

To build a fire

Literature



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To Build a Fire

An author's credibility is very important in making an excellent or interesting book. This is especially important for works of non fiction that require not only primary source research but also an ethical and careful researcher. Jack London's character and beliefs as a man can somehow be interpreted from his work, " To Build a Fire."

Jack London is, as a man, brooding. The opening phrases of his book suggest that trait in him. He said " Day had broken cold and grey, exceedingly cold and grey, ... where a dim and little-travelled trail led eastward ... There was no sun nor hint of sun, though there was not a cloud in the sky. ... there seemed an intangible pall over the face of things, a subtle gloom that made the day dark" (London). These words, collections of words rather, picture a man rather gloomy person. Fortunately, this is balanced by his apparent realism. This is obvious from the book's main character realistic view that in spite of the dark and grey of the now, the " cheerful orb" (London) will eventually show itself.

Moreover, in reading " To Build a Fire" a reader might easily conclude, which I did, that Jack London is very sure of himself. In the book he passed judgment on his main character. According to him, the new comer is " without imagination" (London), which is not the end of his trouble, because though alert his alertness is towards the insignificant aspects of life. In his judgment of his main character, it can be observed that Jack London is not easily amused by trivialities. An average person could easily laugh at the main character's person, but Jack London's description of the man seems that he despises the man. His lack of humor further supports the conclusion in the beginning of the paper that London is a rather gloomy man.

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He is also a very determined man as portrayed by the man he seems to despise a bit. His determination showed through his own character's who, despite the below fifty temperature, trudged on reliably to his destination. The character's determination is undoubtedly as unshakeable as London's. The main character travelled to his destination on foot, " without a sled" (London).

As I read through the book, a startling discovery hit me. The characters of Jack London as I described above appears to be the characteristics of the book's main character's dog. The dog is depressed and discouraged, which are akin to Jack London's gloominess, as a result of the cold. The dog is very practical and a realist as it ponders that " it was no time for travelling" (London).

Lastly, maybe due to or in spite of his gloominess and of his being a realist, Jack London is also a very careful man. As he pictured his character " stepping gingerly and testing the footing for each step" (London), I think he was actually writing how he would act if he was the one in acting in his " To Build a Fire."

Works Cited

London, J., " To Build a Fire", Read Print 11 Jan. 2009. <http://www.readprint.com/work-1063/Jack-London> (11 Jan. 2009).