them. And sometimes the young men came back with strange tales of dangers and toils in the lands beyond the Pellys, and sometimes they did not come back. And we said: 'If they be unafraid of life, these white men, it is because they have many lives; but we be few by the Whitefish, and the young men shall go away no more.' But the young men did go away; and the young women went also; and we were very wroth.

"It be true, we ate flour, and salt pork, and drank tea which was a great delight; only, when we could not get tea, it was very bad and we became short of speech and quick of anger. So we grew to hunger for the things the white men brought in trade. Trade! trade! all the time was it trade! One winter we sold our meat for clocks that would not go, and watches with broken guts, and files worn smooth, and pistols without cartridges and worthless. And then came famine, and we were without meat, and two score died ere the break of spring.

"'Now are we grown weak,' we said; 'and the Pellys will fall upon us, and our bounds be overthrown.' But as it fared with us, so had it fared with the Pellys, and they were too weak to come against us.

"My father, Otsbaok, a strong man, was now old and very wise. And he spoke to the chief, saying: 'Behold, our dogs be worthless. No longer are they thick-furred and strong, and they die in the frost and harness. Let us go into the village and kill them, saving only the wolf ones, and these let us tie out in the night that they may mate with the wild wolves of the forest. Thus shall we have dogs warm and strong again.'

"And his word was harkened to, and we Whitefish became known for our dogs, which were the best in the land. But

known we were not for ourselves. The best of our young men and women had gone away with the white men to wander on trail and river to far places. And the young women came back old and broken, as Noda had come, or they came not at all. And the young men came back to sit by our fires for a time, full of ill speech and rough ways, drinking evil drinks and gambling through long nights and days, with a great unrest always in their hearts, till the call of the white men came to them and they went away again to the unknown places. And they were without honor and respect, jeering the old-time customs and laughing in the faces of chief and shamans.

"As I say, we were become a weak breed, we Whitefish. We sold our warm skins and furs for tobacco and whiskey and thin cotton things that left us shivering in the cold. And the coughing sickness came upon us, and men and women coughed and sweated through the long nights, and the hunters on trail spat blood upon the snow. And now one, and now another, bled swiftly from the mouth and died. And the women bore few children, and those they bore were weak and given to sickness. And other sicknesses came to us from the white men, the like of which we had never known and could not understand. Smallpox, likewise measles, have I heard these sicknesses named, and we died of them as die the salmon in the still eddies when in the fall their eggs are spawned and there is no longer need for them to live.

"And yet, and here be the strangeness of it, the white men come as the breath of death; all their ways lead to death, their nostrils are filled with it; and yet they do not die. Theirs the whiskey, and tobacco, and short-haired dogs; theirs the many sicknesses, the smallpox and measles, the coughing and mouth-bleeding; theirs the white skin, and softness to the frost and storm; and theirs the pistols that shoot six times very swift and are worthless. And yet they grow fat on their many ills, and prosper, and lay a heavy hand over all the world and tread mightily upon its peoples. And their women, too, are soft as little babes, most breakable and never broken, the mothers of men. And out of all this softness, and sickness, and weakness, come strength, and power, and authority. They be gods, or devils, as the case may be. I do not know. What do I

know, I, old Imber of the Whitefish? Only do I know that they are past understanding, these white men, far-wanderers and fighters over the earth that they be.

"As I say, the meat in the forest became less and less. It be true, the white man's gun is most excellent and kills a long way off; but of what worth the gun, when there is no meat to kill? When I was a boy on the Whitefish there was moose on every hill, and each year came the caribou uncountable. But now the hunter may take the trail ten days and not one moose gladden his eyes, while the caribou uncountable come no more at all. Small worth the gun, I say, killing a long way off, when there be nothing to kill.

"And I, Imber, pondered upon these things, watching the while the Whitefish, and the Pellys, and all the tribes of the land, perishing as perished the meat of the forest. Long I pondered. I talked with the shamans and the old men who were wise. I went apart that the sounds of the village might not disturb me, and I ate no meat so that my belly should not press upon me and make me slow of eye and ear. I sat long and sleepless in the forest, wide-eyed for the sign, my ears patient and keen for the word that was to come. And I wandered alone in the blackness of night to the river bank, where was wind-moaning and sobbing of water, and where I sought wisdom from the ghosts of old shamans in the trees and dead and gone.

"And in the end, as in a vision, came to me the short-haired and detestable dogs, and the way seemed plain. By the wisdom of Otsbaok, my father and a strong man, had the blood of our own wolf-dogs been kept clean, wherefore had they remained warm of hide and strong in the harness. So I returned to my village and made oration to the men. 'This be a tribe, these white men,' I said. 'A very large tribe, and doubtless there is no longer meat in their land, and they are come among us to make a new land for themselves. But they weaken us, and we die. They are a very hungry folk. Already has our meat gone from us, and it were well, if we would live, that we deal by them as we have dealt by their dogs.'

"And further oration I made, counselling fight. And the men of the Whitefish listened, and some said one thing, and some another, and some spoke of other and worthless things, and no man made brave talk of deeds and war. But while the young men were weak as water and afraid, watched that the old men sat silent, and that in their eyes fires came and went. And later, when forest and made more talk. And now we were agreed, and we remembered the good young days, and the free land, and the times of plenty, and the gladness and sunshine; and we called ourselves brothers, and swore great secrecy, and a mighty oath to cleanse the land of the evil breed that had come upon it. It be plain we were fools, but how were we to know, we old men of the Whitefish?"

"And to hearten the others, I did the first deed. I kept guard upon the Yukon till the first canoe came down. In it were two white men, and when I stood upright upon the bank and raised my hand they changed their course and drove in to me. And as the man in the bow lifted his head, so, that he might know wherefore I wanted him, my arrow sang through the air straight to his throat, and he knew. The second man, who held paddle in the stern, had his rifle half to his shoulder when the first of my three spear-casts smote him.

"`These be the first,' I said, when the old men had gathered to me. `Later we will bind together all the old men of all the tribes, and after that the young men who remain strong, and the work will become easy.'

"And then the two dead white men we cast into the river. And of the canoe, which was a very good canoe, we made a fire, and a fire, also, of the things within the canoe. But first we looked at the things, and they were pouches of leather which we cut open with our knives. And inside these pouches were many papers, like that from which thou has read, O Howkan, with markings on them which we marvelled at and could not understand. Now, I am become wise, and I know them for the speech of men as thou hast told me."

A whisper and buzz went around the courtroom when Howkan finished interpreting the affair of the canoe, and one

man's voice spoke up: "That was the lost '91 mail, Peter James and Delaney bringing it in and last spoken at Le Barge by Matthews going out." The clerk scratched steadily away, and another paragraph was added to the history of the North.

"There be little more," Imber went on slowly. "It be there on the paper, the things we did. We were old men, and we did not understand. Even I, Imber, do not now understand. Secretly we slew, and continued to slay, for with our years we were crafty and we had learned the swiftness of going without haste. When white men came among us with black looks and rough words, and took away six of the young men with irons binding them helpless, we knew we must slay wider and farther. And one by one we old men departed up river and down to the unknown lands. It was a brave thing. Old we were, and unafraid, but the fear of far places is a terrible fear to men who are old.

"So we slew, without haste and craftily. On the Chilcoot and in the Delta we slew, from the passes to the sea, wherever the white men camped or broke their trails. It be true, they died, but it was without worth. Ever did they come over the mountains, ever did they grow and grow, while we, being old, became less and less. I remember, by the Caribou Crossing, the camp of a white man. He was a very little white man, and three of the old men came upon him in his sleep. And the next day I came upon the four of them. The white man alone still breathed, and there was breath in him to curse me once and well before he died.

"And so it went, now one old man, and now another. Sometimes the word reached us long after of how they died, and sometimes it did not reach us. And the old men of the other tribes were weak and afraid, and would not join with us. As I say, one by one, till I alone was left. I am Imber, of the Whitefish people. My father was Otsbaok, a strong man. There are no Whitefish now. Of the old men I am the last. The young men and young women are gone away, some to live with the Pellys, some with the Salmons, and more with the white men. I am very old, and very tired, and it being vain

fighting the Law, as thou sayest, Howkan, I am come seeking the Law."

"O Imber, thou art indeed a fool," said Howkan. But Imber was dreaming. The square-browed judge likewise dreamed, and all his race rose up before him in a mighty phantasmagoria – his steel-shod, mail-clad race, the lawgiver and world-maker among the families of men. He saw it dawn red-flickering across the dark forests and sullen seas; he saw it blaze, bloody and red, to full and triumphant noon; and down the shaded slope he saw the blood-red sands dropping into night. And through it all he observed the Law, pitiless and potent, ever unswerving and ever ordaining, greater than the motes of men who fulfilled it or were crushed by it, even as it was greater than he, his heart speaking for softness.

The Story Of Keesh (1904)

Keesh lived long ago on the rim of the polar sea, was head man of his village through many and prosperous years, and died full of honors with his name on the lips of men. So long ago did he live that only the old men remember his name, his name and the tale, which they got from the old men before them, and which the old men to come will tell to their children and their children's children down to the end of time. And the winter darkness, when the north gales make their long sweep across the ice-pack, and the air is filled with flying white, and no man may venture forth, is the chosen time for the telling of how Keesh, from the poorest IGLOO in the village, rose to power and place over them all.

He was a bright boy, so the tale runs, healthy and strong, and he had seen thirteen suns, in their way of reckoning time. For each winter the sun leaves the land in darkness, and the next year a new sun returns so that they may be warm again and look upon one another's faces. The father of Keesh had been a very brave man, but he had met his death in a time of famine, when he sought to save the lives of his people by

taking the life of a great polar bear. In his eagerness he came to close grapples with the bear, and his bones were crushed; but the bear had much meat on him and the people were saved. Keesh was his only son, and after that Keesh lived alone with his mother. But the people are prone to forget, and they forgot the deed of his father; and he being but a boy, and his mother only a woman, they, too, were swiftly forgotten, and ere long came to live in the meanest of all the igloos.

It was at a council, one night, in the big igloo of Klash-Kwan, the chief, that Keesh showed the blood that ran in his veins and the manhood that stiffened his back. With the dignity of an elder, he rose to his feet, and waited for silence amid the babble of voices.

"It is true that meat be apportioned me and mine," he said. "But it is oftentimes old and tough, this meat, and, moreover, it has an unusual quantity of bones."

The hunters, grizzled and gray, and lusty and young, were aghast. The like had never been known before. A child, that talked like a grown man, and said harsh things to their very faces!

But steadily and with seriousness, Keesh went on. "For that I know my father, Bok, was a great hunter, I speak these words. It is said that Bok brought home more meat than any of the two best hunters, that with his own hands he attended to the division of it, that with his own eyes he saw to it that the least old woman and the last old man received fair share."

"Na! Na!" the men cried. "Put the child out!" "Send him off to bed!" "He is no man that he should talk to men and graybeards!"

He waited calmly till the uproar died down.

"Thou hast a wife, Ugh-Gluk," he said, "and for her dost thou speak. And thou, too, Massuk, a mother also, and for them dost thou speak. My mother has no one, save me; wherefore I speak. As I say, though Bok be dead because he hunted

over-keenly, it is just that I, who am his son, and that Ikeega, who is my mother and was his wife, should have meat in plenty so long as there be meat in plenty in the tribe. I, Keesh, the son of Bok, have spoken."

He sat down, his ears keenly alert to the flood of protest and indignation his words had created.

"That a boy should speak in council!" old Ugh-Gluk was mumbling.

"Shall the babes in arms tell us men the things we shall do?" Massuk demanded in a loud voice. "Am I a man that I should be made a mock by every child that cries for meat?"

The anger boiled a white heat. They ordered him to bed, threatened that he should have no meat at all, and promised him sore beatings for his presumption. Keesh's eyes began to flash, and the blood to pound darkly under his skin. In the midst of the abuse he sprang to his feet.

"Hear me, ye men!" he cried. "Never shall I speak in the council again, never again till the men come to me and say, 'It is well, Keesh, that thou shouldst speak, it is well and it is our wish.' Take this now, ye men, for my last word. Bok, my father, was a great hunter. I, too, his son, shall go and hunt the meat that I eat. And be it known, now, that the division of that which I kill shall be fair. And no widow nor weak one shall cry in the night because there is no meat, when the strong men are groaning in great pain for that they have eaten overmuch. And in the days to come there shall be shame upon the strong men who have eaten overmuch. I, Keesh, have said it!"

Jeers and scornful laughter followed him out of the IGLOO, but his jaw was set and he went his way, looking neither to right nor left.

The next day he went forth along the shore-line where the ice and the land met together. Those who saw him go noted that he carried his bow, with a goodly supply of bone-barbed

arrows, and that across his shoulder was his father's big hunting-spear. And there was laughter, and much talk, at the event. It was an unprecedented occurrence. Never did boys of his tender age go forth to hunt, much less to hunt alone. Also were there shaking of heads and prophetic mutterings, and the women looked pityingly at Ikeega, and her face was grave and sad.

"He will be back ere long," they said cheeringly.

"Let him go; it will teach him a lesson," the hunters said. "And he will come back shortly, and he will be meek and soft of speech in the days to follow."

But a day passed, and a second, and on the third a wild gale blew, and there was no Keesh. Ikeega tore her hair and put soot of the seal-oil on her face in token of her grief; and the women assailed the men with bitter words in that they had mistreated the boy and sent him to his death; and the men made no answer, preparing to go in search of the body when the storm abated.

Early next morning, however, Keesh strode into the village. But he came not shamefacedly. Across his shoulders he bore a burden of fresh-killed meat. And there was importance in his step and arrogance in his speech.

"Go, ye men, with the dogs and sledges, and take my trail for the better part of a day's travel," he said. There is much meat on the ice – a she-bear and two half-grown cubs."

Ikeega was overcome with joy, but he received her demonstrations in manlike fashion, saying: "Come, Ikeega, let us eat. And after that I shall sleep, for I am weary."

And he passed into their IGLOO and ate profoundly, and after that slept for twenty running hours.

There was much doubt at first, much doubt and discussion. The killing of a polar bear is very dangerous, but thrice

dangerous is it, and three times thrice, to kill a mother bear with her cubs. The men could not bring themselves to believe that the boy Keesh, single-handed, had accomplished so great a marvel. But the women spoke of the fresh-killed meat he had brought on his back, and this was an overwhelming argument against their unbelief. So they finally departed, grumbling greatly that in all probability, if the thing were so, he had neglected to cut up the carcasses. Now in the north it is very necessary that this should be done as soon as a kill is made. If not, the meat freezes so solidly as to turn the edge of the sharpest knife, and a three-hundred-pound bear, frozen stiff, is no easy thing to put upon a sled and haul over the rough ice. But arrived at the spot, they found not only the kill, which they had doubted, but that Keesh had quartered the beasts in true hunter fashion, and removed the entrails.

Thus began the mystery of Keesh, a mystery that deepened and deepened with the passing of the days. His very next trip he killed a young bear, nearly full-grown, and on the trip following, a large male bear and his mate. He was ordinarily gone from three to four days, though it was nothing unusual for him to stay away a week at a time on the ice-field. Always he declined company on these expeditions, and the people marvelled. "How does he do it?" they demanded of one another. "Never does he take a dog with him, and dogs are of such great help, too."

"Why dost thou hunt only bear?" Klash-Kwan once ventured to ask him.

And Keesh made fitting answer. "It is well known that there is more meat on the bear," he said.

But there was also talk of witchcraft in the village. "He hunts with evil spirits," some of the people contended, "wherefore his hunting is rewarded. How else can it be, save that he hunts with evil spirits?"

"Mayhap they be not evil, but good, these spirits," others said. "It is known that his father was a mighty hunter. May not his

father hunt with him so that he may attain excellence and patience and understanding? Who knows?"

None the less, his success continued, and the less skilful hunters were often kept busy hauling in his meat. And in the division of it he was just. As his father had done before him, he saw to it that the least old woman and the last old man received a fair portion, keeping no more for himself than his needs required. And because of this, and of his merit as a hunter, he was looked upon with respect, and even awe; and there was talk of making him chief after old Klash-Kwan. Because of the things he had done, they looked for him to appear again in the council, but he never came, and they were ashamed to ask.

"I am minded to build me an igloo," he said one day to Klash-Kwan and a number of the hunters. "It shall be a large igloo, wherein Ikeega and I can dwell in comfort."

"Ay," they nodded gravely.

"But I have no time. My business is hunting, and it takes all my time. So it is but just that the men and women of the village who eat my meat should build me my igloo."

And the igloo was built accordingly, on a generous scale which exceeded even the dwelling of Klash-Kwan. Keesh and his mother moved into it, and it was the first prosperity she had enjoyed since the death of Bok. Nor was material prosperity alone hers, for, because of her wonderful son and the position he had given her, she came to be looked upon as the first woman in all the village; and the women were given to visiting her, to asking her advice, and to quoting her wisdom when arguments arose among themselves or with the men.

But it was the mystery of Keesh's marvellous hunting that took chief place in all their minds. And one day Ugh-Gluk taxed him with witchcraft to his face.

"It is charged," Ugh-Gluk said ominously, "that thou dealest with evil spirits, wherefore thy hunting is rewarded."

"Is not the meat good?" Keesh made answer. "Has one in the village yet to fall sick from the eating of it? How dost thou know that witchcraft be concerned? Or dost thou guess, in the dark, merely because of the envy that consumes thee?"

And Ugh-Gluk withdrew discomfited, the women laughing at him as he walked away. But in the council one night, after long deliberation, it was determined to put spies on his track when he went forth to hunt, so that his methods might be learned. So, on his next trip, Bim and Bawn, two young men, and of hunters the craftiest, followed after him, taking care not to be seen. After five days they returned, their eyes bulging and their tongues a-tremble to tell what they had seen. The council was hastily called in Klash-Kwan's dwelling, and Bim took up the tale.

"Brothers! As commanded, we journeyed on the trail of Keesh, and cunningly we journeyed, so that he might not know. And midway of the first day he picked up with a great he-bear. It was a very great bear."

"None greater," Bawn corroborated, and went on himself. "Yet was the bear not inclined to fight, for he turned away and made off slowly over the ice. This we saw from the rocks of the shore, and the bear came toward us, and after him came Keesh, very much unafraid. And he shouted harsh words after the bear, and waved his arms about, and made much noise. Then did the bear grow angry, and rise up on his hind legs, and growl. But Keesh walked right up to the bear."

"Ay," Bim continued the story. "Right up to the bear Keesh walked. And the bear took after him, and Keesh ran away. But as he ran he dropped a little round ball on the ice. And the bear stopped and smelled of it, then swallowed it up. And Keesh continued to run away and drop little round balls, and the bear continued to swallow them up."

Exclamations and cries of doubt were being made, and Ugh-Gluk expressed open unbelief.

"With our own eyes we saw it," Bim affirmed.

And Bawn – "Ay, with our own eyes. And this continued until the bear stood suddenly upright and cried aloud in pain, and thrashed his fore paws madly about. And Keesh continued to make off over the ice to a safe distance. But the bear gave him no notice, being occupied with the misfortune the little round balls had wrought within him."

"Ay, within him," Bim interrupted. "For he did claw at himself, and leap about over the ice like a playful puppy, save from the way he growled and squealed it was plain it was not play but pain. Never did I see such a sight!"

"Nay, never was such a sight seen," Bawn took up the strain. "And furthermore, it was such a large bear."

"Witchcraft," Ugh-Gluk suggested.

"I know not," Bawn replied. "I tell only of what my eyes beheld. And after a while the bear grew weak and tired, for he was very heavy and he had jumped about with exceeding violence, and he went off along the shore-ice, shaking his head slowly from side to side and sitting down ever and again to squeal and cry. And Keesh followed after the bear, and we followed after Keesh, and for that day and three days more we followed. The bear grew weak, and never ceased crying from his pain."

"It was a charm!" Ugh-Gluk exclaimed. "Surely it was a charm!"

"It may well be."

And Bim relieved Bawn. "The bear wandered, now this way and now that, doubling back and forth and crossing his trail in circles, so that at the end he was near where Keesh had first

come upon him. By this time he was quite sick, the bear, and could crawl no farther, so Keesh came up close and speared him to death."

"And then?" Klash-Kwan demanded.

"Then we left Keesh skinning the bear, and came running that the news of the killing might be told."

And in the afternoon of that day the women hauled in the meat of the bear while the men sat in council assembled. When Keesh arrived a messenger was sent to him, bidding him come to the council. But he sent reply, saying that he was hungry and tired; also that his IGLOO was large and comfortable and could hold many men.

And curiosity was so strong on the men that the whole council, Klash-Kwan to the fore, rose up and went to the IGLOO of Keesh. He was eating, but he received them with respect and seated them according to their rank. Ikeega was proud and embarrassed by turns, but Keesh was quite composed.

Klash-Kwan recited the information brought by Bim and Bawn, and at its close said in a stern voice: "So explanation is wanted, O Keesh, of thy manner of hunting. Is there witchcraft in it?"

Keesh looked up and smiled. "Nay, O Klash-Kwan. It is not for a boy to know aught of witches, and of witches I know nothing. I have but devised a means whereby I may kill the ice-bear with ease, that is all. It be headcraft, not witchcraft."

"And may any man?"

"Any man."

There was a long silence. The men looked in one another's faces, and Keesh went on eating.

"And . . . and . . . and wilt thou tell us, O Keesh?" Klash-Kwan finally asked in a tremulous voice.

"Yea, I will tell thee." Keesh finished sucking a marrow-bone and rose to his feet. "It is quite simple. Behold!"

He picked up a thin strip of whalebone and showed it to them. The ends were sharp as needle-points. The strip he coiled carefully, till it disappeared in his hand. Then, suddenly releasing it, it sprang straight again. He picked up a piece of blubber.

"So," he said, "one takes a small chunk of blubber, thus, and thus makes it hollow. Then into the hollow goes the whalebone, so, tightly coiled, and another piece of blubber is fitted over the whale-bone. After that it is put outside where it freezes into a little round ball. The bear swallows the little round ball, the blubber melts, the whalebone with its sharp ends stands out straight, the bear gets sick, and when the bear is very sick, why, you kill him with a spear. It is quite simple."

