Call Of The Wild Essay Essay, Research Paper

In 1903, Jack London wrote his best selling novel, concerning the life of a sled dog that travels throughout Alaska, the Yukon, and the Klondike. Throughout this book Jack London uses personification to illustrate the dog?s viewpoint. London describes what adventures the dog encounters after being kidnapped from his Santa Clara Valley home to be taken to Alaska as a sled dog to help men pursue gold in the gold rush of 1897. Buck, is the name of this sled dog who experiences his primitive life style for the first time after many forays through Canada and Alaska. Due to the events in Buck?s life, he transforms from a domesticated, family pet to a primordial, wild beast.

To begin with, before living in northern Canada and Alaska, Buck lived a pampered, luxurious life on Judge Miller?s estate in Santa Clara Valley, California. Although there were numerous breeds of dogs living on the estate, Buck had an aspect to himself that set him aside from the other dogs and animals. ?For he was king ? king over all creeping, crawling flying things of Judge Miller?s place, humans included.? (Call of the Wild, page 14). Buck would take long peaceful walks with the Judge?s daughters; he would go hunting with the Judge?s sons; he would carry the Judge?s grandsons on his backs and roll them in the grass. Buck who had been treated fairly and justly throughout his life, had a carefreee personality and was very trusting of both humans and animals.

Essentially, Buck was like an emperor that reigned over the Judge?s estate, leading a very gracious life.

As the story progresses, Buck?s personality shows a flaw after he trusts Manuel, a worker on Judge Miller?s estate who has a weakness for gambling and owes many debts. Manuel kidnaps Buck and sells him to pay off a debt. Buck?s trustworthy nature changes as soon as he is beaten and is not fed or allowed to drink water. When Buck arrives in Seattle he is almost beaten to death by the man in the red sweater. ?He saw, once for all, that he stood no chance against a man with a club.? (Call of the Wild, page 19). Buck learns from this horrible incident the ?law of the club.? The law of the club states that a dog is no match for a man with a weapon. Buck witnesses as his newly-made friend named Curly is torn to pieces by thirty or forty huskies after she falls to the ground from fighting. Buck is taught the ?law of the fang? from Curly?s death scene. The law of the fang recognizes the fact that once a dog falls to the ground he is dead. In the north, Buck learns many traits that will help him journey through the north in order to survive. Buck learns that he has to eat his food quickly in order to not have it stolen; he learns to steal food to survive, because the daily ration cannot fill his stomach; he learns to break the ice out from his toes; and finally Buck learns that in order to stay warm during the harsh, freezing nights, he has to make a ?nest? to sleep in. Because Buck learns these new secrets of the sled dogs, he is able to survive in the north and to maintain his position as lead sled dog.

As the novel comes to a conclusion, Buck has been a sled dog for many different owners, all of a certain caliber, and he is becoming more in touch with his ancestral way of life and his primordial self. To begin with, Buck begins having dreams about a hairy man who is described to look like a cave man. ?Far more potent were the memories of his heredity that gave things he had never seen before a seeming familiarity; the instincts which had lapsed in later days, and still later, in him, quickened and became alive again.? (Call of the Wild, page 45). Another primordial aspect which he is now in touch with, is the ?call.? The ?call? is something that drives Buck away from his masters, from civilization. When Buck is with a master named John Thornton, he frequently spends time out in the wild seeing a wolf that is shy and hunting large game to feed his unending hunger. Buck later comes back to his master?s camp and finds his favorite master dead. He is in a rage of fury and kills the Indians that killed his master. That is perhaps, when he leaves civilization and becomes a truly wild animal. In addition to killing the Indians, he meets a wolf pack and kills several of the wolves to prove that he is worthy enough to be in the pack. To sum it up, Buck?s last thread of humanity and civilization is cut and he is now truly a wild beast.

In conclusion, clearly it is visible to see that because of the events in Buck?s life, he transforms from a domesticated, family pet to a primordial, wild beast. Buck begins his life as a pampered king who rules over all, and trusts every human that he knows, because he has been treated fairly throughout his life. As his life progress he is learning how to be a sled dog, and has to quarrel with other dogs to maintain his position as lead sled dog. Near the end of Buck?s life he has become a primitive beast, and is the leader of a wolf pack. This book has shown me a great deal about life, and how something, or someone can change greatly over time. This book has made me contemplate more about the question about whether a dog could actually have these feelings toward humans and life. Jack London?s book is truly a masterpiece, and I will remember this book throughout my life.