And Ugh-Gluk said "Oh!" and Klash-Kwan said "Ah!" And each said something after his own manner, and all understood.

And this is the story of Keesh, who lived long ago on the rim of the polar sea. Because he exercised headcraft and not witchcraft, he rose from the meanest IGLOO to be head man of his village, and through all the years that he lived, it is related, his tribe was prosperous, and neither widow nor weak one cried aloud in the night because there was no meat.

Love Of Life (1905)

"This out of all will remain —
They have lived and have tossed:
So much of the game will be gain,
Though the gold of the dice has been lost."

THEY limped painfully down the bank, and once the foremost of the two men staggered among the rough-strewn rocks. They were tired and weak, and their faces had the drawn expression of patience which comes of hardship long endured. They were heavily burdened with blanket packs which were strapped to their shoulders. Head-straps, passing across the forehead, helped support these packs. Each man carried a rifle. They walked in a stooped posture, the shoulders well forward, the head still farther forward, the eyes bent upon the ground.

"I wish we had just about two of them cartridges that's layin' in that cache of ours," said the second man.

His voice was utterly and drearily expressionless. He spoke without enthusiasm; and the first man, limping into the milky stream that foamed over the rocks, vouchsafed no reply.

The other man followed at his heels. They did not remove their foot-gear, though the water was icy cold – so cold that their ankles ached and their feet went numb. In places the water dashed against their knees, and both men staggered for footing.

The man who followed slipped on a smooth boulder, nearly fell, but recovered himself with a violent effort, at the same time uttering a sharp exclamation of pain. He seemed faint and dizzy and put out his free hand while he reeled, as though seeking support against the air. When he had steadied himself he stepped forward, but reeled again and nearly fell. Then he stood still and looked at the other man, who had never turned his head.

The man stood still for fully a minute, as though debating with himself. Then he called out:

"I say, Bill, I've sprained my ankle."

Bill staggered on through the milky water. He did not look around. The man watched him go, and though his face was expressionless as ever, his eyes were like the eyes of a wounded deer.

The other man limped up the farther bank and continued straight on without looking back. The man in the stream watched him. His lips trembled a little, so that the rough thatch of brown hair which covered them was visibly agitated. His tongue even strayed out to moisten them.

"Bill!" he cried out. It was the pleading cry of a strong man in distress, but Bill's head did not turn. The man watched him go, limping grotesquely and lurching forward with stammering gait up the slow slope toward the soft sky-line of the low-lying hill. He watched him go till he passed over the crest and disappeared. Then he turned his gaze and slowly took in the circle of the world that remained to him now that Bill was gone.

Near the horizon the sun was smouldering dimly, almost obscured by formless mists and vapors, which gave an impression of mass and density without outline or tangibility. The man pulled out his watch, the while resting his weight on one leg. It was four o'clock, and as the season was near the last of July or first of August, – he did not know the precise date within a week or two, – he knew that the sun roughly marked the northwest. He looked to the south and knew that somewhere beyond those bleak hills lay the Great Bear Lake; also, he knew that in that direction the Arctic Circle cut its forbidding way across the Canadian Barrens. This stream in which he stood was a feeder to the Coppermine River, which in turn flowed north and emptied into Coronation Gulf and the Arctic Ocean. He had never been there, but he had seen it, once, on a Hudson Bay Company chart.

Again his gaze completed the circle of the world about him. It was not a heartening spectacle. Everywhere was soft skyline. The hills were all low-lying. There were no trees, no shrubs, no grasses – naught but a tremendous and terrible desolation that sent fear swiftly dawning into his eyes.

"Bill!" he whispered, once and twice; "Bill!"

He cowered in the midst of the milky water, as though the vastness were pressing in upon him with overwhelming force, brutally crushing him with its complacent awfulness. He began to shake as with an ague-fit, till the gun fell from his hand with a splash. This served to rouse him. He fought with his fear and pulled himself together, groping in the water and recovering the weapon. He hitched his pack farther over on his left shoulder, so as to take a portion of its weight from off the injured ankle. Then he proceeded, slowly and carefully, wincing with pain, to the bank.

He did not stop. With a desperation that was madness, unmindful of the pain, he hurried up the slope to the crest of the hill over which his comrade had disappeared – more grotesque and comical by far than that limping, jerking comrade. But at the crest he saw a shallow valley, empty of life. He fought with his fear again, overcame it, hitched the pack still farther over on his left shoulder, and lurched on down the slope.

The bottom of the valley was soggy with water, which the thick moss held, spongelike, close to the surface. This water squirted out from under his feet at every step, and each time he lifted a foot the action culminated in a sucking sound as the wet moss reluctantly released its grip. He picked his way from muskeg to muskeg, and followed the other man's footsteps along and across the rocky ledges which thrust like islets through the sea of moss.

Though alone, he was not lost. Farther on he knew he would come to where dead spruce and fir, very small and weazened, bordered the shore of a little lake, the *titchinichillie*, in the tongue of the country, the "land of little sticks."

And into that lake flowed a small stream, the water of which was not milky. There was rush-grass on that stream – this he remembered well – but no timber, and he would follow it till its first trickle ceased at a divide. He would cross this divide to the first trickle of another stream, flowing to the west, which he would follow until it emptied into the river Dease, and here he would find a cache under an upturned canoe and piled over with many rocks. And in this cache would be ammunition for his empty gun, fish-hooks and lines, a small net – all the utilities for the killing and snaring of food. Also, he would find flour, – not much, – a piece of bacon, and some beans.

Bill would be waiting for him there, and they would paddle away south down the Dease to the Great Bear Lake. And south across the lake they would go, ever south, till they gained the Mackenzie. And south, still south, they would go, while the winter raced vainly after them, and the ice formed in the eddies, and the days grew chill and crisp, south to some warm Hudson Bay Company post, where timber grew tall and generous and there was grub without end.

These were the thoughts of the man as he strove onward. But hard as he strove with his body, he strove equally hard with his mind, trying to think that Bill had not deserted him, that Bill would surely wait for him at the cache. He was compelled to think this thought, or else there would not be any use to strive, and he would have lain down and died. And as the dim ball of the sun sank slowly into the northwest he covered every inch – and many times – of his and Bill's flight south before the downcoming winter. And he conned the grub of the cache and the grub of the Hudson Bay Company post over and over again. He had not eaten for two days; for a far longer time he had not had all he wanted to eat. Often he stooped and picked pale muskeg berries, put them into his mouth, and chewed and swallowed them. A muskeg berry is a bit of seed enclosed in a bit of water. In the mouth the water melts away and the seed chews sharp and bitter. The man knew there was no nourishment in the berries, but he chewed them patiently with a hope greater than knowledge and defying experience.

At nine o'clock he stubbed his toe on a rocky ledge, and from sheer weariness and weakness staggered and fell. He lay for some time, without movement, on his side. Then he slipped out of the pack-straps and clumsily dragged himself into a sitting posture. It was not yet dark, and in the lingering twilight he groped about among the rocks for shreds of dry moss. When he had gathered a heap he built a fire, – a smouldering, smudgy fire, – and put a tin pot of water on to boil.

He unwrapped his pack and the first thing he did was to count his matches. There were sixty-seven. He counted them three times to make sure. He divided them into several portions, wrapping them in oil paper, disposing of one bunch in his empty tobacco pouch, of another bunch in the inside band of his battered hat, of a third bunch under his shirt on the chest. This accomplished, a panic came upon him, and he unwrapped them all and counted them again. There were still sixty-seven.

He dried his wet foot-gear by the fire. The moccasins were in soggy shreds. The blanket socks were worn through in places, and his feet were raw and bleeding. His ankle was throbbing, and he gave it an examination. It had swollen to the size of his knee. He tore a long strip from one of his two blankets and bound the ankle tightly. He tore other strips and bound them about his feet to serve for both moccasins and socks. Then he drank the pot of water, steaming hot, wound his watch, and crawled between his blankets.

He slept like a dead man. The brief darkness around midnight came and went. The sun arose in the northeast – at least the day dawned in that quarter, for the sun was hidden by gray clouds.

At six o'clock he awoke, quietly lying on his back. He gazed straight up into the gray sky and knew that he was hungry. As he rolled over on his elbow he was startled by a loud snort, and saw a bull caribou regarding him with alert curiosity. The animal was not more than fifty feet away, and instantly into the man's mind leaped the vision and the savor of a caribou

steak sizzling and frying over a fire. Mechanically he reached for the empty gun, drew a bead, and pulled the trigger. The bull snorted and leaped away, his hoofs rattling and clattering as he fled across the ledges.

The man cursed and flung the empty gun from him. He groaned aloud as he started to drag himself to his feet. It was a slow and arduous task. His joints were like rusty hinges. They worked harshly in their sockets, with much friction, and each bending or unbending was accomplished only through a sheer exertion of will. When he finally gained his feet, another minute or so was consumed in straightening up, so that he could stand erect as a man should stand.

He crawled up a small knoll and surveyed the prospect. There were no trees, no bushes, nothing but a gray sea of moss scarcely diversified by gray rocks, gray lakelets, and gray streamlets. The sky was gray. There was no sun nor hint of sun. He had no idea of north, and he had forgotten the way he had come to this spot the night before. But he was not lost. He knew that. Soon he would come to the land of the little sticks. He felt that it lay off to the left somewhere, not far – possibly just over the next low hill.

He went back to put his pack into shape for travelling. He assured himself of the existence of his three separate parcels of matches, though he did not stop to count them. But he did linger, debating, over a squat moose-hide sack. It was not large. He could hide it under his two hands. He knew that it weighed fifteen pounds, – as much as all the rest of the pack, – and it worried him. He finally set it to one side and proceeded to roll the pack. He paused to gaze at the squat moose-hide sack. He picked it up hastily with a defiant glance about him, as though the desolation were trying to rob him of it; and when he rose to his feet to stagger on into the day, it was included in the pack on his back.

He bore away to the left, stopping now and again to eat muskeg berries. His ankle had stiffened, his limp was more pronounced, but the pain of it was as nothing compared with the pain of his stomach. The hunger pangs were sharp. They

gnawed and gnawed until he could not keep his mind steady on the course he must pursue to gain the land of little sticks. The muskeg berries did not allay this gnawing, while they made his tongue and the roof of his mouth sore with their irritating bite.

He came upon a valley where rock ptarmigan rose on whirring wings from the ledges and muskegs. "Ker – ker – ker" was the cry they made. He threw stones at them, but could not hit them. He placed his pack on the ground and stalked them as a cat stalks a sparrow. The sharp rocks cut through his pants' legs till his knees left a trail of blood; but the hurt was lost in the hurt of his hunger. He squirmed over the wet moss, saturating his clothes and chilling his body; but he was not aware of it, so great was his fever for food. And always the ptarmigan rose, whirring, before him, till their ker – ker – ker became a mock to him, and he cursed them and cried aloud at them with their own cry.

Once he crawled upon one that must have been asleep. He did not see it till it shot up in his face from its rocky nook. He made a clutch as startled as was the rise of the ptarmigan, and there remained in his hand three tail-feathers. As he watched its flight he hated it, as though it had done him some terrible wrong. Then he returned and shouldered his pack.

As the day wore along he came into valleys or swales where game was more plentiful. A band of caribou passed by, twenty and odd animals, tantalizingly within rifle range. He felt a wild desire to run after them, a certitude that he could run them down. A black fox came toward him, carrying a ptarmigan in his mouth. The man shouted. It was a fearful cry, but the fox, leaping away in fright, did not drop the ptarmigan.

Late in the afternoon he followed a stream, milky with lime, which ran through sparse patches of rush-grass. Grasping these rushes firmly near the root, he pulled up what resembled a young onion-sprout no larger than a shingle-nail. It was tender, and his teeth sank into it with a crunch that promised deliciously of food. But its fibers were tough. It was composed of stringy filaments saturated with water, like the

berries, and devoid of nourishment. He threw off his pack and went into the rush-grass on hands and knees, crunching and munching, like some bovine creature.

He was very weary and often wished to rest – to lie down and sleep; but he was continually driven on – not so much by his desire to gain the land of little sticks as by his hunger. He searched little ponds for frogs and dug up the earth with his nails for worms, though he knew in spite that neither frogs nor worms existed so far north.

He looked into every pool of water vainly, until, as the long twilight came on, he discovered a solitary fish, the size of a minnow, in such a pool. He plunged his arm in up to the shoulder, but it eluded him. He reached for it with both hands and stirred up the milky mud at the bottom. In his excitement he fell in, wetting himself to the waist. Then the water was too muddy to admit of his seeing the fish, and he was compelled to wait until the sediment had settled.

The pursuit was renewed, till the water was again muddied. But he could not wait. He unstrapped the tin bucket and began to bale the pool. He baled wildly at first, splashing himself and flinging the water so short a distance that it ran back into the pool. He worked more carefully, striving to be cool, though his heart was pounding against his chest and his hands were trembling. At the end of half an hour the pool was nearly dry. Not a cupful of water remained. And there was no fish. He found a hidden crevice among the stones through which it had escaped to the adjoining and larger pool – a pool which he could not empty in a night and a day. Had he known of the crevice, he could have closed it with a rock at the beginning and the fish would have been his.

Thus he thought, and crumpled up and sank down upon the wet earth. At first he cried softly to himself, then he cried loudly to the pitiless desolation that ringed him around; and for a long time after he was shaken by great dry sobs.

He built a fire and warmed himself by drinking quarts of hot water, and made camp on a rocky ledge in the same fashion

he had the night before. The last thing he did was to see that his matches were dry and to wind his watch. The blankets were wet and clammy. His ankle pulsed with pain. But he knew only that he was hungry, and through his restless sleep he dreamed of feasts and banquets and of food served and spread in all imaginable ways.

He awoke chilled and sick. There was no sun. The gray of earth and sky had become deeper, more profound. A raw wind was blowing, and the first flurries of snow were whitening the hilltops. The air about him thickened and grew white while he made a fire and boiled more water. It was wet snow, half rain, and the flakes were large and soggy. At first they melted as soon as they came in contact with the earth, but ever more fell, covering the ground, putting out the fire, spoiling his supply of moss-fuel.

This was a signal for him to strap on his pack and stumble onward, he knew not where. He was not concerned with the land of little sticks, nor with Bill and the cache under the upturned canoe by the river Dease. He was mastered by the verb "to eat." He was hunger-mad. He took no heed of the course he pursued, so long as that course led him through the swale bottoms. He felt his way through the wet snow to the watery muskeg berries, and went by feel as he pulled up the rush-grass by the roots. But it was tasteless stuff and did not satisfy. He found a weed that tasted sour and he ate all he could find of it, which was not much, for it was a creeping growth, easily hidden under the several inches of snow.

He had no fire that night, nor hot water, and crawled under his blanket to sleep the broken hunger-sleep. The snow turned into a cold rain. He awakened many times to feel it falling on his upturned face. Day came – a gray day and no sun. It had ceased raining. The keenness of his hunger had departed. Sensibility, as far as concerned the yearning for food, had been exhausted. There was a dull, heavy ache in his stomach, but it did not bother him so much. He was more rational, and once more he was chiefly interested in the land of little sticks and the cache by the river Dease.

He ripped the remnant of one of his blankets into strips and bound his bleeding feet. Also, he recinched the injured ankle and prepared himself for a day of travel. When he came to his pack, he paused long over the squat moose-hide sack, but in the end it went with him.

The snow had melted under the rain, and only the hilltops showed white. The sun came out, and he succeeded in locating the points of the compass, though he knew now that he was lost. Perhaps, in his previous days' wanderings, he had edged away too far to the left. He now bore off to the right to counteract the possible deviation from his true course.

Though the hunger pangs were no longer so exquisite, he realized that he was weak. He was compelled to pause for frequent rests, when he attacked the muskeg berries and rush-grass patches. His tongue felt dry and large, as though covered with a fine hairy growth, and it tasted bitter in his mouth. His heart gave him a great deal of trouble. When he had travelled a few minutes it would begin a remorseless thump, thump, thump, and then leap up and away in a painful flutter of beats that choked him and made him go faint and dizzy.

In the middle of the day he found two minnows in a large pool. It was impossible to bale it, but he was calmer now and managed to catch them in his tin bucket. They were no longer than his little finger, but he was not particularly hungry. The dull ache in his stomach had been growing duller and fainter. It seemed almost that his stomach was dozing. He ate the fish raw, masticating with painstaking care, for the eating was an act of pure reason. While he had no desire to eat, he knew that he must eat to live.

In the evening he caught three more minnows, eating two and saving the third for breakfast. The sun had dried stray shreds of moss, and he was able to warm himself with hot water. He had not covered more than ten miles that day; and the next day, travelling whenever his heart permitted him, he covered no more than five miles. But his stomach did not give him the slightest uneasiness. It had gone to sleep. He was in a

strange country, too, and the caribou were growing more plentiful, also the wolves. Often their yelps drifted across the desolation, and once he saw three of them slinking away before his path.

Another night; and in the morning, being more rational, he untied the leather string that fastened the squat moose-hide sack. From its open mouth poured a yellow stream of coarse gold-dust and nuggets. He roughly divided the gold in halves, caching one half on a prominent ledge, wrapped in a piece of blanket, and returning the other half to the sack. He also began to use strips of the one remaining blanket for his feet. He still clung to his gun, for there were cartridges in that cache by the river Dease. This was a day of fog, and this day hunger awoke in him again. He was very weak and was afflicted with a giddiness which at times blinded him. It was no uncommon thing now for him to stumble and fall; and stumbling once, he fell squarely into a ptarmigan nest. There were four newly hatched chicks, a day old – little specks of pulsating life no more than a mouthful; and he ate them ravenously, thrusting them alive into his mouth and crunching them like egg-shells between his teeth. The mother ptarmigan beat about him with great outcry. He used his gun as a club with which to knock her over, but she dodged out of reach. He threw stones at her and with one chance shot broke a wing. Then she fluttered away, running, trailing the broken wing, with him in pursuit.

The little chicks had no more than whetted his appetite. He hopped and bobbed clumsily along on his injured ankle, throwing stones and screaming hoarsely at times; at other times hopping and bobbing silently along, picking himself up grimly and patiently when he fell, or rubbing his eyes with his hand when the giddiness threatened to overpower him.

The chase led him across swampy ground in the bottom of the valley, and he came upon footprints in the soggy moss. They were not his own – he could see that. They must be Bill's. But he could not stop, for the mother ptarmigan was running on. He would catch her first, then he would return and investigate.

He exhausted the mother ptarmigan; but he exhausted himself. She lay panting on her side. He lay panting on his side, a dozen feet away, unable to crawl to her. And as he recovered she recovered, fluttering out of reach as his hungry hand went out to her. The chase was resumed. Night settled down and she escaped. He stumbled from weakness and pitched head foremost on his face, cutting his cheek, his pack upon his back. He did not move for a long while; then he rolled over on his side, wound his watch, and lay there until morning.

Another day of fog. Half of his last blanket had gone into foot-wrappings. He failed to pick up Bill's trail. It did not matter. His hunger was driving him too compellingly – only – only he wondered if Bill, too, were lost. By midday the irk of his pack became too oppressive. Again he divided the gold, this time merely spilling half of it on the ground. In the afternoon he threw the rest of it away, there remaining to him only the half-blanket, the tin bucket, and the rifle.

An hallucination began to trouble him. He felt confident that one cartridge remained to him. It was in the chamber of the rifle and he had overlooked it. On the other hand, he knew all the time that the chamber was empty. But the hallucination persisted. He fought it off for hours, then threw his rifle open and was confronted with emptiness. The disappointment was as bitter as though he had really expected to find the cartridge.

He plodded on for half an hour, when the hallucination arose again. Again he fought it, and still it persisted, till for very relief he opened his rifle to unconvince himself. At times his mind wandered farther afield, and he plodded on, a mere automaton, strange conceits and whimsicalities gnawing at his brain like worms. But these excursions out of the real were of brief duration, for ever the pangs of the hunger-bite called him back. He was jerked back abruptly once from such an excursion by a sight that caused him nearly to faint. He reeled and swayed, doddering like a drunken man to keep from falling. Before him stood a horse. A horse! He could not believe his eyes. A thick mist was in them, intershot with

sparkling points of light. He rubbed his eyes savagely to clear his vision, and beheld, not a horse, but a great brown bear. The animal was studying him with bellicose curiosity.

The man had brought his gun halfway to his shoulder before he realized. He lowered it and drew his hunting-knife from its beaded sheath at his hip. Before him was meat and life.

He ran his thumb along the edge of his knife. It was sharp. The point was sharp. He would fling himself upon the bear and kill it. But his heart began its warning thump, thump, thump. Then followed the wild upward leap and tattoo of flutters, the pressing as of an iron band about his forehead, the creeping of the dizziness into his brain.

His desperate courage was evicted by a great surge of fear. In his weakness, what if the animal attacked him? He drew himself up to his most imposing stature, gripping the knife and staring hard at the bear. The bear advanced clumsily a couple of steps, reared up, and gave vent to a tentative growl. If the man ran, he would run after him; but the man did not run. He was animated now with the courage of fear. He, too, growled, savagely, terribly, voicing the fear that is to life germane and that lies twisted about life's deepest roots.

The bear edged away to one side, growling menacingly, himself appalled by this mysterious creature that appeared upright and unafraid. But the man did not move. He stood like a statue till the danger was past, when he yielded to a fit of trembling and sank down into the wet moss.

He pulled himself together and went on, afraid now in a new way. It was not the fear that he should die passively from lack of food, but that he should be destroyed violently before starvation had exhausted the last particle of the endeavor in him that made toward surviving. There were the wolves. Back and forth across the desolation drifted their howls, weaving the very air into a fabric of menace that was so tangible that he found himself, arms in the air, pressing it back from him as it might be the walls of a wind-blown tent.

Now and again the wolves, in packs of two and three, crossed his path. But they sheered clear of him. They were not in sufficient numbers, and besides they were hunting the caribou, which did not battle, while this strange creature that walked erect might scratch and bite.

In the late afternoon he came upon scattered bones where the wolves had made a kill. The debris had been a caribou calf an hour before, squawking and running and very much alive. He contemplated the bones, clean-picked and polished, pink with the cell-life in them which had not yet died. Could it possibly be that he might be that ere the day was done! Such was life, eh? A vain and fleeting thing. It was only life that pained. There was no hurt in death. To die was to sleep. It meant cessation, rest. Then why was he not content to die?

But he did not moralize long. He was squatting in the moss, a bone in his mouth, sucking at the shreds of life that still dyed it faintly pink. The sweet meaty taste, thin and elusive almost as a memory, maddened him. He closed his jaws on the bones and crunched. Sometimes it was the bone that broke, sometimes his teeth. Then he crushed the bones between rocks, pounded them to a pulp, and swallowed them. He pounded his fingers, too, in his haste, and yet found a moment in which to feel surprise at the fact that his fingers did not hurt much when caught under the descending rock.

Came frightful days of snow and rain. He did not know when he made camp, when he broke camp. He travelled in the night as much as in the day. He rested wherever he fell, crawled on whenever the dying life in him flickered up and burned less dimly. He, as a man, no longer strove. It was the life in him, unwilling to die, that drove him on. He did not suffer. His nerves had become blunted, numb, while his mind was filled with weird visions and delicious dreams.

But ever he sucked and chewed on the crushed bones of the caribou calf, the least remnants of which he had gathered up and carried with him. He crossed no more hills or divides, but automatically followed a large stream which flowed through a wide and shallow valley. He did not see this stream nor this

valley. He saw nothing save visions. Soul and body walked or crawled side by side, yet apart, so slender was the thread that bound them.

He awoke in his right mind, lying on his back on a rocky ledge. The sun was shining bright and warm. Afar off he heard the squawking of caribou calves. He was aware of vague memories of rain and wind and snow, but whether he had been beaten by the storm for two days or two weeks he did not know.

For some time he lay without movement, the genial sunshine pouring upon him and saturating his miserable body with its warmth. A fine day, he thought. Perhaps he could manage to locate himself. By a painful effort he rolled over on his side. Below him flowed a wide and sluggish river. Its unfamiliarity puzzled him. Slowly he followed it with his eyes, winding in wide sweeps among the bleak, bare hills, bleaker and barer and lower-lying than any hills he had yet encountered. Slowly, deliberately, without excitement or more than the most casual interest, he followed the course of the strange stream toward the sky-line and saw it emptying into a bright and shining sea. He was still unexcited. Most unusual, he thought, a vision or a mirage – more likely a vision, a trick of his disordered mind. He was confirmed in this by sight of a ship lying at anchor in the midst of the shining sea. He closed his eyes for a while, then opened them. Strange how the vision persisted! Yet not strange. He knew there were no seas or ships in the heart of the barren lands, just as he had known there was no cartridge in the empty rifle.

He heard a snuffle behind him – a half-choking gasp or cough. Very slowly, because of his exceeding weakness and stiffness, he rolled over on his other side. He could see nothing near at hand, but he waited patiently. Again came the snuffle and cough, and outlined between two jagged rocks not a score of feet away he made out the gray head of a wolf. The sharp ears were not pricked so sharply as he had seen them on other wolves; the eyes were bleared and bloodshot, the head seemed to droop limply and forlornly. The animal

blinked continually in the sunshine. It seemed sick. As he looked it snuffled and coughed again.

This, at least, was real, he thought, and turned on the other side so that he might see the reality of the world which had been veiled from him before by the vision. But the sea still shone in the distance and the ship was plainly discernible. Was it reality, after all? He closed his eyes for a long while and thought, and then it came to him. He had been making north by east, away from the Dease Divide and into the Coppermine Valley. This wide and sluggish river was the Coppermine. That shining sea was the Arctic Ocean. That ship was a whaler, strayed east, far east, from the mouth of the Mackenzie, and it was lying at anchor in Coronation Gulf. He remembered the Hudson Bay Company chart he had seen long ago, and it was all clear and reasonable to him.

He sat up and turned his attention to immediate affairs. He had worn through the blanket-wrappings, and his feet were shapeless lumps of raw meat. His last blanket was gone. Rifle and knife were both missing. He had lost his hat somewhere, with the bunch of matches in the band, but the matches against his chest were safe and dry inside the tobacco pouch and oil paper. He looked at his watch. It marked eleven o'clock and was still running. Evidently he had kept it wound.

He was calm and collected. Though extremely weak, he had no sensation of pain. He was not hungry. The thought of food was not even pleasant to him, and whatever he did was done by his reason alone. He ripped off his pants' legs to the knees and bound them about his feet. Somehow he had succeeded in retaining the tin bucket. He would have some hot water before he began what he foresaw was to be a terrible journey to the ship.

His movements were slow. He shook as with a palsy. When he started to collect dry moss, he found he could not rise to his feet. He tried again and again, then contented himself with crawling about on hands and knees. Once he crawled near to the sick wolf. The animal dragged itself reluctantly out of his way, licking its chops with a tongue which seemed hardly to

have the strength to curl. The man noticed that the tongue was not the customary healthy red. It was a yellowish brown and seemed coated with a rough and half-dry mucus.

After he had drunk a quart of hot water the man found he was able to stand, and even to walk as well as a dying man might be supposed to walk. Every minute or so he was compelled to rest. His steps were feeble and uncertain, just as the wolf's that trailed him were feeble and uncertain; and that night, when the shining sea was blotted out by blackness, he knew he was nearer to it by no more than four miles.

Throughout the night he heard the cough of the sick wolf, and now and then the squawking of the caribou calves. There was life all around him, but it was strong life, very much alive and well, and he knew the sick wolf clung to the sick man's trail in the hope that the man would die first. In the morning, on opening his eyes, he beheld it regarding him with a wistful and hungry stare. It stood crouched, with tail between its legs, like a miserable and woe-begone dog. It shivered in the chill morning wind, and grinned dispiritedly when the man spoke to it in a voice that achieved no more than a hoarse whisper.

The sun rose brightly, and all morning the man tottered and fell toward the ship on the shining sea. The weather was perfect. It was the brief Indian Summer of the high latitudes. It might last a week. To-morrow or next day it might be gone.

In the afternoon the man came upon a trail. It was of another man, who did not walk, but who dragged himself on all fours. The man thought it might be Bill, but he thought in a dull, uninterested way. He had no curiosity. In fact, sensation and emotion had left him. He was no longer susceptible to pain. Stomach and nerves had gone to sleep. Yet the life that was in him drove him on. He was very weary, but it refused to die. It was because it refused to die that he still ate muskeg berries and minnows, drank his hot water, and kept a wary eye on the sick wolf.

He followed the trail of the other man who dragged himself along, and soon came to the end of it – a few fresh-picked

bones where the soggy moss was marked by the foot-pads of many wolves. He saw a squat moose-hide sack, mate to his own, which had been torn by sharp teeth. He picked it up, though its weight was almost too much for his feeble fingers. Bill had carried it to the last. Ha! ha! He would have the laugh on Bill. He would survive and carry it to the ship in the shining sea. His mirth was hoarse and ghastly, like a raven's croak, and the sick wolf joined him, howling lugubriously. The man ceased suddenly. How could he have the laugh on Bill if that were Bill; if those bones, so pinky-white and clean, were Bill?

He turned away. Well, Bill had deserted him; but he would not take the gold, nor would he suck Bill's bones. Bill would have, though, had it been the other way around, he mused as he staggered on. He came to a pool of water. Stooping over in quest of minnows, he jerked his head back as though he had been stung. He had caught sight of his reflected face. So horrible was it that sensibility awoke long enough to be shocked. There were three minnows in the pool, which was too large to drain; and after several ineffectual attempts to catch them in the tin bucket he forbore. He was afraid, because of his great weakness, that he might fall in and drown. It was for this reason that he did not trust himself to the river astride one of the many drift-logs which lined its sand-spits.

That day he decreased the distance between him and the ship by three miles; the next day by two – for he was crawling now as Bill had crawled; and the end of the fifth day found the ship still seven miles away and him unable to make even a mile a day. Still the Indian Summer held on, and he continued to crawl and faint, turn and turn about; and ever the sick wolf coughed and wheezed at his heels. His knees had become raw meat like his feet, and though he padded them with the shirt from his back it was a red track he left behind him on the moss and stones. Once, glancing back, he saw the wolf licking hungrily his bleeding trail, and he saw sharply what his own end might be – unless – unless he could get the wolf. Then began as grim a tragedy of existence as was ever played – a sick man that crawled, a sick wolf that limped, two

creatures dragging their dying carcasses across the desolation and hunting each other's lives.

Had it been a well wolf, it would not have mattered so much to the man; but the thought of going to feed the maw of that loathsome and all but dead thing was repugnant to him. He was finicky. His mind had begun to wander again, and to be perplexed by hallucinations, while his lucid intervals grew rarer and shorter.

He was awakened once from a faint by a wheeze close in his ear. The wolf leaped lamely back, losing its footing and falling in its weakness. It was ludicrous, but he was not amused. Nor was he even afraid. He was too far gone for that. But his mind was for the moment clear, and he lay and considered. The ship was no more than four miles away. He could see it quite distinctly when he rubbed the mists out of his eyes, and he could see the white sail of a small boat cutting the water of the shining sea. But he could never crawl those four miles. He knew that, and was very calm in the knowledge. He knew that he could not crawl half a mile. And yet he wanted to live. It was unreasonable that he should die after all he had undergone. Fate asked too much of him. And, dying, he declined to die. It was stark madness, perhaps, but in the very grip of Death he defied Death and refused to die.

He closed his eyes and composed himself with infinite precaution. He steeled himself to keep above the suffocating languor that lapped like a rising tide through all the wells of his being. It was very like a sea, this deadly languor, that rose and rose and drowned his consciousness bit by bit. Sometimes he was all but submerged, swimming through oblivion with a faltering stroke; and again, by some strange alchemy of soul, he would find another shred of will and strike out more strongly.

Without movement he lay on his back, and he could hear, slowly drawing near and nearer, the wheezing intake and output of the sick wolf's breath. It drew closer, ever closer, through an infinitude of time, and he did not move. It was at his ear. The harsh dry tongue grated like sandpaper against

his cheek. His hands shot out – or at least he willed them to shoot out. The fingers were curved like talons, but they closed on empty air. Swiftiness and certitude require strength, and the man had not this strength.

The patience of the wolf was terrible. The man's patience was no less terrible. For half a day he lay motionless, fighting off unconsciousness and waiting for the thing that was to feed upon him and upon which he wished to feed. Sometimes the languid sea rose over him and he dreamed long dreams; but ever through it all, waking and dreaming, he waited for the wheezing breath and the harsh caress of the tongue.

He did not hear the breath, and he slipped slowly from some dream to the feel of the tongue along his hand. He waited. The fangs pressed softly; the pressure increased; the wolf was exerting its last strength in an effort to sink teeth in the food for which it had waited so long. But the man had waited long, and the lacerated hand closed on the jaw. Slowly, while the wolf struggled feebly and the hand clutched feebly, the other hand crept across to a grip. Five minutes later the whole weight of the man's body was on top of the wolf. The hands had not sufficient strength to choke the wolf, but the face of the man was pressed close to the throat of the wolf and the mouth of the man was full of hair. At the end of half an hour the man was aware of a warm trickle in his throat. It was not pleasant. It was like molten lead being forced into his stomach, and it was forced by his will alone. Later the man rolled over on his back and slept.

There were some members of a scientific expedition on the whale-ship Bedford. From the deck they remarked a strange object on the shore. It was moving down the beach toward the water. They were unable to classify it, and, being scientific men, they climbed into the whale-boat alongside and went ashore to see. And they saw something that was alive but which could hardly be called a man. It was blind, unconscious. It squirmed along the ground like some monstrous worm. Most of its efforts were ineffectual, but it was persistent, and it writhed and twisted and went ahead perhaps a score of feet an hour.

Three weeks afterward the man lay in a bunk on the whale-ship Bedford, and with tears streaming down his wasted cheeks told who he was and what he had undergone. He also babbled incoherently of his mother, of sunny Southern California, and a home among the orange groves and flowers.

The days were not many after that when he sat at table with the scientific men and ship's officers. He gloated over the spectacle of so much food, watching it anxiously as it went into the mouths of others. With the disappearance of each mouthful an expression of deep regret came into his eyes. He was quite sane, yet he hated those men at meal-time. He was haunted by a fear that the food would not last. He inquired of the cook, the cabin-boy, the captain, concerning the food stores. They reassured him countless times; but he could not believe them, and pried cunningly about the lazarette to see with his own eyes.

It was noticed that the man was getting fat. He grew stouter with each day. The scientific men shook their heads and theorized. They limited the man at his meals, but still his girth increased and he swelled prodigiously under his shirt.

The sailors grinned. They knew. And when the scientific men set a watch on the man, they knew too. They saw him slouch for'ard after breakfast, and, like a mendicant, with outstretched palm, accost a sailor. The sailor grinned and passed him a fragment of sea biscuit. He clutched it avariciously, looked at it as a miser looks at gold, and thrust it into his shirt bosom. Similar were the donations from other grinning sailors. The scientific men were discreet. They let him alone. But they privily examined his bunk. It was lined with hardtack; the mattress was stuffed with hardtack; He was taking precautions against another possible famine – that was all. He would recover from it, the scientific men said; and he did, ere the Bedford's anchor rumbled down in San Francisco Bay.

Brown Wolf (1906)

She had delayed, because of the dew-wet grass, in order to put on her overshoes, and when she emerged from the house found her waiting husband absorbed in the wonder of a bursting almond-bud. She sent a questing glance across the tall grass and in and out among the orchard trees.

"Where's Wolf?" she asked.

"He was here a moment ago." Walt Irvine drew himself away with a jerk from the metaphysics and poetry of the organic miracle of blossom, and surveyed the landscape. "He was running a rabbit the last I saw of him."

"Wolf! Wolf! Here Wolf!" she called, as they left the clearing and took the trail that led down through the waxen-belled manzanita jungle to the county road.

Irvine thrust between his lips the little finger of each hand and lent to her efforts a shrill whistling.

She covered her ears hastily and made a wry grimace.

"My! for a poet, delicately attuned and all the rest of it, you can make unlovely noises. My ear-drums are pierced. You outwhistle – "

"Orpheus."

"I was about to say a street-arab," she concluded severely.

"Poesy does not prevent one from being practical – at least it doesn't prevent ME. Mine is no futility of genius that can't sell gems to the magazines."

He assumed a mock extravagance, and went on:

"I am no attic singer, no ballroom warbler. And why? Because I am practical. Mine is no squalor of song that cannot

transmute itself, with proper exchange value, into a flower-crowned cottage, a sweet mountain-meadow, a grove of redwoods, an orchard of thirty-seven trees, one long row of blackberries and two short rows of strawberries, to say nothing of a quarter of a mile of gurgling brook. I am a beauty-merchant, a trader in song, and I pursue utility, dear Madge. I sing a song, and thanks to the magazine editors I transmute my song into a waft of the west wind sighing through our redwoods, into a murmur of waters over mossy stones that sings back to me another song than the one I sang and yet the same song wonderfully – er – transmuted."

"O that all your song-transmutations were as successful!" she laughed.

"Name one that wasn't."

"Those two beautiful sonnets that you transmuted into the cow that was accounted the worst milker in the township."

"She was beautiful – " he began,

"But she didn't give milk," Madge interrupted.

"But she WAS beautiful, now, wasn't she?" he insisted.

"And here's where beauty and utility fall out," was her reply.
"And there's the Wolf!"

From the thicket-covered hillside came a crashing of underbrush, and then, forty feet above them, on the edge of the sheer wall of rock, appeared a wolf's head and shoulders. His braced fore paws dislodged a pebble, and with sharp-pricked ears and peering eyes he watched the fall of the pebble till it struck at their feet. Then he transferred his gaze and with open mouth laughed down at them.

"You Wolf, you!" and "You blessed Wolf!" the man and woman called out to him.

The ears flattened back and down at the sound, and the head seemed to snuggle under the caress of an invisible hand.

They watched him scramble backward into the thicket, then proceeded on their way. Several minutes later, rounding a turn in the trail where the descent was less precipitous, he joined them in the midst of a miniature avalanche of pebbles and loose soil. He was not demonstrative. A pat and a rub around the ears from the man, and a more prolonged caressing from the woman, and he was away down the trail in front of them, gliding effortlessly over the ground in true wolf fashion.

In build and coat and brush he was a huge timber-wolf; but the lie was given to his wolfhood by his color and marking. There the dog unmistakably advertised itself. No wolf was ever colored like him. He was brown, deep brown, red-brown, an orgy of browns. Back and shoulders were a warm brown that paled on the sides and underneath to a yellow that was dingy because of the brown that lingered in it. The white of the throat and paws and the spots over the eyes was dirty because of the persistent and ineradicable brown, while the eyes themselves were twin topazes, golden and brown.

The man and woman loved the dog very much; perhaps this was because it had been such a task to win his love. It had been no easy matter when he first drifted in mysteriously out of nowhere to their little mountain cottage. Footsore and famished, he had killed a rabbit under their very noses and under their very windows, and then crawled away and slept by the spring at the foot of the blackberry bushes. When Walt Irvine went down to inspect the intruder, he was snarled at for his pains, and Madge likewise was snarled at when she went down to present, as a peace-offering, a large pan of bread and milk.

A most unsociable dog he proved to be, resenting all their advances, refusing to let them lay hands on him, menacing them with bared fangs and bristling hair. Nevertheless he remained, sleeping and resting by the spring, and eating the food they gave him after they set it down at a safe distance

and retreated. His wretched physical condition explained why he lingered; and when he had recuperated, after several days' sojourn, he disappeared.

And this would have been the end of him, so far as Irvine and his wife were concerned, had not Irvine at that particular time been called away into the northern part of the state. Riding along on the train, near to the line between California and Oregon, he chanced to look out of the window and saw his unsociable guest sliding along the wagon road, brown and wolfish, tired yet tireless, dust-covered and soiled with two hundred miles of travel.

Now Irvine was a man of impulse, a poet. He got off the train at the next station, bought a piece of meat at a butcher shop, and captured the vagrant on the outskirts of the town. The return trip was made in the baggage car, and so Wolf came a second time to the mountain cottage. Here he was tied up for a week and made love to by the man and woman. But it was very circumspect love-making. Remote and alien as a traveller from another planet, he snarled down their soft-spoken love-words. He never barked. In all the time they had him he was never known to bark.

To win him became a problem. Irvine liked problems. He had a metal plate made, on which was stamped: RETURN TO WALT IRVINE, GLEN ELLEN, SONOMA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA. This was riveted to a collar and strapped about the dog's neck. Then he was turned loose, and promptly he disappeared. A day later came a telegram from Mendocino County. In twenty hours he had made over a hundred miles to the north, and was still going when captured.

He came back by Wells Fargo Express, was tied up three days, and was loosed on the fourth and lost. This time he gained southern Oregon before he was caught and returned. Always, as soon as he received his liberty, he fled away, and always he fled north. He was possessed of an obsession that drove him north. The homing instinct, Irvine called it, after he had expended the selling price of a sonnet in getting the animal back from northern Oregon.

Another time the brown wanderer succeeded in traversing half the length of California, all of Oregon, and most of Washington, before he was picked up and returned "Collect." A remarkable thing was the speed with which he travelled. Fed up and rested, as soon as he was loosed he devoted all his energy to getting over the ground. On the first day's run he was known to cover as high as a hundred and fifty miles, and after that he would average a hundred miles a day until caught. He always arrived back lean and hungry and savage, and always departed fresh and vigorous, cleaving his way northward in response to some prompting of his being that no one could understand.

But at last, after a futile year of flight, he accepted the inevitable and elected to remain at the cottage where first he had killed the rabbit and slept by the spring. Even after that, a long time elapsed before the man and woman succeeded in patting him. It was a great victory, for they alone were allowed to put hands on him. He was fastidiously exclusive, and no guest at the cottage ever succeeded in making up to him. A low growl greeted such approach; if any one had the hardihood to come nearer, the lips lifted, the naked fangs appeared, and the growl became a snarl – a snarl so terrible and malignant that it awed the stoutest of them, as it likewise awed the farmers' dogs that knew ordinary dog-snarling, but had never seen wolf-snarling before.

He was without antecedents. His history began with Walt and Madge. He had come up from the south, but never a clew did they get of the owner from whom he had evidently fled. Mrs. Johnson, their nearest neighbor and the one who supplied them with milk, proclaimed him a Klondike dog. Her brother was burrowing for frozen pay-streaks in that far country, and so she constituted herself an authority on the subject.

But they did not dispute her. There were the tips of Wolf's ears, obviously so severely frozen at some time that they would never quite heal again. Besides, he looked like the photographs of the Alaskan dogs they saw published in magazines and newspapers. They often speculated over his past, and tried to conjure up (from what they had read and

heard) what his northland life had been. That the northland still drew him, they knew; for at night they sometimes heard him crying softly; and when the north wind blew and the bite of frost was in the air, a great restlessness would come upon him and he would lift a mournful lament which they knew to be the long wolf-howl. Yet he never barked. No provocation was great enough to draw from him that canine cry.

Long discussion they had, during the time of winning him, as to whose dog he was. Each claimed him, and each proclaimed loudly any expression of affection made by him. But the man had the better of it at first, chiefly because he was a man. It was patent that Wolf had had no experience with women. He did not understand women. Madge's skirts were something he never quite accepted. The swish of them was enough to set him a-bristle with suspicion, and on a windy day she could not approach him at all.

On the other hand, it was Madge who fed him; also it was she who ruled the kitchen, and it was by her favor, and her favor alone, that he was permitted to come within that sacred precinct. It was because of these things that she bade fair to overcome the handicap of her garments. Then it was that Walt put forth special effort, making it a practice to have Wolf lie at his feet while he wrote, and, between petting and talking, losing much time from his work. Walt won in the end, and his victory was most probably due to the fact that he was a man, though Madge averred that they would have had another quarter of a mile of gurgling brook, and at least two west winds sighing through their redwoods, had Wait properly devoted his energies to song-transmutation and left Wolf alone to exercise a natural taste and an unbiassed judgment.

"It's about time I heard from those triolets", Walt said, after a silence of five minutes, during which they had swung steadily down the trail. "There'll be a check at the post-office, I know, and we'll transmute it into beautiful buckwheat flour, a gallon of maple syrup, and a new pair of overshoes for you."

"And into beautiful milk from Mrs. Johnson's beautiful cow," Madge added. "To-morrow's the first of the month, you know."

Walt scowled unconsciously; then his face brightened, and he clapped his hand to his breast pocket.

"Never mind. I have here a nice beautiful new cow, the best milker in California."

"When did you write it?" she demanded eagerly. Then, reproachfully, "And you never showed it to me."

"I saved it to read to you on the way to the post-office, in a spot remarkably like this one," he answered, indicating, with a wave of his hand, a dry log on which to sit.

A tiny stream flowed out of a dense fern-brake, slipped down a mossy-lipped stone, and ran across the path at their feet. From the valley arose the mellow song of meadow-larks, while about them, in and out, through sunshine and shadow, fluttered great yellow butterflies.

Up from below came another sound that broke in upon Walt reading softly from his manuscript. It was a crunching of heavy feet, punctuated now and again by the clattering of a displaced stone. As Walt finished and looked to his wife for approval, a man came into view around the turn of the trail. He was bare-headed and sweaty. With a handkerchief in one hand he mopped his face, while in the other hand he carried a new hat and a wilted starched collar which he had removed from his neck. He was a well-built man, and his muscles seemed on the point of bursting out of the painfully new and ready-made black clothes he wore.

"Warm day," Walt greeted him. Walt believed in country democracy, and never missed an opportunity to practise it.

The man paused and nodded.

"I guess I ain't used much to the warm," he vouchsafed half apologetically. "I'm more accustomed to zero weather."

"You don't find any of that in this country," Walt laughed.

"Should say not," the man answered. "An' I ain't here a-lookin' for it neither. I'm tryin' to find my sister. Mebbe you know where she lives. Her name's Johnson, Mrs. William Johnson."

"You're not her Klondike brother!" Madge cried, her eyes bright with interest, "about whom we've heard so much?"

"Yes'm, that's me," he answered modestly. "My name's Miller, Skiff Miller. I just thought I'd s'prise her."

"You are on the right track then. Only you've come by the foot-path." Madge stood up to direct him, pointing up the canyon a quarter of a mile. "You see that blasted redwood? Take the little trail turning off to the right. It's the short cut to her house. You can't miss it."

"Yes'm, thank you, ma'am," he said. He made tentative efforts to go, but seemed awkwardly rooted to the spot. He was gazing at her with an open admiration of which he was quite unconscious, and which was drowning, along with him, in the rising sea of embarrassment in which he floundered.

"We'd like to hear you tell about the Klondike," Madge said. "Mayn't we come over some day while you are at your sister's? Or, better yet, won't you come over and have dinner with us?"

"Yes'm, thank you, ma'am," he mumbled mechanically. Then he caught himself up and added: "I ain't stoppin' long. I got to be pullin' north again. I go out on to-night's train. You see, I've got a mail contract with the government."

When Madge had said that it was too bad, he made another futile effort to go. But he could not take his eyes from her face. He forgot his embarrassment in his admiration, and it was her turn to flush and feel uncomfortable.

It was at this juncture, when Walt had just decided it was time for him to be saying something to relieve the strain, that Wolf,

who had been away nosing through the brush, trotted wolf-like into view.

Skiff Miller's abstraction disappeared. The pretty woman before him passed out of his field of vision. He had eyes only for the dog, and a great wonder came into his face.

"Well, I'll be damned!" he enunciated slowly and solemnly.

He sat down ponderingly on the log, leaving Madge standing. At the sound of his voice, Wolf's ears had flattened down, then his mouth had opened in a laugh. He trotted slowly up to the stranger and first smelled his hands, then licked them with his tongue.

Skiff Miller patted the dog's head, and slowly and solemnly repeated, "Well, I'll be damned!"

"Excuse me, ma'am," he said the next moment "I was just s'prised some, that was all."

"We're surprised, too," she answered lightly. "We never saw Wolf make up to a stranger before."

"Is that what you call him – Wolf?" the man asked.

Madge nodded. "But I can't understand his friendliness toward you – unless it's because you're from the Klondike. He's a Klondike dog, you know."

"Yes'm," Miller said absently. He lifted one of Wolf's fore legs and examined the foot-pads, pressing them and denting them with his thumb. "Kind of SOFT," he remarked. "He ain't been on trail for a long time."

"I say," Walt broke in, "it is remarkable the way he lets you handle him."

Skiff Miller arose, no longer awkward with admiration of Madge, and in a sharp, businesslike manner asked, "How long have you had him?"

But just then the dog, squirming and rubbing against the newcomer's legs, opened his mouth and barked. It was an explosive bark, brief and joyous, but a bark.

"That's a new one on me," Skiff Miller remarked.

Walt and Madge stared at each other. The miracle had happened. Wolf had barked.

"It's the first time he ever barked," Madge said.

"First time I ever heard him, too," Miller volunteered.

Madge smiled at him. The man was evidently a humorist.

"Of course," she said, "since you have only seen him for five minutes."

Skiff Miller looked at her sharply, seeking in her face the guile her words had led him to suspect.

"I thought you understood," he said slowly. "I thought you'd tumbled to it from his makin' up to me. He's my dog. His name ain't Wolf. It's Brown."

"Oh, Walt!" was Madge's instinctive cry to her husband.

Walt was on the defensive at once.

"How do you know he's your dog?" he demanded.

"Because he is," was the reply.

"Mere assertion," Walt said sharply.

In his slow and pondering way, Skiff Miller looked at him, then asked, with a nod of his head toward Madge:

"How d'you know she's your wife? You just say, 'Because she is,' and I'll say it's mere assertion. The dog's mine. I bred 'm an' raised 'm, an' I guess I ought to know. Look here. I'll prove it to you."

Skiff Miller turned to the dog. "Brown!" His voice rang out sharply, and at the sound the dog's ears flattened down as to a caress. "Gee!" The dog made a swinging turn to the right. "Now mush-on!" And the dog ceased his swing abruptly and started straight ahead, halting obediently at command.

"I can do it with whistles", Skiff Miller said proudly. "He was my lead dog."

"But you are not going to take him away with you?" Madge asked tremulously.

The man nodded.

"Back into that awful Klondike world of suffering?"

He nodded and added: "Oh, it ain't so bad as all that. Look at me. Pretty healthy specimen, ain't I?"

"But the dogs! The terrible hardship, the heart-breaking toil, the starvation, the frost! Oh, I've read about it and I know."

"I nearly ate him once, over on Little Fish River," Miller volunteered grimly. "If I hadn't got a moose that day was all that saved 'm."

"I'd have died first!" Madge cried.

"Things is different down here", Miller explained. "You don't have to eat dogs. You think different just about the time you're all in. You've never ben all in, so you don't know anything about it."

"That's the very point," she argued warmly. "Dogs are not eaten in California. Why not leave him here? He is happy. He'll never want for food – you know that. He'll never suffer from cold and hardship. Here all is softness and gentleness. Neither the human nor nature is savage. He will never know a whip-lash again. And as for the weather – why, it never snows here."

"But it's all-fired hot in summer, beggin' your pardon," Skiff Miller laughed.

"But you do not answer," Madge continued passionately. "What have you to offer him in that northland life?"

"Grub, when I've got it, and that's most of the time," came the answer.

"And the rest of the time?"

"No grub."

"And the work?"

"Yes, plenty of work," Miller blurted out impatiently. "Work without end, an' famine, an' frost, an all the rest of the miseries – that's what he'll get when he comes with me. But he likes it. He is used to it. He knows that life. He was born to it an' brought up to it. An' you don't know anything about it. You don't know what you're talking about. That's where the dog belongs, and that's where he'll be happiest."

"The dog doesn't go," Walt announced in a determined voice. "So there is no need of further discussion."

"What's that?" Skiff Miller demanded, his brows lowering and an obstinate flush of blood reddening his forehead.

"I said the dog doesn't go, and that settles it. I don't believe he's your dog. You may have seen him sometime. You may even sometime have driven him for his owner. But his

obeying the ordinary driving commands of the Alaskan trail is no demonstration that he is yours. Any dog in Alaska would obey you as he obeyed. Besides, he is undoubtedly a valuable dog, as dogs go in Alaska, and that is sufficient explanation of your desire to get possession of him. Anyway, you've got to prove property."

Skiff Miller, cool and collected, the obstinate flush a trifle deeper on his forehead, his huge muscles bulging under the black cloth of his coat, carefully looked the poet up and down as though measuring the strength of his slenderness.

The Klondiker's face took on a contemptuous expression as he said finally, "I reckon there's nothin' in sight to prevent me takin' the dog right here an' now."

Walt's face reddened, and the striking-muscles of his arms and shoulders seemed to stiffen and grow tense. His wife fluttered apprehensively into the breach.

"Maybe Mr. Miller is right", she said. "I am afraid that he is. Wolf does seem to know him, and certainly he answers to the name of 'Brown.' He made friends with him instantly, and you know that's something he never did with anybody before. Besides, look at the way he barked. He was just bursting with joy Joy over what? Without doubt at finding Mr. Miller."

Walt's striking-muscles relaxed, and his shoulders seemed to droop with hopelessness.

"I guess you're right, Madge," he said. "Wolf isn't Wolf, but Brown, and he must belong to Mr. Miller."

"Perhaps Mr. Miller will sell him," she suggested. "We can buy him."

Skiff Miller shook his head, no longer belligerent, but kindly, quick to be generous in response to generousness.

"I had five dogs," he said, casting about for the easiest way to temper his refusal. "He was the leader. They was the crack team of Alaska. Nothin' could touch 'em. In 1898 I refused five thousand dollars for the bunch. Dogs was high, then, anyway; but that wasn't what made the fancy price. It was the team itself. Brown was the best in the team. That winter I refused twelve hundred for 'm. I didn't sell 'm then, an' I ain't a-sellin' 'm now. Besides, I think a mighty lot of that dog. I've ben lookin' for 'm for three years. It made me fair sick when I found he'd ben stole – not the value of him, but the – well, I liked 'm like hell, that's all, beggin' your pardon. I couldn't believe my eyes when I seen 'm just now. I thought I was dreamin'. It was too good to be true. Why, I was his wet-nurse. I put 'm to bed, snug every night. His mother died, and I brought 'm up on condensed milk at two dollars a can when I couldn't afford it in my own coffee. He never knew any mother but me. He used to suck my finger regular, the darn little cuss – that finger right there!"

And Skiff Miller, too overwrought for speech, held up a fore finger for them to see.

"That very finger," he managed to articulate, as though it somehow clinched the proof of ownership and the bond of affection.

He was still gazing at his extended finger when Madge began to speak.

"But the dog," she said. "You haven't considered the dog."

Skiff Miller looked puzzled.

"Have you thought about him?" she asked.

"Don't know what you're drivin' at," was the response.

"Maybe the dog has some choice in the matter," Madge went on. "Maybe he has his likes and desires. You have not considered him. You give him no choice. It has never entered

your mind that possibly he might prefer California to Alaska. You consider only what you like. You do with him as you would with a sack of potatoes or a bale of hay."

This was a new way of looking at it, and Miller was visibly impressed as he debated it in his mind. Madge took advantage of his indecision.

"If you really love him, what would be happiness to him would be your happiness also," she urged.

Skiff Miller continued to debate with himself, and Madge stole a glance of exultation to her husband, who looked back warm approval.

"What do you think?" the Klondiker suddenly demanded.

It was her turn to be puzzled. "What do you mean?" she asked.

"D'ye think he'd sooner stay in California?"

She nodded her head with positiveness. "I am sure of it."

Skiff Miller again debated with himself, though this time aloud, at the same time running his gaze in a judicial way over the mooted animal.

"He was a good worker. He's done a heap of work for me. He never loafed on me, an' he was a joe-dandy at hammerin' a raw team into shape. He's got a head on him. He can do everything but talk. He knows what you say to him. Look at 'm now. He knows we're talkin' about him."

The dog was lying at Skiff Miller's feet, head close down on paws, ears erect and listening, and eyes that were quick and eager to follow the sound of speech as it fell from the lips of first one and then the other.

"An' there's a lot of work in 'm yet. He's good for years to come. An' I do like him. I like him like hell."

Once or twice after that Skiff Miller opened his mouth and closed it again without speaking. Finally he said:

"I'll tell you what I'll do. Your remarks, ma'am, has some weight in them. The dog's worked hard, and maybe he's earned a soft berth an' has got a right to choose. Anyway, we'll leave it up to him. Whatever he says, goes. You people stay right here settin' down. I'll say good-by and walk off casual-like. If he wants to stay, he can stay. If he wants to come with me, let 'm come. I won't call 'm to come an' don't you call 'm to come back."

He looked with sudden suspicion at Madge, and added, "Only you must play fair. No persuadin' after my back is turned."

"We'll play fair," Madge began, but Skiff Miller broke in on her assurances.

"I know the ways of women," he announced. "Their hearts is soft. When their hearts is touched they're likely to stack the cards, look at the bottom of the deck, an' lie like the devil – beggin' your pardon, ma'am. I'm only discoursin' about women in general."

"I don't know how to thank you," Madge quavered.

"I don't see as you've got any call to thank me," he replied. "Brown ain't decided yet. Now you won't mind if I go away slow? It's no more'n fair, seein' I'll be out of sight inside a hundred yards." – Madge agreed, and added, "And I promise you faithfully that we won't do anything to influence him."

"Well, then, I might as well be gettin' along," Skiff Miller said in the ordinary tones of one departing.

At this change in his voice, Wolf lifted his head quickly, and still more quickly got to his feet when the man and woman

shook hands. He sprang up on his hind legs, resting his fore paws on her hip and at the same time licking Skiff Miller's hand. When the latter shook hands with Walt, Wolf repeated his act, resting his weight on Walt and licking both men's hands.

"It ain't no picnic, I can tell you that," were the Klondiker's last words, as he turned and went slowly up the trail.

For the distance of twenty feet Wolf watched him go, himself all eagerness and expectancy, as though waiting for the man to turn and retrace his steps. Then, with a quick low whine, Wolf sprang after him, overtook him, caught his hand between his teeth with reluctant tenderness, and strove gently to make him pause.

Failing in this, Wolf raced back to where Walt Irvine sat, catching his coat-sleeve in his teeth and trying vainly to drag him after the retreating man.

Wolf's perturbation began to wax. He desired ubiquity. He wanted to be in two places at the same time, with the old master and the new, and steadily the distance between them was increasing. He sprang about excitedly, making short nervous leaps and twists, now toward one, now toward the other, in painful indecision, not knowing his own mind, desiring both and unable to choose, uttering quick sharp whines and beginning to pant.

He sat down abruptly on his haunches, thrusting his nose upward, the mouth opening and closing with jerking movements, each time opening wider. These jerking movements were in unison with the recurrent spasms that attacked the throat, each spasm severer and more intense than the preceding one. And in accord with jerks and spasms the larynx began to vibrate, at first silently, accompanied by the rush of air expelled from the lungs, then sounding a low, deep note, the lowest in the register of the human ear. All this was the nervous and muscular preliminary to howling.

But just as the howl was on the verge of bursting from the full throat, the wide-opened mouth was closed, the paroxysms ceased, and he looked long and steadily at the retreating man. Suddenly Wolf turned his head, and over his shoulder just as steadily regarded Walt. The appeal was unanswered. Not a word nor a sign did the dog receive, no suggestion and no clue as to what his conduct should be.

A glance ahead to where the old master was nearing the curve of the trail excited him again. He sprang to his feet with a whine, and then, struck by a new idea, turned his attention to Madge. Hitherto he had ignored her, but now, both masters failing him, she alone was left. He went over to her and snuggled his head in her lap, nudging her arm with his nose – an old trick of his when begging for favors. He backed away from her and began writhing and twisting playfully, curvetting and prancing, half rearing and striking his fore paws to the earth, struggling with all his body, from the wheedling eyes and flattening ears to the wagging tail, to express the thought that was in him and that was denied him utterance.

This, too, he soon abandoned. He was depressed by the coldness of these humans who had never been cold before. No response could he draw from them, no help could he get. They did not consider him. They were as dead.

He turned and silently gazed after the old master. Skiff Miller was rounding the curve. In a moment he would be gone from view. Yet he never turned his head, plodding straight onward, slowly and methodically, as though possessed of no interest in what was occurring behind his back.

And in this fashion he went out of view. Wolf waited for him to reappear. He waited a long minute, silently, quietly, without movement, as though turned to stone – withal stone quick with eagerness and desire. He barked once, and waited. Then he turned and trotted back to Walt Irvine. He sniffed his hand and dropped down heavily at his feet, watching the trail where it curved emptily from view.

The tiny stream slipping down the mossy-lipped stone seemed suddenly to increase the volume of its gurgling noise. Save for the meadow-larks, there was no other sound. The great yellow butterflies drifted silently through the sunshine and lost themselves in the drowsy shadows. Madge gazed triumphantly at her husband.

A few minutes later Wolf got upon his feet. Decision and deliberation marked his movements. He did not glance at the man and woman. His eyes were fixed up the trail. He had made up his mind. They knew it. And they knew, so far as they were concerned, that the ordeal had just begun.

He broke into a trot, and Madge's lips pursed, forming an avenue for the caressing sound that it was the will of her to send forth. But the caressing sound was not made. She was impelled to look at her husband, and she saw the sternness with which he watched her. The pursed lips relaxed, and she sighed inaudibly.

Wolf's trot broke into a run. Wider and wider were the leaps he made. Not once did he turn his head, his wolf's brush standing out straight behind him. He cut sharply across the curve of the trail and was gone.

The Wit Of Porportuk (1906)

EI-Soo had been a Mission girl. Her mother had died when she was very small, and Sister Alberta had plucked EI-Soo as a brand from the burning, one summer day, and carried her away to Holy Cross Mission and dedicated her to God. EI-Soo was a full-blooded Indian, yet she exceeded all the half-breed and quarter-breed girls. Never had the good sisters dealt with a girl so adaptable and at the same time so spirited.

EI-Soo was quick, and deft, and intelligent; but above all she was fire, the living flame of life, a blaze of personality that was compounded of will, sweetness, and daring. Her father was a

chief, and his blood ran in her veins. Obedience, on the part of El-Soo, was a matter of terms and arrangement. She had a passion for equity, and perhaps it was because of this that she excelled in mathematics.

But she excelled in other things. She learned to read and write English as no girl had ever learned in the Mission. She led the girls in singing, and into song she carried her sense of equity. She was an artist, and the fire of her flowed toward creation. Had she from birth enjoyed a more favorable environment, she would have made literature or music.

Instead, she was El-Soo, daughter of Klakee-Nah, a chief, and she lived in the Holy Cross Mission where were no artists, but only pure-souled Sisters who were interested in cleanliness and righteousness and the welfare of the spirit in the land of immortality that lay beyond the skies.

The years passed. She was eight years old when she entered the Mission; she was sixteen, and the Sisters were corresponding with their superiors in the Order concerning the sending of El-Soo to the United States to complete her education, when a man of her own tribe arrived at Holy Cross and had talk with her. El-Soo was somewhat appalled by him. He was dirty. He was a Caliban-like creature, primitively ugly, with a mop of hair that had never been combed. He looked at her disapprovingly and refused to sit down.

"Thy brother is dead," he said, shortly.

El-Soo was not particularly shocked. She remembered little of her brother. "Thy father is an old man, and alone," the messenger went on. "His house is large and empty, and he would hear thy voice and look upon thee."

Him she remembered – Klakee-Nah, the head-man of the village, the friend of the missionaries and the traders, a large man thewed like a giant, with kindly eyes and masterful ways, and striding with a consciousness of crude royalty in his carriage.

"Tell him that I will come," was El-Soo's answer.

Much to the despair of the Sisters, the brand plucked from the burning went back to the burning. All pleading with El-Soo was vain. There was much argument, expostulation, and weeping. Sister Alberta even revealed to her the project of sending her to the United States. El-Soo stared wide-eyed into the golden vista thus opened up to her, and shook her head. In her eyes persisted another vista. It was the mighty curve of the Yukon at Tana-naw Station, with the St. George Mission on one side, and the trading post on the other, and midway between the Indian village and a certain large log house where lived an old man tended upon by slaves.

All dwellers on the Yukon bank for twice a thousand miles knew the large log house, the old man and the tending slaves; and well did the Sisters know the house, its unending revelry, its feasting and its fun. So there was weeping at Holy Cross when El-Soo departed.

There was a great cleaning up in the large house when El-Soo arrived. Klakee-Nah, himself masterful, protested at this masterful conduct of his young daughter; but in the end, dreaming barbarically of magnificence, he went forth and borrowed a thousand dollars from old Porportuk, than whom there was no richer Indian on the Yukon. Also, Klakee-Nah ran up a heavy bill at the trading post. El-Soo re-created the large house. She invested it with new splendor, while Klakee-Nah maintained its ancient traditions of hospitality and revelry.

All this was unusual for a Yukon Indian, but Klakee-Nah was an unusual Indian. Not alone did he like to render inordinate hospitality, but, what of being a chief and of acquiring much money, he was able to do it. In the primitive trading days he had been a power over his people, and he had dealt profitably with the white trading companies. Later on, with Porportuk, he had made a gold-strike on the Koyokuk River. Klakee-Nah was by training and nature an aristocrat. Porportuk was bourgeois, and Porportuk bought him out of the gold-mine. Porportuk was content to plod and

accumulate. Klakee-Nah went back to his large house and proceeded to spend. Porportuk was known as the richest Indian in Alaska. Klakee-Nah was known as the whitest. Porportuk was a money-lender and a usurer. Klakee-Nah was an anachronism – a mediaeval ruin, a fighter and a feaster, happy with wine and song.

El-Soo adapted herself to the large house and its ways as readily as she had adapted herself to Holy Cross Mission and its ways. She did not try to reform her father and direct his footsteps toward God. It is true, she reproved him when he drank overmuch and profoundly, but that was for the sake of his health and the direction of his footsteps on solid earth.

The latchstring to the large house was always out. What with the coming and the going, it was never still. The rafters of the great living-room shook with the roar of wassail and of song. At table sat men from all the world and chiefs from distant tribes – Englishmen and Colonials, lean Yankee traders and rotund officials of the great companies, cowboys from the Western ranges, sailors from the sea, hunters and dog-mushers of a score of nationalities.

El-Soo drew breath in a cosmopolitan atmosphere. She could speak English as well as she could her native tongue, and she sang English songs and ballads. The passing Indian ceremonials she knew, and the perishing traditions. The tribal dress of the daughter of a chief she knew how to wear upon occasion. But for the most part she dressed as white women dress. Not for nothing was her needlework at the Mission and her innate artistry. She carried her clothes like a white woman, and she made clothes that could be so carried.

In her way she was as unusual as her father, and the position she occupied was as unique as his. She was the one Indian woman who was the social equal with the several white women at Tana-naw Station. She was the one Indian woman to whom white men honorably made proposals of marriage. And she was the one Indian woman whom no white man ever insulted.

For El-Soo was beautiful – not as white women are beautiful, not as Indian women are beautiful. It was the flame of her, that did not depend upon feature, that was her beauty. So far as mere line and feature went, she was the classic Indian type. The black hair and the fine bronze were hers, and the black eyes, brilliant and bold, keen as sword-light, proud; and hers the delicate eagle nose with the thin, quivering nostrils, the high cheek-bones that were not broad apart, and the thin lips that were not too thin. But over all and through all poured the flame of her – the unanalyzable something that was fire and that was the soul of her, that lay mellow-warm or blazed in her eyes, that sprayed the cheeks of her, that distended the nostrils, that curled the lip, or, when the lip was in repose, that was still there in the lip, the lip palpitant with its presence.

And El-Soo had wit – rarely sharp to hurt, yet quick to search out forgivable weakness. The laughter of her mind played like lambent flame over all about her, and from all about her arose answering laughter. Yet she was never the centre of things. This she would not permit. The large house, and all of which it was significant, was her father's; and through it, to the last, moved his heroic figure – host, master of the revels, and giver of the law. It is true, as the strength oozed from him, that she caught up responsibilities from his failing hands. But in appearance he still ruled, dozing oft-times at the board, a bacchanalian ruin, yet in all seeming the ruler of the feast.

And through the large house moved the figure of Porportuk, ominous, with shaking head, coldly disapproving, paying for it all. Not that he really paid, for he compounded interest in weird ways, and year by year absorbed the properties of Klakee-Nah. Porportuk once took it upon himself to chide El-Soo upon the wasteful way of life in the large house – it was when he had about absorbed the last of Klakee-Nah's wealth – but he never ventured so to chide again. El-Soo, like her father, was an aristocrat, as disdainful of money as he, and with an equal sense of honor as finely strung.

Porportuk continued grudgingly to advance money, and ever the money flowed in golden foam away. Upon one thing El-Soo was resolved – her father should die as he had lived.

There should be for him no passing from high to low, no diminution of the revels, no lessening of the lavish hospitality. When there was famine, as of old, the Indians came groaning to the large house and went away content. When there was famine and no money, money was borrowed from Porportuk, and the Indians still went away content. El-Soo might well have repeated, after the aristocrats of another time and place, that after her came the deluge. In her case the deluge was old Porportuk. With every advance of money, he looked upon her with a more possessive eye, and felt bourgeoning within him ancient fires.

But El-Soo had no eyes for him. Nor had she eyes for the white men who wanted to marry her at the Mission with ring and priest and book. For at Tana-naw Station was a young man, Akoon, of her own blood, and tribe, and village. He was strong and beautiful to her eyes, a great hunter, and, in that he had wandered far and much, very poor; he had been to all the unknown wastes and places; he had journeyed to Sitka and to the United States; he had crossed the continent to Hudson Bay and back again, and as seal-hunter on a ship he had sailed to Siberia and for Japan.

When he returned from the gold-strike in Klondike he came, as was his wont, to the large house to make report to old Klakee-Nah of all the world that he had seen; and there he first saw El-Soo, three years back from the Mission. Thereat, Akoon wandered no more. He refused a wage of twenty dollars a day as pilot on the big steamboats. He hunted some and fished some, but never far from Tana-naw Station, and he was at the large house often and long. And El-Soo measured him against many men and found him good. He sang songs to her, and was ardent and glowed until all Tana-naw Station knew he loved her. And Porportuk but grinned and advanced more money for the upkeep of the large house.

Then came the death table of Klakee-Nah. He sat at feast, with death in his throat, that he could not drown with wine. And laughter and joke and song went around, and Akoon told a story that made the rafters echo. There were no tears or sighs at that table. It was no more than fit that Klakee-Nah

should die as he had lived, and none knew this better than El-Soo, with her artist sympathy. The old roosting crowd was there, and, as of old, three frost-bitten sailors were there, fresh from the long traverse from the Arctic, survivors of a ship's company of seventy-four. At Klakee-Nah's back were four old men, all that were left him of the slaves of his youth. With rheumy eyes they saw to his needs, with palsied hands filling his glass or striking him on the back between the shoulders when death stirred and he coughed and gasped.

It was a wild night, and as the hours passed and the fun laughed and roared along, death stirred more restlessly in Klakee-Nah's throat. Then it was that he sent for Porportuk. And Porportuk came in from the outside frost to look with disapproving eyes upon the meat and wine on the table for which he had paid. But as he looked down the length of flushed faces to the far end and saw the face of El-Soo, the light in his eyes flared up, and for a moment the disapproval vanished.

Place was made for him at Klakee-Nah's side, and a glass placed before him. Klakee-Nah, with his own hands, filled the glass with fervent spirits. "Drink!" he cried. "Is it not good?"

And Porportuk's eyes watered as he nodded his head and smacked his lips.

"When, in your own house, have you had such drink?" Klakee-Nah demanded.

"I will not deny that the drink is good to this old throat of mine," Porportuk made answer, and hesitated for the speech to complete the thought.

"But it costs overmuch," Klakee-Nah roared, completing it for him.

Porportuk winced at the laughter that went down the table. His eyes burned malevolently. "We were boys together, of the same age," he said. "In your throat is death. I am still alive and strong."

An ominous murmur arose from the company. Klakee-Nah coughed and strangled, and the old slaves smote him between the shoulders. He emerged gasping, and waved his hand to still the threatening rumble.

"You have grudged the very fire in your house because the wood cost overmuch!" he cried. "You have grudged life. To live cost overmuch, and you have refused to pay the price. Your life has been like a cabin where the fire is out and there are no blankets on the floor." He signalled to a slave to fill his glass, which he held aloft. "But I have lived. And I have been warm with life as you have never been warm. It is true, you shall live long. But the longest nights are the cold nights when a man shivers and lies awake. My nights have been short, but I have slept warm."

He drained the glass. The shaking hand of a slave failed to catch it as it crashed to the floor. Klakee-Nah sank back, panting, watching the upturned glasses at the lips of the drinkers, his own lips slightly smiling to the applause. At a sign, two slaves attempted to help him sit upright again. But they were weak, his frame was mighty, and the four old men tottered and shook as they helped him forward.

"But manner of life is neither here nor there," he went on. "We have other business, Porportuk, you and I, to-night. Debts are mischances, and I am in mischance with you. What of my debt, and how great is it?"

Porportuk searched in his pouch and brought forth a memorandum. He sipped at his glass and began. "There is the note of August, 1889, for three hundred dollars. The interest has never been paid. And the note of the next year for five hundred dollars. This note was included in the note of two months later for a thousand dollars. Then there is the note – "

"Never mind the many notes!" Klakee-Nah cried out impatiently. "They make my head go around and all the things inside my head. The whole! The round whole! How much is it?"

Porportuk referred to his memorandum. "Fifteen thousand nine hundred and sixty-seven dollars and seventy-five cents," he read with careful precision.

"Make it sixteen thousand, make it sixteen thousand," Klakee-Nah said grandly. "Odd numbers were ever a worry. And now – and it is for this that I have sent for you – make me out a new note for sixteen thousand, which I shall sign. I have no thought of the interest. Make it as large as you will, and make it payable in the next world, when I shall meet you by the fire of the Great Father of all Indians. Then the note will be paid. This I promise you. It is the word of Klakee-Nah."

Porportuk looked perplexed, and loudly the laughter arose and shook the room. Klakee-Nah raised his hands. "Nay," he cried. "It is not a joke. I but speak in fairness. It was for this I sent for you, Porportuk. Make out the note."

"I have no dealings with the next world," Porportuk made answer slowly.

"Have you no thought to meet me before the Great Father!" Klakee-Nah demanded. Then he added, "I shall surely be there."

"I have no dealings with the next world," Porportuk repeated sourly.

The dying man regarded him with frank amazement.

"I know naught of the next world," Porportuk explained. "I do business in this world."

Klakee-Nah's face cleared. "This comes of sleeping cold of nights," he laughed. He pondered for a space, then said, "It is in this world that you must be paid. There remains to me this house. Take it, and burn the debt in the candle there."

"It is an old house and not worth the money," Porportuk made answer.

"There are my mines on the Twisted Salmon."

"They have never paid to work," was the reply.

"There is my share in the steamer *Koyokuk*. I am half owner."

"She is at the bottom of the Yukon."

Klakee-Nah started. "True, I forgot. It was last spring when the ice went out." He mused for a time, while the glasses remained untasted, and all the company waited upon his utterance.

"Then it would seem I owe you a sum of money which I cannot pay . . . in this world?" Porportuk nodded and glanced down the table.

"Then it would seem that you, Porportuk, are a poor business man," Klakee-Nah said slyly. And boldly Porportuk made answer, "No; there is security yet untouched."

"What!" cried Klakee-Nah. "Have I still property? Name it, and it is yours, and the debt is no more."

"There it is." Porportuk pointed at *Ei-Soo*.

Klakee-Nah could not understand. He peered down the table, brushed his eyes, and peered again.

"Your daughter, *Ei-Soo* – her will I take and the debt be no more. I will burn the debt there in the candle."

Klakee-Nah's great chest began to heave. "Ho! ho! – a joke – Ho! ho! ho!" he laughed Homerically. "And with your cold bed and daughters old enough to be the mother of *Ei-Soo*! Ho! ho! ho!" He began to cough and strangle, and the old slaves smote him on the back. "Ho! ho!" he began again, and went off into another paroxysm.

Porportuk waited patiently, sipping from his glass and studying the double row of faces down the board. "It is no joke," he said finally. "My speech is well meant."

Klakee-Nah sobered and looked at him, then reached for his glass, but could not touch it. A slave passed it to him, and glass and liquor he flung into the face of Porportuk.

"Turn him out!" Klakee-Nah thundered to the waiting table that strained like a pack of hounds in leash. "And roll him in the snow!"

As the mad riot swept past him and out of doors, he signalled to the slaves, and the four tottering old men supported him on his feet as he met the returning revellers, upright, glass in hand, pledging them a toast to the short night when a man sleeps warm.

It did not take long to settle the estate of Klakee-Nah. Tommy, the little Englishman, clerk at the trading post, was called in by El-Soo to help. There was nothing but debts, notes overdue, mortgaged properties, and properties mortgaged but worthless. Notes and mortgages were held by Porportuk. Tommy called him a robber many times as he pondered the compounding of the interest.

"Is it a debt, Tommy?" El-Soo asked.

"It is a robbery," Tommy answered.

"Nevertheless, it is a debt," she persisted.

The winter wore away, and the early spring, and still the claims of Porportuk remained unpaid. He saw El-Soo often and explained to her at length, as he had explained to her father, the way the debt could be cancelled. Also, he brought with him old medicine-men, who elaborated to her the everlasting damnation of her father if the debt were not paid. One day, after such an elaboration, El-Soo made final announcement to Porportuk.

"I shall tell you two things," she said. "First, I shall not be your wife. Will you remember that? Second, you shall be paid the last cent of the sixteen thousand dollars – "

"Fifteen thousand nine hundred and sixty-seven dollars and seventy-five cents," Porportuk corrected.

"My father said sixteen thousand," was her reply. "You shall be paid."

"How?"

"I know not how, but I shall find out how. Now go, and bother me no more. If you do" – she hesitated to find fitting penalty – "if you do, I shall have you rolled in the snow again as soon as the first snow flies."

This was still in the early spring, and a little later El-Soo surprised the country. Word went up and down the Yukon from Chilcoot to the Delta, and was carried from camp to camp to the farthestmost camps, that in June, when the first salmon ran, El-Soo, daughter of Klakee-Nah, would sell herself at public auction to satisfy the claims of Porportuk. Vain were the attempts to dissuade her. The missionary at St. George wrestled with her, but she replied: –

"Only the debts to God are settled in the next world. The debts of men are of this world, and in this world are they settled."

Akoon wrestled with her, but she replied: "I do love thee, Akoon; but honor is greater than love, and who am I that I should blacken my father?" Sister Alberta journeyed all the way up from Holy Cross on the first steamer, and to no better end.

"My father wanders in the thick and endless forests," said El-Soo. "And there will he wander, with the lost souls crying, till the debt be paid. Then, and not until then, may he go on to the house of the Great Father."

"And you believe this?" Sister Alberta asked.

"I do not know," El-Soo made answer. "It was my father's belief."

Sister Alberta shrugged her shoulders incredulously.

"Who knows but that the things we believe come true?" El-Soo went on. "Why not? The next world to you may be heaven and harps . . . because you have believed heaven and harps; to my father the next world may be a large house where he will sit always at table feasting with God."

"And you?" Sister Alberta asked. "What is your next world?"

El-Soo hesitated but for a moment. "I should like a little of both," she said. "I should like to see your face as well as the face of my father."

The day of the auction came. Tana-naw Station was populous. As was their custom, the tribes had gathered to await the salmon-run, and in the meantime spent the time in dancing and frolicking, trading and gossiping. Then there was the ordinary sprinkling of white adventurers, traders, and prospectors, and, in addition, a large number of white men who had come because of curiosity or interest in the affair.

It had been a backward spring, and the salmon were late in running. This delay but keyed up the interest. Then, on the day of the auction, the situation was made tense by Akoon. He arose and made public and solemn announcement that whosoever bought El-Soo would forthwith and immediately die. He flourished the Winchester in his hand to indicate the manner of the taking-off. El-Soo was angered thereat; but he refused to speak with her, and went to the trading post to lay in extra ammunition.

The first salmon was caught at ten o'clock in the evening, and at midnight the auction began. It took place on top of the high bank alongside the Yukon. The sun was due north just below

the horizon, and the sky was lurid red. A great crowd gathered about the table and the two chairs that stood near the edge of the bank. To the fore were many white men and several chiefs. And most prominently to the fore, rifle in hand, stood Akoon. Tommy, at El-Soo's request, served as auctioneer, but she made the opening speech and described the goods about to be sold. She was in native costume, in the dress of a chief's daughter, splendid and barbaric, and she stood on a chair, that she might be seen to advantage.

"Who will buy a wife?" she asked. "Look at me. I am twenty years old and a maid. I will be a good wife to the man who buys me. If he is a white man, I shall dress in the fashion of white women; if he is an Indian, I shall dress as" – she hesitated a moment – "a squaw. I can make my own clothes, and sew, and wash, and mend. I was taught for eight years to do these things at Holy Cross Mission. I can read and write English, and I know how to play the organ. Also I can do arithmetic and some algebra – a little. I shall be sold to the highest bidder, and to him I will make out a bill of sale of myself. I forgot to say that I can sing very well, and that I have never been sick in my life. I weigh one hundred and thirty-two pounds; my father is dead and I have no relatives. Who wants me?"

She looked over the crowd with flaming audacity and stepped down. At Tommy's request she stood upon the chair again, while he mounted the second chair and started the bidding.

Surrounding El-Soo stood the four old slaves of her father. They were age-twisted and palsied, faithful to their meat, a generation out of the past that watched unmoved the antics of younger life. In the front of the crowd were several Eldorado and Bonanza kings from the Upper Yukon, and beside them, on crutches, swollen with scurvy, were two broken prospectors. From the midst of the crowd, thrust out by its own vividness, appeared the face of a wild-eyed squaw from the remote regions of the Upper Tana-naw; a strayed Sitkan from the coast stood side by side with a Stick from Lake Le Barge, and, beyond, a half-dozen French-Canadian voyageurs, grouped by themselves. From afar came the faint

cries of myriads of wild-fowl on the nesting-grounds. Swallows were skimming up overhead from the placid surface of the Yukon, and robins were singing. The oblique rays of the hidden sun shot through the smoke, high-dissipated from forest fires a thousand miles away, and turned the heavens to sombre red, while the earth shone red in the reflected glow. This red glow shone in the faces of all, and made everything seem unearthly and unreal.

The bidding began slowly. The Sitkan, who was a stranger in the land and who had arrived only half an hour before, offered one hundred dollars in a confident voice, and was surprised when Akoon turned threateningly upon him with the rifle. The bidding dragged. An Indian from the Tozikakat, a pilot, bid one hundred and fifty, and after some time a gambler, who had been ordered out of the Upper Country, raised the bid to two hundred. El-Soo was saddened; her pride was hurt; but the only effect was that she flamed more audaciously upon the crowd.

There was a disturbance among the onlookers as Porportuk forced his way to the front. "Five hundred dollars!" he bid in a loud voice, then looked about him proudly to note the effect.

He was minded to use his great wealth as a bludgeon with which to stun all competition at the start. But one of the voyageurs, looking on El-Soo with sparkling eyes, raised the bid a hundred.

"Seven hundred!" Porportuk returned promptly.

And with equal promptness came the "Eight hundred," of the voyageur.

Then Porportuk swung his club again. "Twelve hundred!" he shouted.

With a look of poignant disappointment, the voyageur succumbed. There was no further bidding. Tommy worked hard, but could not elicit a bid.

El-Soo spoke to Porportuk. "It were good, Porportuk, for you to weigh well your bid. Have you forgotten the thing I told you – that I would never marry you!"

"It is a public auction," he retorted. "I shall buy you with a bill of sale. I have offered twelve hundred dollars. You come cheap."

"Too damned cheap!" Tommy cried. "What if I am auctioneer? That does not prevent me from bidding. I'll make it thirteen hundred."

"Fourteen hundred," from Porportuk.

"I'll buy you in to be my – my sister," Tommy whispered to El-Soo, then called aloud, "Fifteen hundred!"

At two thousand, one of the Eldorado kings took a hand, and Tommy dropped out.

A third time Porportuk swung the club of his wealth, making a clean raise of five hundred dollars. But the Eldorado king's pride was touched. No man could club him. And he swung back another five hundred.

El-Soo stood at three thousand. Porportuk made it thirty-five hundred, and gasped when the Eldorado king raised it a thousand dollars. Porportuk again raised it five hundred, and again gasped when the king raised a thousand more.

Porportuk became angry. His pride was touched; his strength was challenged, and with him strength took the form of wealth. He would not be ashamed for weakness before the world. El-Soo became incidental. The savings and scrimpings from the cold nights of all his years were ripe to be squandered. El-Soo stood at six thousand. He made it seven thousand. And then, in thousand-dollar bids, as fast as they could be uttered, her price went up. At fourteen thousand the two men stopped for breath.

Then the unexpected happened. A still heavier club was swung. In the pause that ensued, the gambler, who had scented a speculation and formed a syndicate with several of his fellows, bid sixteen thousand dollars.

"Seventeen thousand," Porportuk said weakly.

"Eighteen thousand," said the king.

Porportuk gathered his strength. "Twenty thousand."

The syndicate dropped out. The Eldorado king raised a thousand, and Porportuk raised back; and as they bid, Akoon turned from one to the other, half menacingly, half curiously, as though to see what manner of man it was that he would have to kill. When the king prepared to make his next bid, Akoon having pressed closer, the king first loosed the revolver at his hip, then said: –

"Twenty-three thousand."

"Twenty-four thousand," said Porportuk. He grinned viciously, for the certitude of his bidding had at last shaken the king. The latter moved over close to El-Soo. He studied her carefully, for a long while.

"And five hundred," he said at last.

"Twenty-five thousand," came Porportuk's raise.

The king looked for a long space, and shook his head. He looked again, and said reluctantly, "And five hundred."

"Twenty-six thousand," Porportuk snapped.

The king shook his head and refused to meet Tommy's pleading eye. In the meantime Akoon had edged close to Porportuk. El-Soo's quick eye noted this, and, while Tommy wrestled with the Eldorado king for another bid, she bent, and spoke in a low voice in the ear of a slave. And while Tommy's

"Going – going – going – " dominated the air, the slave went up to Akoon and spoke in a low voice in his ear. Akoon made no sign that he had heard, though El-Soo watched him anxiously.

"Gone!" Tommy's voice rang out. "To Porportuk, for twenty-six thousand dollars."

Porportuk glanced uneasily at Akoon. All eyes were centred upon Akoon, but he did nothing.

"Let the scales be brought," said El-Soo.

"I shall make payment at my house," said Porportuk.

"Let the scales be brought," El-Soo repeated. "Payment shall be made here where all can see."

So the gold-scales were brought from the trading post, while Porportuk went away and came back with a man at his heels, on whose shoulders was a weight of gold-dust in moose-hide sacks. Also, at Porportuk's back, walked another man with a rifle, who had eyes only for Akoon.

"Here are the notes and mortgages," said Porportuk, "for fifteen thousand nine hundred and sixty-seven dollars and seventy-five cents."

El-Soo received them into her hands and said to Tommy, "Let them be reckoned as sixteen thousand."

"There remains ten thousand dollars to be paid in gold," Tommy said. Porportuk nodded, and untied the mouths of the sacks. El-Soo, standing at the edge of the bank, tore the papers to shreds and sent them fluttering out over the Yukon. The weighing began, but halted.

"Of course, at seventeen dollars," Porportuk had said to Tommy, as he adjusted the scales.

"At sixteen dollars," El-Soo said sharply.

"It is the custom of all the land to reckon gold at seventeen dollars for each ounce," Porportuk replied. "And this is a business transaction."

El-Soo laughed. "It is a new custom," she said. "It began this spring. Last year, and the years before, it was sixteen dollars an ounce. When my father's debt was made, it was sixteen dollars. When he spent at the store the money he got from you, for one ounce he was given sixteen dollars' worth of flour, not seventeen. Wherefore, shall you pay for me at sixteen, and not at seventeen." Porportuk grunted and allowed the weighing to proceed.

"Weigh it in three piles, Tommy," she said. "A thousand dollars here, three thousand here, and here six thousand."

It was slow work, and, while the weighing went on, Akoon was closely watched by all.

"He but waits till the money is paid," one said; and the word went around and was accepted, and they waited for what Akoon should do when the money was paid. And Porportuk's man with the rifle waited and watched Akoon.

The weighing was finished, and the gold-dust lay on the table in three dark-yellow heaps. "There is a debt of my father to the Company for three thousand dollars," said El-Soo. "Take it, Tommy, for the Company. And here are four old men, Tommy. You know them. And here is one thousand dollars. Take it, and see that the old men are never hungry and never without tobacco."

Tommy scooped the gold into separate sacks. Six thousand dollars remained on the table. El-Soo thrust the scoop into the heap, and with a sudden turn whirled the contents out and down to the Yukon in a golden shower. Porportuk seized her wrist as she thrust the scoop a second time into the heap.

"It is mine," she said calmly. Porportuk released his grip, but he gritted his teeth and scowled darkly as she continued to scoop the gold into the river till none was left.

The crowd had eyes for naught but Akoon, and the rifle of Porportuk's man lay across the hollow of his arm, the muzzle directed at Akoon a yard away, the man's thumb on the hammer. But Akoon did nothing.

"Make out the bill of sale," Porportuk said grimly.

And Tommy made out the bill of sale, wherein all right and title in the woman El-Soo was vested in the man Porportuk. El-Soo signed the document, and Porportuk folded it and put it away in his pouch. Suddenly his eyes flashed, and in sudden speech he addressed El-Soo.

"But it was not your father's debt," he said. "What I paid was the price for you. Your sale is business of to-day and not of last year and the years before. The ounces paid for you will buy at the post to-day seventeen dollars of flour, and not sixteen. I have lost a dollar on each ounce. I have lost six hundred and twenty-five dollars."

El-Soo thought for a moment, and saw the error she had made. She smiled, and then she laughed.

"You are right," she laughed. "I made a mistake. But it is too late. You have paid, and the gold is gone. You did not think quick. It is your loss. Your wit is slow these days, Porportuk. You are getting old."

He did not answer. He glanced uneasily at Akoon, and was reassured. His lips tightened, and a hint of cruelty came into his face. "Come," he said, "we will go to my house."

"Do you remember the two things I told you in the spring?" El-Soo asked, making no movement to accompany him.

"My head would be full with the things women say, did I heed them," he answered.

"I told you that you would be paid," El-Soo went on carefully. "And I told you that I would never be your wife."

"But that was before the bill of sale." Porportuk crackled the paper between his fingers inside the pouch. "I have bought you before all the world. You belong to me. You will not deny that you belong to me."

"I belong to you," El-Soo said steadily.

"I own you."

"You own me."

Porportuk's voice rose slightly and triumphantly. "As a dog, own you."

"As a dog you own me," El-Soo continued calmly. "But, Porportuk, you forget the thing I told you. Had any other man bought me, I should have been that man's wife. I should have been a good wife to that man. Such was my will. But my will with you was that I should never be your wife. Wherefore, I am your dog."

Porportuk knew that he played with fire, and he resolved to play firmly. "Then I speak to you, not as El-Soo, but as a dog," he said; "and I tell you to come with me." He half reached to grip her arm, but with a gesture she held him back.

"Not so fast, Porportuk. You buy a dog. The dog runs away. It is your loss. I am your dog. What if I run away?"

"As the owner of the dog, I shall beat you – "

"When you catch me?"

"When I catch you."

"Then catch me."

He reached swiftly for her, but she eluded him. She laughed as she circled around the table. "Catch her!" Porportuk commanded the Indian with the rifle, who stood near to her. But as the Indian stretched forth his arm to her, the Eldorado king felled him with a fist blow under the ear. The rifle clattered to the ground. Then was Akoon's chance. His eyes glittered, but he did nothing.

Porportuk was an old man, but his cold nights retained for him his activity. He did not circle the table. He came across suddenly, over the top of the table. El-Soo was taken off her guard. She sprang back with a sharp cry of alarm, and Porportuk would have caught her had it not been for Tommy. Tommy's leg went out. Porportuk tripped and pitched forward on the ground. El-Soo got her start.

"Then catch me," she laughed over her shoulder, as she fled away.

She ran lightly and easily, but Porportuk ran swiftly and savagely. He outran her. In his youth he had been swiftest of all the young men. But El-Soo dodged in a willowy, elusive way. Being in native dress, her feet were not cluttered with skirts, and her pliant body curved a flight that defied the gripping fingers of Porportuk.

With laughter and tumult, the great crowd scattered out to see the chase. It led through the Indian encampment; and ever dodging, circling, and reversing, El-Soo and Porportuk appeared and disappeared among the tents. El-Soo seemed to balance herself against the air with her arms, now one side, now on the other, and sometimes her body, too, leaned out upon the air far from the perpendicular as she achieved her sharpest curves. And Porportuk, always a leap behind, or a leap this side or that, like a lean hound strained after her.

They crossed the open ground beyond the encampment and disappeared in the forest. Tana-naw Station waited their reappearance, and long and vainly it waited.

In the meantime Akoon ate and slept, and lingered much at the steamboat landing, deaf to the rising resentment of Tana-naw Station in that he did nothing. Twenty-four hours later Porportuk returned. He was tired and savage. He spoke to no one but Akoon, and with him tried to pick a quarrel. But Akoon shrugged his shoulders and walked away. Porportuk did not waste time. He outfitted half a dozen of the young men, selecting the best trackers and travellers, and at their head plunged into the forest.

Next day the steamer *Seattle*, bound up river, pulled in to the shore and wooded up. When the lines were cast off and she churned out from the bank, Akoon was on board in the pilot-house. Not many hours afterward, when it was his turn at the wheel, he saw a small birch-bark canoe put off from the shore. There was only one person in it. He studied it carefully, put the wheel over, and slowed down.

The captain entered the pilot-house. "What's the matter?" he demanded. "The water's good."

Akoon grunted. He saw a larger canoe leaving the bank, and in it were a number of persons. As the *Seattle* lost headway, he put the wheel over some more.

The captain fumed. "It's only a squaw," he protested.

Akoon did not grunt. He was all eyes for the squaw and the pursuing canoe. In the latter six paddles were flashing, while the squaw paddled slowly.

"You'll be aground," the captain protested, seizing the wheel.

But Akoon countered his strength on the wheel and looked him in the eyes. The captain slowly released the spokes. "Queer beggar," he sniffed to himself.

Akoon held the *Seattle* on the edge of the shoal water and waited till he saw the squaw's fingers clutch the forward rail. Then he signalled for full speed ahead and ground the wheel over. The large canoe was very near, but the gap between it and the steamer was widening.

The squaw laughed and leaned over the rail. "Then catch me, Porportuk!" she cried.

Akoon left the steamer at Fort Yukon. He outfitted a small poling-boat and went up the Porcupine River. And with him went El-Soo. It was a weary journey, and the way led across the backbone of the world; but Akoon had travelled it before. When they came to the head-waters of the Porcupine, they left the boat and went on foot across the Rocky Mountains.

Akoon greatly liked to walk behind El-Soo and watch the movement of her. There was a music in it that he loved. And especially he loved the well-rounded calves in their sheaths of soft-tanned leather, the slim ankles, and the small moccasined feet that were tireless through the longest days.

"You are light as air," he said, looking up at her. "It is no labor for you to walk. You almost float, so lightly do your feet rise and fall. You are like a deer, El-Soo; you are like a deer, and your eyes are like deer's eyes, sometimes when you look at me, or when you hear a quick sound and wonder if it be danger that stirs. Your eyes are like a deer's eyes now as you look at me."

And El-Soo, luminous and melting, bent and kissed Akoon.

"When we reach the Mackenzie, we will not delay," Akoon said later. "We will go south before the winter catches us. We will go to the sunlands where there is no snow. But we will return. I have seen much of the world, and there is no land like Alaska, no sun like our sun, and the snow is good after the long summer."

"And you will learn to read," said El-Soo.

And Akoon said, "I will surely learn to read."

But there was delay when they reached the Mackenzie. They fell in with a band of Mackenzie Indians and, hunting, Akoon was shot by accident. The rifle was in the hands of a youth. The bullet broke Akoon's right arm and, ranging farther, broke two of his ribs. Akoon knew rough surgery, while El-Soo had learned some refinements at Holy Cross. The bones were finally set, and Akoon lay by the fire for them to knit. Also, he lay by the fire so that the smoke would keep the mosquitoes away.

Then it was that Porportuk, with his six young men, arrived. Akoon groaned in his helplessness and made appeal to the Mackenzies. But Porportuk made demand, and the Mackenzies were perplexed. Porportuk was for seizing upon El-Soo, but this they would not permit. Judgment must be given, and, as it was an affair of man and woman, the council of the old men was called – this that warm judgment might not be given by the young men, who were warm of heart.

The old men sat in a circle about the smudge-fire. Their faces were lean and wrinkled, and they gasped and panted for air. The smoke was not good for them. Occasionally they struck with withered hands at the mosquitoes that braved the smoke. After such exertion they coughed hollowly and painfully. Some spat blood, and one of them sat a bit apart with head bowed forward, and bled slowly and continuously at the mouth; the coughing sickness had gripped them. They were as dead men; their time was short. It was a judgment of the dead.

"And I paid for her a heavy price," Porportuk concluded his complaint. "Such a price you have never seen. Sell all that is yours – sell your spears and arrows and rifles, sell your skins and furs, sell your tents and boats and dogs, sell everything, and you will not have maybe a thousand dollars. Yet did I pay for the woman, El-Soo, twenty-six times the price of all your spears and arrows and rifles, your skins and furs, your tents and boats and dogs. It was a heavy price."

The old men nodded gravely, though their weazened eye-slits widened with wonder that any woman should be worth such a price. The one that bled at the mouth wiped his lips. "Is it true talk?" he asked each of Porportuk's six young men. And each answered that it was true.

"Is it true talk?" he asked El-Soo, and she answered, "It is true."

"But Porportuk has not told that he is an old man," Akoon said, "and that he has daughters older than El-Soo."

"It is true, Porportuk is an old man," said El-Soo.

"It is for Porportuk to measure the strength of his age," said he who bled at the mouth. "We be old men. Behold! Age is never so old as youth would measure it."

And the circle of old men champed their gums, and nodded approvingly, and coughed.

"I told him that I would never be his wife," said El-Soo.

"Yet you took from him twenty-six times all that we possess?" asked a one-eyed old man.

El-Soo was silent.

"It is true?" And his one eye burned and bored into her like a fiery gimlet.

"It is true," she said.

"But I will run away again," she broke out passionately, a moment later. "Always will I run away."

"That is for Porportuk to consider," said another of the old men. "It is for us to consider the judgment."

"What price did you pay for her?" was demanded of Akoon.

"No price did I pay for her," he answered. "She was above price. I did not measure her in gold-dust, nor in dogs, and tents, and furs."

The old men debated among themselves and mumbled in undertones. "These old men are ice," Akoon said in English. "I will not listen to their judgment, Porportuk. If you take El-Soo, I will surely kill you."

The old men ceased and regarded him suspiciously. "We do not know the speech you make," one said.

"He but said that he would kill me," Porportuk volunteered. "So it were well to take from him his rifle, and to have some of your young men sit by him, that he may not do me hurt. He is a young man, and what are broken bones to youth!"

Akoon, lying helpless, had rifle and knife taken from him, and to either side of his shoulders sat young men of the Mackenzies. The one-eyed old man arose and stood upright. "We marvel at the price paid for one mere woman," he began; "but the wisdom of the price is no concern of ours. We are here to give judgment, and judgment we give. We have no doubt. It is known to all that Porportuk paid a heavy price for the woman El-Soo. Wherefore does the woman El-Soo belong to Porportuk and none other." He sat down heavily, and coughed. The old men nodded and coughed.

"I will kill you," Akoon cried in English.

Porportuk smiled and stood up. "You have given true judgment," he said to the council, "and my young men will give to you much tobacco. Now let the woman be brought to me."

Akoon gritted his teeth. The young men took El-Soo by the arms. She did not resist, and was led, her face a sullen flame, to Porportuk.

"Sit there at my feet till I have made my talk," he commanded. He paused a moment. "It is true," he said, "I am an old man. Yet can understand the ways of youth. The fire has not all gone out of me. Yet am I no longer young, nor am I minded to run these old legs of mine through all the years that remain to me. El-Soo can run fast and well. She is a deer. This I know, for I have seen and run after her. It is not good that a wife should run so fast. I paid for her a heavy price, yet does she run away from me. Akoon paid no price at all, yet does she run to him.

"When I came among you people of the Mackenzie, I was of one mind. As I listened in the council and thought of the swift legs of El-Soo, I was of many minds. Now am I of one mind again, but it is a different mind from the one I brought to the council. Let me tell you my mind. When a dog runs once away from a master, it will run away again. No matter how many times it is brought back, each time it will run away again. When we have such dogs, we sell them. El-Soo is like a dog that runs away. I will sell her. Is there any man of the council that will buy?"

The old men coughed and remained silent.

"Akoon would buy," Porportuk went on, "but he has no money. Wherefore I will give El-Soo to him, as he said, without price. Even now will I give her to him."

Reaching down, he took El-Soo by the hand and led her across the space to where Akoon lay on his back.

"She has a bad habit, Akoon," he said, seating her at Akoon's feet. "As she has run away from me in the past, in the days to come she may run away from you. But there is no need to fear that she will ever run away, Akoon. I shall see to that. Never will she run away from you – this the word of Porportuk. She has great wit. I know, for often has it bitten into me. Yet am I minded myself to give my wit play for once. And by my wit will I secure her to you, Akoon."

Stooping, Porportuk crossed El-Soo's feet, so that the instep of one lay over that of the other; and then, before his purpose could be divined, he discharged his rifle through the two ankles. As Akoon struggled to rise against the weight of the young men, there was heard the crunch of the broken bone rebroken. "It is just," said the old men, one to another.

El-Soo made no sound. She sat and looked at her shattered ankles, on which she would never walk again.

"My legs are strong, El-Soo," Akoon said. "But never will they bear me away from you."

El-Soo looked at him, and for the first time in all the time he had known her, Akoon saw tears in her eyes.

"Your eyes are like deer's eyes, El-Soo," he said.

"Is it just?" Porportuk asked, and grinned from the edge of the smoke as he prepared to depart.

"It is just," the old men said. And they sat on in the silence.

To Build A Fire (1908)

DAY HAD BROKEN cold and gray, exceedingly cold and gray, when the man turned aside from the main Yukon trail and climbed the high earth-bank, where a dim and little-travelled trail led eastward through the fat spruce timberland. It was a steep bank, and he paused for breath at the top, excusing the act to himself by looking at his watch. It was nine o'clock. There was no sun nor hint of sun, though there was not a cloud in the sky. It was a clear day, and yet there seemed an intangible pall over the face of things, a subtle gloom that made the day dark, and that was due to the

absence of sun. This fact did not worry the man. He was used to the lack of sun. It had been days since he had seen the sun, and he knew that a few more days must pass before that cheerful orb, due south, would just peep above the sky-line and dip immediately from view.

The man flung a look back along the way he had come. The Yukon lay a mile wide and hidden under three feet of ice. On top of this ice were as many feet of snow. It was all pure white, rolling in gentle undulations where the ice-jams of the freeze-up had formed. North and south, as far as his eye could see, it was unbroken white, save for a dark hair-line that curved and twisted from around the spruce-covered island to the south, and that curved and twisted away into the north, where it disappeared behind another spruce-covered island. This dark hair-line was the trail—the main trail—that led south five hundred miles to the Chilcoot Pass, Dyea, and salt water; and that led north seventy miles to Dawson, and still on to the north a thousand miles to Nulato, and finally to St. Michael on Bering Sea, a thousand miles and half a thousand more.

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 long used to it. He was a newcomer in the land, a *chechaquo*, and this was his first winter. The trouble with him was that he was without imagination. He was quick and alert in the things of life, but only in the things, and not in the significances. Fifty degrees below zero meant eighty-odd degrees of frost. Such fact impressed him as being cold and uncomfortable, and that was all. It did not lead him to meditate upon his frailty as a creature of temperature, and upon man's frailty in general, able only to live within certain narrow limits of heat and cold; and from there on it did not lead him to the conjectural field of immortality and man's place in the universe. Fifty degrees below zero stood for a bite of frost that hurt and that must be guarded against by the use of mittens, ear-flaps, warm moccasins, and thick socks. Fifty degrees below zero was to him just precisely fifty degrees below zero. That there should

be anything more to it than that was a thought that never entered his head.

As he turned to go on, he spat speculatively. There was a sharp, explosive crackle that startled him. He spat again. And again, in the air, before it could fall to the snow, the spittle crackled. He knew that at fifty below spittle crackled on the snow, but this spittle had crackled in the air. Undoubtedly it was colder than fifty below—how much colder he did not know. But the temperature did not matter. He was bound for the old claim on the left fork of Henderson Creek, where the boys were already. They had come over across the divide from the Indian Creek country, while he had come the roundabout way to take a look at the possibilities of getting out logs in the spring from the islands in the Yukon. He would be in to camp by six o'clock; a bit after dark, it was true, but the boys would be there, a fire would be going, and a hot supper would be ready. As for lunch, he pressed his hand against the protruding bundle under his jacket. It was also under his shirt, wrapped up in a handkerchief and lying against the naked skin. It was the only way to keep the biscuits from freezing. He smiled agreeably to himself as he thought of those biscuits, each cut open and sopped in bacon grease, and each enclosing a generous slice of fried bacon.

He plunged in among the big spruce trees. The trail was faint. A foot of snow had fallen since the last sled had passed over, and he was glad he was without a sled, travelling light. In fact, he carried nothing but the lunch wrapped in the handkerchief. He was surprised, however, at the cold. It certainly was cold, he concluded, as he rubbed his numb nose and cheek-bones with his mittened hand. He was a warm-whiskered man, but the hair on his face did not protect the high cheek-bones and the eager nose that thrust itself aggressively into the frosty air.

At the man's heels trotted a dog, a big native husky, the proper wolf-dog, gray-coated and without any visible or temperamental difference from its brother, the wild wolf. The animal was depressed by the tremendous cold. It knew that it was no time for travelling. Its instinct told it a truer tale than

was told to the man by the man's judgment. In reality, it was not merely colder than fifty below zero; it was colder than sixty below, than seventy below. It was seventy-five below zero. Since the freezing-point is thirty-two above zero, it meant that one hundred and seven degrees of frost obtained. The dog did not know anything about thermometers. Possibly in its brain there was no sharp consciousness of a condition of very cold such as was in the man's brain. But the brute had its instinct. It experienced a vague but menacing apprehension that subdued it and made it slink along at the man's heels, and that made it question eagerly every unwonted movement of the man as if expecting him to go into camp or to seek shelter somewhere and build a fire. The dog had learned fire, and it wanted fire, or else to burrow under the snow and cuddle its warmth away from the air.

The frozen moisture of its breathing had settled on its fur in a fine powder of frost, and especially were its jowls, muzzle, and eyelashes whitened by its crystallized breath. 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 that he was unable to clear his chin when he expelled the juice. The result was that a crystal beard of the color and solidity of amber was increasing its length on his chin. If he fell down it would shatter itself, like glass, into brittle fragments. But he did not mind the appendage. It was the penalty all tobacco-chewers paid in that country, and he had been out before in two cold snaps. They had not been so cold as this, he knew, but by the spirit thermometer at Sixty Mile he knew they had been registered at fifty below and at fifty-five.

He held on through the level stretch of woods for several miles, crossed a wide flat of niggerheads, and dropped down a bank to the frozen bed of a small stream. This was Henderson Creek, and he knew he was ten miles from the forks. He looked at his watch. It was ten o'clock. He was making four miles an hour, and he calculated that he would

arrive at the forks at half-past twelve. He decided to celebrate that event by eating his lunch there.

The dog dropped in again at his heels, with a tail drooping discouragement, as the man swung along the creek-bed. The furrow of the old sled-trail was plainly visible, but a dozen inches of snow covered the marks of the last runners. In a month no man had come up or down that silent creek. The man held steadily on. He was not much given to thinking, and just then particularly he had nothing to think about save that he would eat lunch at the forks and that at six o'clock he would be in camp with the boys. There was nobody to talk to; and, had there been, speech would have been impossible because of the ice-muzzle on his mouth. So he continued monotonously to chew tobacco and to increase the length of his amber beard.

Once in a while the thought reiterated itself that it was very cold and that he had never experienced such cold. As he walked along he rubbed his cheek-bones and nose with the back of his mittened hand. He did this automatically, now and again changing hands. But rub as he would, the instant he stopped his cheek-bones went numb, and the following instant the end of his nose went numb. He was sure to frost his cheeks; he knew that, and experienced a pang of regret that he had not devised a nose-strap of the sort Bud wore in cold snaps. Such a strap passed across the cheeks, as well, and saved them. But it didn't matter much, after all. What were frosted cheeks? A bit painful, that was all; they were never serious.

“They were traps. They hid pools of water under the snow...”

Empty as the man's mind was of thoughts, he was keenly observant, and he noticed the changes in the creek, the curves and bends and timber-jams, and always he sharply noted where he placed his feet. Once, coming around a bend, he shied abruptly, like a startled horse, curved away from the place where he had been walking, and retreated several paces back along the trail. The creek he knew was frozen clear to the bottom,—no creek could contain water in that

arctic winter,—but he knew also that there were springs that bubbled out from the hillsides and ran along under the snow and on top the ice of the creek. He knew that the coldest snaps never froze these springs, and he knew likewise their danger. They were traps. They hid pools of water under the snow that might be three inches deep, or three feet. Sometimes a skin of ice half an inch thick covered them, and in turn was covered by the snow. Sometimes there were alternate layers of water and ice-skin, so that when one broke through he kept on breaking through for a while, sometimes wetting himself to the waist.

That was why he had shied in such panic. He had felt the give under his feet and heard the crackle of a snow-hidden ice-skin. And to get his feet wet in such a temperature meant trouble and danger. At the very least it meant delay, for he would be forced to stop and build a fire, and under its protection to bare his feet while he dried his socks and moccasins. He stood and studied the creek-bed and its banks, and decided that the flow of water came from the right. He reflected awhile, rubbing his nose and cheeks, then skirted to the left, stepping gingerly and testing the footing for each step. Once clear of the danger, he took a fresh chew of tobacco and swung along at his four-mile gait. In the course of the next two hours he came upon several similar traps. Usually the snow above the hidden pools had a sunken, candied appearance that advertised the danger. Once again, however, he had a close call; and once, suspecting danger, he compelled the dog to go on in front. The dog did not want to go. It hung back until the man shoved it forward, and then it went quickly across the white, unbroken surface. Suddenly it broke through, floundered to one side, and got away to firmer footing. It had wet its forefeet and legs, and almost immediately the water that clung to it turned to ice. It made quick efforts to lick the ice off its legs, then dropped down in the snow and began to bite out the ice that had formed between the toes. This was a matter of instinct. To permit the ice to remain would mean sore feet. It did not know this. It merely obeyed the mysterious prompting that arose from the deep crypts of its being. But the man knew, having achieved a judgment on the subject, and he removed the mitten from

his right hand and helped tear out the ice-particles. He did not expose his fingers more than a minute, and was astonished at the swift numbness that smote them. It certainly was cold. He pulled on the mitten hastily, and beat the hand savagely across his chest.

At twelve o'clock the day was at its brightest. Yet the sun was too far south on its winter journey to clear the horizon. The bulge of the earth intervened between it and Henderson Creek, where the man walked under a clear sky at noon and cast no shadow. At half-past twelve, to the minute, he arrived at the forks of the creek. He was pleased at the speed he had made. If he kept it up, he would certainly be with the boys by six. He unbuttoned his jacket and shirt and drew forth his lunch. The action consumed no more than a quarter of a minute, yet in that brief moment the numbness laid hold of the exposed fingers. He did not put the mitten on, but, instead, struck the fingers a dozen sharp smashes against his leg. Then he sat down on a snow-covered log to eat. The sting that followed upon the striking of his fingers against his leg ceased so quickly that he was startled. He had had no chance to take a bite of biscuit. He struck the fingers repeatedly and returned them to the mitten, baring the other hand for the purpose of eating. He tried to take a mouthful, but the ice-muzzle prevented. He had forgotten to build a fire and thaw out. He chuckled at his foolishness, and as he chuckled he noted the numbness creeping into the exposed fingers. Also, he noted that the stinging which had first come to his toes when he sat down was already passing away. He wondered whether the toes were warm or numb. He moved them inside the moccasins and decided that they were numb.

He pulled the mitten on hurriedly and stood up. He was a bit frightened. He stamped up and down until the stinging returned into the feet. It certainly was cold, was his thought. That man from Sulphur Creek had spoken the truth when telling how cold it sometimes got in the country. And he had laughed at him at the time! That showed one must not be too sure of things. There was no mistake about it, it was cold. He strode up and down, stamping his feet and threshing his arms, until reassured by the returning warmth. Then he got

out matches and proceeded to make a fire. From the undergrowth, where high water of the previous spring had lodged a supply of seasoned twigs, he got his fire-wood. Working carefully from a small beginning, he soon had a roaring fire, over which he thawed the ice from his face and in the protection of which he ate his biscuits. For the moment the cold of space was outwitted. The dog took satisfaction in the fire, stretching out close enough for warmth and far enough away to escape being singed.

When the man had finished, he filled his pipe and took his comfortable time over a smoke. Then he pulled on his mittens, settled the ear-flaps of his cap firmly about his ears, and took the creek trail up the left fork. The dog was disappointed and yearned back toward the fire. This man did not know cold. Possibly all the generations of his ancestry had been ignorant of cold, of real cold, of cold one hundred and seven degrees below freezing-point. But the dog knew; all its ancestry knew, and it had inherited the knowledge. And it knew that it was not good to walk abroad in such fearful cold. It was the time to lie snug in a hole in the snow and wait for a curtain of cloud to be drawn across the face of outer space whence this cold came. On the other hand, there was no keen intimacy between the dog and the man. The one was the toil-slave of the other, and the only caresses it had ever received were the caresses of the whip-lash and of harsh and menacing throat-sounds that threatened the whip-lash. So the dog made no effort to communicate its apprehension to the man. It was not concerned in the welfare of the man; it was for its own sake that it yearned back toward the fire. But the man whistled, and spoke to it with the sound of whip-lashes, and the dog swung in at the man's heels and followed after.

The man took a chew of tobacco and proceeded to start a new amber beard. Also, his moist breath quickly powdered with white his mustache, eyebrows, and lashes. There did not seem to be so many springs on the left fork of the Henderson, and for half an hour the man saw no signs of any. And then it happened. At a place where there were no signs, where the soft, unbroken snow seemed to advertise solidity beneath, the

man broke through. It was not deep. He wet himself halfway to the knees before he floundered out to the firm crust.

He was angry, and cursed his luck aloud. He had hoped to get into camp with the boys at six o'clock, and this would delay him an hour, for he would have to build a fire and dry out his foot-gear. This was imperative at that low temperature—he knew that much; and he turned aside to the bank, which he climbed. On top, tangled in the underbrush about the trunks of several small spruce trees, was a high-water deposit of dry fire-wood—sticks and twigs, principally, but also larger portions of seasoned branches and fine, dry, last-year's grasses. He threw down several large pieces on top of the snow. This served for a foundation and prevented the young flame from drowning itself in the snow it otherwise would melt. The flame he got by touching a match to a small shred of birch-bark that he took from his pocket. This burned even more readily than paper. Placing it on the foundation, he fed the young flame with wisps of dry grass and with the tiniest dry twigs.

He worked slowly and carefully, keenly aware of his danger. Gradually, as the flame grew stronger, he increased the size of the twigs with which he fed it. He squatted in the snow, pulling the twigs out from their entanglement in the brush and feeding directly to the flame. He knew there must be no failure. When it is seventy-five below zero, a man must not fail in his first attempt to build a fire—that is, if his feet are wet. If his feet are dry, and he fails, he can run along the trail for half a mile and restore his circulation. But the circulation of wet and freezing feet cannot be restored by running when it is seventy-five below. No matter how fast he runs, the wet feet will freeze the harder.

All this the man knew. The old-timer on Sulphur Creek had told him about it the previous fall, and now he was appreciating the advice. Already all sensation had gone out of his feet. To build the fire he had been forced to remove his mittens, and the fingers had quickly gone numb. His pace of four miles an hour had kept his heart pumping blood to the surface of his body and to all the extremities. But the instant

he stopped, the action of the pump eased down. The cold of space smote the unprotected tip of the planet, and he, being on that unprotected tip, received the full force of the blow. The blood of his body recoiled before it. The blood was alive, like the dog, and like the dog it wanted to hide away and cover itself up from the fearful cold. So long as he walked four miles an hour, he pumped that blood, willy-nilly, to the surface; but now it ebbed away and sank down into the recesses of his body. The extremities were the first to feel its absence. His wet feet froze the faster, and his exposed fingers numbed the faster, though they had not yet begun to freeze. Nose and cheeks were already freezing, while the skin of all his body chilled as it lost its blood.

But he was safe. Toes and nose and cheeks would be only touched by the frost, for the fire was beginning to burn with strength. He was feeding it with twigs the size of his finger. In another minute he would be able to feed it with branches the size of his wrist, and then he could remove his wet foot-gear, and, while it dried, he could keep his naked feet warm by the fire, rubbing them at first, of course, with snow. The fire was a success. He was safe. He remembered the advice of the old-timer on Sulphur Creek, and smiled. The old-timer had been very serious in laying down the law that no man must travel alone in the Klondike after fifty below. Well, here he was; he had had the accident; he was alone; and he had saved himself. Those old-timers were rather womanish, some of them, he thought. All a man had to do was to keep his head, and he was all right. Any man who was a man could travel alone. But it was surprising, the rapidity with which his cheeks and nose were freezing. And he had not thought his fingers could go lifeless in so short a time. Lifeless they were, for he could scarcely make them move together to grip a twig, and they seemed remote from his body and from him. When he touched a twig, he had to look and see whether or not he had hold of it. The wires were pretty well down between him and his finger-ends.

All of which counted for little. There was the fire, snapping and crackling and promising life with every dancing flame. He started to untie his moccasins. They were coated with ice; the

thick German socks were like sheaths of iron halfway to the knees; and the moccasin strings were like rods of steel all twisted and knotted as by some conflagration. For a moment he tugged with his numb fingers, then, realizing the folly of it, he drew his sheath-knife.

But before he could cut the strings, it happened. It was his own fault or, rather, his mistake. He should not have built the fire under the spruce tree. He should have built it in the open. But it had been easier to pull the twigs from the brush and drop them directly on the fire. Now the tree under which he had done this carried a weight of snow on its boughs. No wind had blown for weeks, and each bough was fully freighted. Each time he had pulled a twig he had communicated a slight agitation to the tree—an imperceptible agitation, so far as he was concerned, but an agitation sufficient to bring about the disaster. High up in the tree one bough capsized its load of snow. This fell on the boughs beneath, capsizing them. This process continued, spreading out and involving the whole tree. It grew like an avalanche, and it descended without warning upon the man and the fire, and the fire was blotted out! Where it had burned was a mantle of fresh and disordered snow.

The man was shocked. It was as though he had just heard his own sentence of death. For a moment he sat and stared at the spot where the fire had been. Then he grew very calm. Perhaps the old-timer on Sulphur Creek was right. If he had only had a trail-mate he would have been in no danger now. The trail-mate could have built the fire. Well, it was up to him to build the fire over again, and this second time there must be no failure. Even if he succeeded, he would most likely lose some toes. His feet must be badly frozen by now, and there would be some time before the second fire was ready.

Such were his thoughts, but he did not sit and think them. He was busy all the time they were passing through his mind. He made a new foundation for a fire, this time in the open, where no treacherous tree could blot it out. Next, he gathered dry grasses and tiny twigs from the high-water flotsam. He could not bring his fingers together to pull them out, but he was able

to gather them by the handful. In this way he got many rotten twigs and bits of green moss that were undesirable, but it was the best he could do. He worked methodically, even collecting an armful of the larger branches to be used later when the fire gathered strength. And all the while the dog sat and watched him, a certain yearning wistfulness in its eyes, for it looked upon him as the fire-provider, and the fire was slow in coming.

When all was ready, the man reached in his pocket for a second piece of birch-bark. He knew the bark was there, and, though he could not feel it with his fingers, he could hear its crisp rustling as he fumbled for it. Try as he would, he could not clutch hold of it. And all the time, in his consciousness, was the knowledge that each instant his feet were freezing. This thought tended to put him in a panic, but he fought against it and kept calm. He pulled on his mittens with his teeth, and threshed his arms back and forth, beating his hands with all his might against his sides. He did this sitting down, and he stood up to do it; and all the while the dog sat in the snow, its wolf-brush of a tail curled around warmly over its forefeet, its sharp wolf-ears pricked forward intently as it watched the man. And the man, as he beat and threshed with his arms and hands, felt a great surge of envy as he regarded the creature that was warm and secure in its natural covering.

After a time he was aware of the first faraway signals of sensation in his beaten fingers. The faint tingling grew stronger till it evolved into a stinging ache that was excruciating, but which the man hailed with satisfaction. He stripped the mitten from his right hand and fetched forth the birch-bark. The exposed fingers were quickly going numb again. Next he brought out his bunch of sulphur matches. But the tremendous cold had already driven the life out of his fingers. In his effort to separate one match from the others, the whole bunch fell in the snow. He tried to pick it out of the snow, but failed. The dead fingers could neither touch nor clutch. He was very careful. He drove the thought of his freezing feet, and nose, and cheeks, out of his mind, devoting his whole soul to the matches. He watched, using the sense of vision in place of that of touch, and when he saw his

fingers on each side the bunch, he closed them—that is, he willed to close them, for the wires were down, and the fingers did not obey. He pulled the mitten on the right hand, and beat it fiercely against his knee. Then, with both mittened hands, he scooped the bunch of matches, along with much snow, into his lap. Yet he was no better off.

After some manipulation he managed to get the bunch between the heels of his mittened hands. In this fashion he carried it to his mouth. The ice crackled and snapped when by a violent effort he opened his mouth. He drew the lower jaw in, curled the upper lip out of the way, and scraped the bunch with his upper teeth in order to separate a match. He succeeded in getting one, which he dropped on his lap. He was no better off. He could not pick it up. Then he devised a way. He picked it up in his teeth and scratched it on his leg. Twenty times he scratched before he succeeded in lighting it. As it flamed he held it with his teeth to the birch-bark. But the burning brimstone went up his nostrils and into his lungs, causing him to cough spasmodically. The match fell into the snow and went out.

The old-timer on Sulphur Creek was right, he thought in the moment of controlled despair that ensued: after fifty below, a man should travel with a partner. He beat his hands, but failed in exciting any sensation. Suddenly he bared both hands, removing the mittens with his teeth. He caught the whole bunch between the heels of his hands. His arm-muscles not being frozen enabled him to press the hand-heels tightly against the matches. Then he scratched the bunch along his leg. It flared into flame, seventy sulphur matches at once! There was no wind to blow them out. He kept his head to one side to escape the strangling fumes, and held the blazing bunch to the birch-bark. As he so held it, he became aware of sensation in his hand. His flesh was burning. He could smell it. Deep down below the surface he could feel it. The sensation developed into pain that grew acute. And still he endured it, holding the flame of the matches clumsily to the bark that would not light readily because his own burning hands were in the way, absorbing most of the flame.

At last, when he could endure no more, he jerked his hands apart. The blazing matches fell sizzling into the snow, but the birch-bark was alight. He began laying dry grasses and the tiniest twigs on the flame. He could not pick and choose, for he had to lift the fuel between the heels of his hands. Small pieces of rotten wood and green moss clung to the twigs, and he bit them off as well as he could with his teeth. He cherished the flame carefully and awkwardly. It meant life, and it must not perish. The withdrawal of blood from the surface of his body now made him begin to shiver, and he grew more awkward. A large piece of green moss fell squarely on the little fire. He tried to poke it out with his fingers, but his shivering frame made him poke too far, and he disrupted the nucleus of the little fire, the burning grasses and tiny twigs separating and scattering. He tried to poke them together again, but in spite of the tenseness of the effort, his shivering got away with him, and the twigs were hopelessly scattered. Each twig gushed a puff of smoke and went out. The fire-provider had failed. As he looked apathetically about him, his eyes chanced on the dog, sitting across the ruins of the fire from him, in the snow, making restless, hunching movements, slightly lifting one forefoot and then the other, shifting its weight back and forth on them with wistful eagerness.

The sight of the dog put a wild idea into his head. He remembered the tale of the man, caught in a blizzard, who killed a steer and crawled inside the carcass, and so was saved. He would kill the dog and bury his hands in the warm body until the numbness went out of them. Then he could build another fire. He spoke to the dog, calling it to him; but in his voice was a strange note of fear that frightened the animal, who had never known the man to speak in such way before. Something was the matter, and its suspicious nature sensed danger—it knew not what danger, but somewhere, somehow, in its brain arose an apprehension of the man. It flattened its ears down at the sound of the man's voice, and its restless, hunching movements and the liftings and shiftings of its forefeet became more pronounced; but it would not come to the man. He got on his hands and knees and

crawled toward the dog. This unusual posture again excited suspicion, and the animal sidled mincingly away.

The man sat up in the snow for a moment and struggled for calmness. Then he pulled on his mittens, by means of his teeth, and got upon his feet. He glanced down at first in order to assure himself that he was really standing up, for the absence of sensation in his feet left him unrelated to the earth. His erect position in itself started to drive the webs of suspicion from the dog's mind; and when he spoke peremptorily, with the sound of whip-lashes in his voice, the dog rendered its customary allegiance and came to him. As it came within reaching distance, the man lost his control. His arms flashed out to the dog, and he experienced genuine surprise when he discovered that his hands could not clutch, that there was neither bend nor feeling in the fingers. He had forgotten for the moment that they were frozen and that they were freezing more and more. All this happened quickly, and before the animal could get away, he encircled its body with his arms. He sat down in the snow, and in this fashion held the dog, while it snarled and whined and struggled.

But it was all he could do, hold its body encircled in his arms and sit there. He realized that he could not kill the dog. There was no way to do it. With his helpless hands he could neither draw nor hold his sheath-knife nor throttle the animal. He released it, and it plunged wildly away, with tail between its legs, and still snarling. It halted forty feet away and surveyed him curiously, with ears sharply pricked forward. The man looked down at his hands in order to locate them, and found them hanging on the ends of his arms. It struck him as curious that one should have to use his eyes in order to find out where his hands were. He began threshing his arms back and forth, beating the mittened hands against his sides. He did this for five minutes, violently, and his heart pumped enough blood up to the surface to put a stop to his shivering. But no sensation was aroused in the hands. He had an impression that they hung like weights on the ends of his arms, but when he tried to run the impression down, he could not find it.

A certain fear of death, dull and oppressive, came to him. This fear quickly became poignant as he realized that it was no longer a mere matter of freezing his fingers and toes, or of losing his hands and feet, but that it was a matter of life and death with the chances against him. This threw him into a panic, and he turned and ran up the creek-bed along the old, dim trail. The dog joined in behind and kept up with him. He ran blindly, without intention, in fear such as he had never known in his life. Slowly, as he ploughed and floundered through the snow, he began to see things again,—the banks of the creek, the old timber-jams, the leafless aspens, and the sky. The running made him feel better. He did not shiver. Maybe, if he ran on, his feet would thaw out; and, anyway, if he ran far enough, he would reach camp and the boys. Without doubt he would lose some fingers and toes and some of his face; but the boys would take care of him, and save the rest of him when he got there. And at the same time there was another thought in his mind that said he would never get to the camp and the boys; that it was too many miles away, that the freezing had too great a start on him, and that he would soon be stiff and dead. This thought he kept in the background and refused to consider. Sometimes it pushed itself forward and demanded to be heard, but he thrust it back and strove to think of other things.

It struck him as curious that he could run at all on feet so frozen that he could not feel them when they struck the earth and took the weight of his body. He seemed to himself to skim along above the surface, and to have no connection with the earth. Somewhere he had once seen a winged Mercury, and he wondered if Mercury felt as he felt when skimming over the earth.

“Several times he stumbled, and finally he tottered, crumpled up, and fell. . .”

His theory of running until he reached camp and the boys had one flaw in it: he lacked the endurance. Several times he stumbled, and finally he tottered, crumpled up, and fell. When he tried to rise, he failed. He must sit and rest, he decided,

and next time he would merely walk and keep on going. As he sat and regained his breath, he noted that he was feeling quite warm and comfortable. He was not shivering, and it even seemed that a warm glow had come to his chest and trunk. And yet, when he touched his nose or cheeks, there was no sensation. Running would not thaw them out. Nor would it thaw out his hands and feet. Then the thought came to him that the frozen portions of his body must be extending. He tried to keep this thought down, to forget it, to think of something else; he was aware of the panicky feeling that it caused, and he was afraid of the panic. But the thought asserted itself, and persisted, until it produced a vision of his body totally frozen. This was too much, and he made another wild run along the trail. Once he slowed down to a walk, but the thought of the freezing extending itself made him run again.

And all the time the dog ran with him, at his heels. When he fell down a second time, it curled its tail over its forefeet and sat in front of him, facing him, curiously eager and intent. The warmth and security of the animal angered him, and he cursed it till it flattened down its ears appeasingly. This time the shivering came more quickly upon the man. He was losing in his battle with the frost. It was creeping into his body from all sides. The thought of it drove him on, but he ran no more than a hundred feet, when he staggered and pitched headlong. It was his last panic. When he had recovered his breath and control, he sat up and entertained in his mind the conception of meeting death with dignity. However, the conception did not come to him in such terms. His idea of it was that he had been making a fool of himself, running around like a chicken with its head cut off—such was the simile that occurred to him. Well, he was bound to freeze anyway, and he might as well take it decently. With this new-found peace of mind came the first glimmerings of drowsiness. A good idea, he thought, to sleep off to death. It was like taking an anaesthetic. Freezing was not so bad as people thought. There were lots worse ways to die.

He pictured the boys finding his body next day. Suddenly he found himself with them, coming along the trail and looking for

himself. And, still with them, he came around a turn in the trail and found himself lying in the snow. He did not belong with himself any more, for even then he was out of himself, standing with the boys and looking at himself in the snow. It certainly was cold, was his thought. When he got back to the States he could tell the folks what real cold was. He drifted on from this to a vision of the old-timer on Sulphur Creek. He could see him quite clearly, warm and comfortable, and smoking a pipe.

"You were right, old hoss; you were right," the man mumbled to the old-timer of Sulphur Creek.

Then the man drowsed off into what seemed to him the most comfortable and satisfying sleep he had ever known. The dog sat facing him and waiting. The brief day drew to a close in a long, slow twilight. There were no signs of a fire to be made, and, besides, never in the dog's experience had it known a man to sit like that in the snow and make no fire. As the twilight drew on, its eager yearning for the fire mastered it, and with a great lifting and shifting of forefeet, it whined softly, then flattened its ears down in anticipation of being chidden by the man. But the man remained silent. Later, the dog whined loudly. And still later it crept close to the man and caught the scent of death. This made the animal bristle and back away. A little longer it delayed, howling under the stars that leaped and danced and shone brightly in the cold sky. Then it turned and trotted up the trail in the direction of the camp it knew, where were the other food-providers and fire-providers.

Lost Face (1908)

It was the end. Subienkow had travelled a long trail of bitterness and horror, homing like a dove for the capitals of Europe, and here, farther away than ever, in Russian America, the trail ceased. He sat in the snow, arms tied behind him, waiting the torture. He stared curiously before

him at a huge Cossack, prone in the snow, moaning in his pain. The men had finished handling the giant and turned him over to the women. That they exceeded the fiendishness of the men, the man's cries attested.

Subienkow looked on, and shuddered. He was not afraid to die. He had carried his life too long in his hands, on that weary trail from Warsaw to Nulato, to shudder at mere dying. But he objected to the torture. It offended his soul. And this offence, in turn, was not due to the mere pain he must endure, but to the sorry spectacle the pain would make of him. He knew that he would pray, and beg, and entreat, even as Big Ivan and the others that had gone before. This would not be nice. To pass out bravely and cleanly, with a smile and a jest--ah! that would have been the way. But to lose control, to have his soul upset by the pangs of the flesh, to screech and gibber like an ape, to become the veriest beast ah, that was what was so terrible.

There had been no chance to escape. From the beginning, when he dreamed the fiery dream of Poland's independence, he had become a puppet in the hands of Fate. From the beginning, at Warsaw, at St. Petersburg, in the Siberian mines, in Kamtchatka, on the crazy boats of the fur-thieves, Fate had been driving him to this end. Without doubt, in the foundations of the world was graved this end for him--for him, who was so fine and sensitive, whose nerves scarcely sheltered under his skin, who was a dreamer, and a poet, and an artist. Before he was dreamed of, it had been determined that the quivering bundle of sensitiveness that constituted him should be doomed to live in raw and howling savagery, and to die in this far land of night, in this dark place beyond the last boundaries of the world.

He sighed. So that thing before him was Big Ivan -- Big Ivan the giant, the man without nerves, the man of iron, the Cossack turned freebooter of the seas, who was as phlegmatic as an ox, with a nervous system so low that what was pain to ordinary men was scarcely a tickle to him. Well, well, trust these Nulato Indians to find Big Ivan's nerves and trace them to the roots of his quivering soul. They were

certainly doing it. It was inconceivable that a man could suffer so much and yet live. Big Ivan was paying for his low order of nerves. Already he had lasted twice as long as any of the others.

Subienkow felt that he could not stand the Cossack's sufferings much longer. Why didn't Ivan die? He would go mad if that screaming did not cease. But when it did cease, his turn would come. And there was Yakaga awaiting him, too, grinning at him even now in anticipation--Yakaga, whom only last week he had kicked out of the fort, and upon whose face he had laid the lash of his dog-whip. Yakaga would attend to him. Doubtlessly Yakaga was saving for him more refined tortures, more exquisite nerve-racking. Ah! that must have been a good one, from the way Ivan screamed. The squaws bending over him stepped back with laughter and clapping of hands. Subienkow saw the monstrous thing that had been perpetrated, and began to laugh hysterically. The Indians looked at him in wonderment that he should laugh. But Subienkow could not stop.

This would never do. He controlled himself, the spasmodic twitchings slowly dying away. He strove to think of other things, and began reading back in his own life. He remembered his mother and his father, and the little spotted pony, and the French tutor who had taught him dancing and sneaked him an old worn copy of Voltaire. Once more he saw Paris, and dreary London, and gay Vienna, and Rome. And once more he saw that wild group of youths who had dreamed, even as he, the dream of an independent Poland with a king of Poland on the throne at Warsaw. Ah, there it was that the long trail began. Well, he had lasted longest. One by one, beginning with the two executed at St. Petersburg, he took up the count of the passing of those brave spirits. Here one had been beaten to death by a jailer, and there, on that blood-stained highway of the exiles, where they had marched for endless months, beaten and maltreated by their Cossack guards, another had dropped by the way. Always it had been savagery--brutal, bestial savagery. They had died--of fever, in the mines, under the knout. The last two had died after the escape, in the battle with the Cossacks,

and he alone had won to Kamtchatka with the stolen papers and the money of a traveller he had left lying in the snow.

It had been nothing but savagery. All the years, with his heart in studios, and theatres, and courts, he had been hemmed in by savagery. He had purchased his life with blood. Everybody had killed. He had killed that traveller for his passports. He had proved that he was a man of parts by duelling with two Russian officers on a single day. He had had to prove himself in order to win to a place among the fur-thieves. He had had to win to that place. Behind him lay the thousand-years-long road across all Siberia and Russia. He could not escape that way. The only way was ahead, across the dark and icy sea of Bering to Alaska. The way had led from savagery to deeper savagery. On the scurvy-rotten ships of the fur-thieves, out of food and out of water, buffeted by the interminable storms of that stormy sea, men had become animals. Thrice he had sailed east from Kamtchatka. And thrice, after all manner of hardship and suffering, the survivors had come back to Kamtchatka. There had been no outlet for escape, and he could not go back the way he had come, for the mines and the knout awaited him.

Again, the fourth and last time, he had sailed east. He had been with those who first found the fabled Seal Islands; but he had not returned with them to share the wealth of furs in the mad orgies of Kamtchatka. He had sworn never to go back. He knew that to win to those dear capitals of Europe he must go on. So he had changed ships and remained in the dark new land. His comrades were Slavonian hunters and Russian adventurers, Mongols and Tartars and Siberian aborigines; and through the savages of the new world they had cut a path of blood. They had massacred whole villages that refused to furnish the fur-tribute; and they, in turn, had been massacred by ships' companies. He, with one Finn, had been the sole survivors of such a company. They had spent a winter of solitude and starvation on a lonely Aleutian isle, and their rescue in the spring by another fur-ship had been one chance in a thousand.

But always the terrible savagery had hemmed him in. Passing from ship to ship, and ever refusing to return, he had come to the ship that explored south All down the Alaska coast they had encountered nothing but hosts of savages. Every anchorage among the beetling islands or under the frowning cliffs of the mainland had meant a battle or a storm. Either the gales blew, threatening destruction, or the war canoes came off, manned by howling natives with the war-paint on their faces, who came to learn the bloody virtues of the sea-rovers' gunpowder. South, south they had coasted, clear to the myth-land of California. Here, it was said, were Spanish adventurers who had fought their way up from Mexico. He had had hopes of those Spanish adventurers. Escaping to them, the rest would have been easy--a year or two, what did it matter more or less--and he would win to Mexico, then a ship, and Europe would be his. But they had met no Spaniards. Only had they encountered the same impregnable wall of savagery. The denizens of the confines of the world, painted for war, had driven them back from the shores. At last, when one boat was cut off and every man killed, the commander had abandoned the quest and sailed back to the north.

The years had passed. He had served under Tebenkoff when Michaelovski Redoubt was built. He had spent two years in the Kuskokwim country. Two summers, in the month of June, he had managed to be at the head of Kotzebue Sound. Here, at this time, the tribes assembled for barter; here were to be found spotted deerskins from Siberia, ivory from the Diomedes, walrus skins from the shores of the Arctic, strange stone lamps, passing in trade from tribe to tribe, no one knew whence, and, once, a hunting-knife of English make; and here, Subienkow knew, was the school in which to learn geography. For he met Eskimos from Norton Sound, from King Island and St. Lawrence Island, from Cape Prince of Wales, and Point Barrow. Such places had other names, and their distances were measured in days.

It was a vast region these trading savages came from, and a vaster region from which, by repeated trade, their stone lamps and that steel knife had come. Subienkow bullied, and

cajoled, and bribed. Every far-journeyer or strange tribesman was brought before him. Perils unaccountable and unthinkable were mentioned, as well as wild beasts, hostile tribes, impenetrable forests, and mighty mountain ranges; but always from beyond came the rumor and the tale of white-skinned men, blue of eye and fair of hair, who fought like devils and who sought always for furs. They were to the east-far, far to the east. No one had seen them. It was the word that had been passed along.

It was a hard school. One could not learn geography very well through the medium of strange dialects, from dark minds that mingled fact and fable and that measured distances by "sleeps" that varied according to the difficulty of the going. But at last came the whisper that gave Subienkow courage. In the east lay a great river where were these blue-eyed men. The river was called the Yukon. South of Michaelovski Redoubt emptied another great river which the Russians knew as the Kwikpak. These two rivers were one, ran the whisper. Subienkow returned to Michaelovski. For a year he urged an expedition up the Kwikpak. Then arose Malakoff, the Russian half-breed, to lead the wildest and most ferocious of the hell's broth of mongrel adventurers who had crossed from Kamtchatka. Subienkow was his lieutenant. They threaded the mazes of the great delta of the Kwikpak, picked up the first low hills on the northern bank, and for half a thousand miles, in skin canoes loaded to the gunwales with trade-goods and ammunition, fought their way against the five-knot current of a river that ran from two to ten miles wide in a channel many fathoms deep. Malakoff decided to build the fort at Nulato. Subienkow urged to go farther. But he quickly reconciled himself to Nulato. The long winter was coming on. It would be better to wait. Early the following summer, when the ice was gone, he would disappear up the Kwikpak and work his way to the Hudson Bay Company's posts. Malakoff had never heard the whisper that the Kwikpak was the Yukon, and Subienkow did not tell him.

Came the building of the fort. It was enforced labor. The tiered walls of logs arose to the sighs and groans of the Nulato Indians. The lash was laid upon their backs, and it was

the iron hand of the freebooters of the sea that laid on the lash. There were Indians that ran away, and when they were caught they were brought back and spread-eagled before the fort, where they and their tribe learned the efficacy of the knout. Two died under it; others were injured for life; and the rest took the lesson to heart and ran away no more. The snow was flying ere the fort was finished, and then it was the time for furs. A heavy tribute was laid upon the tribe. Blows and lashings continued, and that the tribute should be paid, the women and children were held as hostages and treated with the barbarity that only the fur-thieves knew.

Well, it had been a sowing of blood, and now was come the harvest. The fort was gone. In the light of its burning, half the fur-thieves had been cut down. The other half had passed under the torture. Only Subienkow remained, or Subienkow and Big Ivan, if that whimpering, moaning thing in the snow could be called Big Ivan. Subienkow caught Yakaga grinning at him. There was no gainsaying Yakaga. The mark of the lash was still on his face. After all, Subienkow could not blame him, but he disliked the thought of what Yakaga would do to him. He thought of appealing to Makamuk, the head-chief; but his judgment told him that such appeal was useless. Then, too, he thought of bursting his bonds and dying fighting. Such an end would be quick. But he could not break his bonds. Caribou thongs were stronger than he. Still devising, another thought came to him. He signed for Makamuk, and that an interpreter who knew the coast dialect should be brought.

"Oh, Makamuk," he said, "I am not minded to die. I am a great man, and it were foolishness for me to die. In truth, I shall not die. I am not like these other carrion."

He looked at the moaning thing that had once been Big Ivan, and stirred it contemptuously with his toe.

"I am too wise to die. Behold, I have a great medicine. I alone know this medicine. Since I am not going to die, I shall exchange this medicine with you."

"What is this medicine?" Makamuk demanded.

"It is a strange medicine."

Subienkow debated with himself for a moment, as if loath to part with the secret.

"I will tell you. A little bit of this medicine rubbed on the skin makes the skin hard like a rock, hard like iron, so that no cutting weapon can cut it. The strongest blow of a cutting weapon is a vain thing against it. A bone knife becomes like a piece of mud; and it will turn the edge of the iron knives we have brought among you. What will you give me for the secret of the medicine?"

"I will give you your life," Makamuk made answer through the interpreter.

Subienkow laughed scornfully.

"And you shall be a slave in my house until you die."

The Pole laughed more scornfully.

"Untie my hands and feet and let us talk," he said.

The chief made the sign; and when he was loosed Subienkow rolled a cigarette and lighted it.

"This is foolish talk," said Makamuk. "There is no such medicine. It cannot be. A cutting edge is stronger than any medicine."

The chief was incredulous, and yet he wavered. He had seen too many deviltries of fur-thieves that worked. He could not wholly doubt.

"I will give you your life; but you shall not be a slave," he announced.

"More than that."

Subienkow played his game as coolly as if he were bartering for a foxskin.

"It is a very great medicine. It has saved my life many times. I want a sled and dogs, and six of your hunters to travel with me down the river and give me safety to one day's sleep from Michaelovski Redoubt."

"You must live here, and teach us all of your deviltries," was the reply.

Subienkow shrugged his shoulders and remained silent. He blew cigarette smoke out on the icy air, and curiously regarded what remained of the big Cossack.

"That scar!" Makamuk said suddenly, pointing to the Pole's neck, where a livid mark advertised the slash of a knife in a Kamtchatkan brawl. "The medicine is not good. The cutting edge was stronger than the medicine."

"It was a strong man that drove the stroke." (Subienkow considered.)

"Stronger than you, stronger than your strongest hunter, stronger than he."

Again, with the toe of his moccasin, he touched the Cossack--a grisly spectacle, no longer conscious--yet in whose dismembered body the pain-racked life clung and was loath to go.

"Also, the medicine was weak. For at that place there were no berries of a certain kind, of which I see you have plenty in this country. The medicine here will be strong."

"I will let you go down river," said Makamuk; "and the sled and the dogs and the six hunters to give you safety shall be yours."

"You are slow," was the cool rejoinder. "You have committed an offence against my medicine in that you did not at once accept my terms. Behold, I now demand more. I want one hundred beaver skins." (Makamuk sneered.) "I want one hundred pounds of dried fish." (Makamuk nodded, for fish were plentiful and cheap.) "I want two sleds--one for me and one for my furs and fish. And my rifle must be returned to me. If you do not like the price, in a little while the price will grow."

Yakaga whispered to the chief.

"But how can I know your medicine is true medicine?" Makamuk asked.

"It is very eas First, I shall go into the woods--"

Again Yakaga whispered to Makamuk, who made a suspicious dissent.

"You can send twenty hunters with me," Subienkow went on. "You see, I must get the berries and the roots with which to make the medicine. Then, when you have brought the two sleds and loaded on them the fish and the beaver skins and the rifle, and when you have told off the six hunters who will go with me--then, when all is ready, I will

rub the medicine on my neck, so, and lay my neck there on that log. Then can your strongest hunter take the axe and strike three times on my neck. You yourself can strike the three times."

Makamuk stood with gaping mouth, drinking in this latest and most wonderful magic of the fur-thieves.

"But first," the Pole added hastily, "between each blow I must put on fresh medicine. The axe is heavy and sharp, and I want no mistakes."

"All that you have asked shall be yours," Makamuk cried in a rush of acceptance. "Proceed to make your medicine."

Subienkow concealed his elation. He was playing a desperate game, and there must be no slips. He spoke arrogantly.

"You have been slow. My medicine is offended. To make the offence clean you must give me your daughter."

He pointed to the girl, an unwholesome creature, with a cast in one eye and a bristling wolf-tooth. Makamuk was angry, but the Pole remained imperturbable, rolling and lighting another cigarette.

"Make haste," he threatened. "If you are not quick, I shall demand yet more."

In the silence that followed, the dreary northland scene faded from before him, and he saw once more his native land, and France, and, once, as he glanced at the wolf-toothed girl, he remembered another girl, a singer and a dancer, whom he had known when first as a youth he came to Paris.

"What do you want with the girl?" Makamuk asked.

"To go down the river with me." Subienkow glanced her over critically. "She will make a good wife, and it is an honor worthy of my medicine to be married to your blood."

Again he remembered the singer and dancer and hummed aloud a song she had taught him. He lived the old life over, but in a detached, impersonal sort of way, looking at the memory-pictures of his own life as if they were pictures in a book of anybody's life. The chief's voice, abruptly breaking the silence, startled him.

"It shall be done," said Makamuk. "The girl shall go down the river with you. But be it understood that I myself strike the three blows with the axe on your neck."

"But each time I shall put on the medicine," Subienkow answered, with a show of ill-concealed anxiety.

"You shall put the medicine on between each blow. Here are the hunters who shall see you do not escape. Go into the forest and gather your medicine."

Makamuk had been convinced of the worth of the medicine by the Pole's rapacity. Surely nothing less than the greatest of medicines could enable a man in the shadow of death to stand up and drive an old-woman's bargain.

"Besides," whispered Yakaga, when the Pole, with his guard, had disappeared among the spruce trees, "when you have learned the medicine you can easily destroy him."

"But how can I destroy him?" Makamuk argued. "His medicine will not let me destroy him."

"There will be some part where he has not rubbed the medicine," was Yakaga's reply. "We will destroy him through that part. It may be his ears. Very well; we will thrust a spear in one ear and out the other. Or it may be his eyes. Surely the medicine will be much too strong to rub on his eyes."

The chief nodded. "You are wise, Yakaga. If he possesses no other devil-things, we will then destroy him."

Subienkow did not waste time in gathering the ingredients for his medicine. He selected whatsoever came to hand such as spruce needles, the inner bark of the willow, a strip of birch bark, and a quantity of moss-berries, which he made the hunters dig up for him from beneath the snow. A few frozen roots completed his supply, and he led the way back to camp.

Makamuk and Yakaga crouched beside him, noting the quantities and kinds of the ingredients he dropped into the pot of boiling water.

"You must be careful that the moss-berries go in first," he explained.

"And--oh, yes, one other thing--the finger of a man. Here, Yakaga, let me cut off your finger."

But Yakaga put his hands behind him and scowled.

"Just a small finger," Subienkow pleaded.

"Yakaga, give him your finger," Makamuk commanded.

"There be plenty of fingers lying around," Yakaga grunted, indicating the human wreckage in the snow of the score of persons who had been tortured to death.

"It must be the finger of a live man," the Pole objected.

"Then shall you have the finger of a live man." Yakaga strode over to the Cossack and sliced off a finger.

"He is not yet dead," he announced, flinging the bloody trophy in the snow at the Pole's feet. "Also, it is a good finger, because it is large."

Subienkow dropped it into the fire under the pot and began to sing. It was a French love-song that with great solemnity he sang into the brew.

"Without these words I utter into it, the medicine is worthless," he explained. "The words are the chiefest strength of it. Behold, it is ready."

"Name the words slowly, that I may know them," Makamuk commanded.

"Not until after the test. When the axe flies back three times from my neck, then will I give you the secret of the words."

"But if the medicine is not good medicine?" Makamuk queried anxiously.

Subienkow turned upon him wrathfully.

"My medicine is always good. However, if it is not good, then do by me as you have done to the others. Cut me up a bit at a time, even as you have cut him up." He pointed to the Cossack. "The medicine is now cool. Thus, I rub it on my neck, saying this further medicine."

With great gravity he slowly intoned a line of the "Marseillaise," at the same time rubbing the villainous brew thoroughly into his neck.

An outcry interrupted his play-acting. The giant Cossack, with a last resurgence of his tremendous vitality, had arisen to his knees. Laughter and cries of surprise and applause arose from the Nulatos, as Big Ivan began flinging himself about in the snow with mighty spasms.

Subienkow was made sick by the sight, but he mastered his qualms and made believe to be angry.

"This will not do," he said. "Finish him, and then we will make the test. Here, you, Yakaga, see that his noise ceases."

While this was being done, Subienkow turned to Makamuk.

"And remember, you are to strike hard. This is not baby-work. Here, take the axe and strike the log, so that I can see you strike like a man."

Makamuk obeyed, striking twice, precisely and with vigor, cutting out a large chip.

"It is well " Subienkow looked about him at the circle of savage faces that somehow seemed to symbolize the wall of savagery that had hemmed him about ever since the Czar's police had first arrested him in Warsaw. "Take your axe, Makamuk, and stand so. I shall lie down. When I raise my hand, strike, and strike with all your might. And be careful that no one stands behind you. The medicine is good, and the axe may bounce from off my neck and right out of your hands."

He looked at the two sleds, with the dogs in harness, loaded with furs and fish. His rifle lay on top of the beaver skins. The six hunters who were to act as his guard stood by the sleds.

"Where is the girl?" the Pole demanded. "Bring her up to the sleds before the test goes on."

When this had been carried out, Subienkow lay down in the snow, resting his head on the log like a tired child about to sleep. He had lived so many dreary years that he was indeed tired.

"I laugh at you and your strength, O Makamuk," he said. "Strike, and strike hard."

He lifted his hand. Makamuk swung the axe, a broadaxe for the squaring of logs. The bright steel flashed through the frosty air, poised for a perceptible instant above Makamuk's head, then descended upon Subienkow's bare neck. Clear through flesh and bone it cut its way, biting deeply into the log beneath. The amazed savages saw the head bounce a yard away from the blood-spouting trunk.

There was a great bewilderment and silence, while slowly it began to dawn in their minds that there had been no medicine. The fur-thief had outwitted them. Alone, of all their prisoners, he had escaped the torture. That had been the stake for which he played. A great roar of laughter went up. Makamuk bowed his head in shame. The fur-thief had fooled him. He had lost face before all his people. Still they continued to roar out their laughter. Makamuk turned, and with bowed head stalked away. He knew that thenceforth he would be no longer known as Makamuk. He would be Lost Face; the record of his shame would be with him until he died; and whenever the tribes gathered in the spring for the salmon, or in the summer for the trading, the story would pass back and forth across the camp-fires of how the fur-thief died peaceably, at a single stroke, by the hand of Lost Face.

"Who was Lost Face?" he could hear, in anticipation, some insolent young buck demand. "Oh, Lost Face," would be the

answer, "he who once was Makamuk in the days before he cut off the fur-thief's head."