

**Split-Page Notes: *The Call of the Wild*, Chapter 3 “The Dominant Primordial Beast”**

Question	Response
<p>1. What do we learn about the “primordial beast” within Buck in the first paragraph?</p> <p>2. What does Spitz do to finally provoke Buck to act?</p> <p>3. Reread the following lines:</p> <p>Buck got a frothing adversary by the throat, and was sprayed with blood when his teeth sank through the jugular. The warm taste of it in his mouth goaded him to greater fierceness. He flung himself upon another, and at the same time felt teeth sink into his own throat. It was Spitz, treacherously attacking from the side.</p> <p>What does Spitz do? Why is this significant?</p> <p>4. How do Francois and Perrault’s view about Buck and Spitz differ?</p>	<p>The primordial beast in Buck continues to grow as Buck becomes more accustomed to his life in the wild. The text states that it was strong, “and under the fierce condition of trail life it grew and grew.” However, it also states that it was secret, as Buck did not pick fight and instead avoided them. He shunned off Spitz’ offensive acts, even though he hated him.</p> <p>Buck finally takes action to fight Spitz after he takes his warm nest in the snow when Buck gets up to find more food.</p> <p>Spitz attacks Buck from the side while the wild dogs are attacking and after Buck has already been injured. This demonstrates that Spitz seeks to destroy or kill Buck, and also that he is sly and cunning in his approach. This is the perfect time to attack Buck because the rest of the dogs have been attacked and there is chaos within the camp.</p> <p>Perrault believes that Spitz will kill Buck; Francois thinks that Buck is stronger than Spitz and will eventually kill him.</p>

<p>5. How does the author use the incident of the wild dog attack to propel the action and the suspense in the text?</p>	<p>The incident of the wild dog attack propels the action and the suspense in the text by demonstrating the intensity of the conflict between Buck and Spitz and by encouraging the dog team to move forward. In the text, the wild dogs attack the dog sled team, and all of the dogs are brutally injured by the fierce attack. However, the attack also serves to demonstrate how intense the rivalry between Spitz and Buck has become. The wild dog attack stops Buck and Spitz from fighting, and then during the attack, Spitz finds Buck and attacks him while he is injured. This suggests that the conflict between Buck and Spitz will continue until there is a resolution and one of the dogs emerges as the winner by killing the other dog. The dog attack also encourages Francois and Perrault to continue on their journey for fear that the dogs will go mad, thus moving the plot forward.</p>
<p>6. What incidents demonstrate Buck's desire to undermine Spitz's authority? Cite textual evidence.</p>	<p>Buck begins to undermine Spitz' authority by threatening his authority in ways that cause the other dogs to follow suit. For example, in the text Spitz' tries to attack Pike for staying in his nest instead of being ready for the traces, but when Spitz tries to attack Pike as punishment, Buck intervenes and attacks Spitz. This leads Pike to also turn on Spitz, which he wouldn't have done if not for Buck. Buck also encouraged the other dogs to threaten Spitz' authority.</p>
<p>7. Read the following lines from the text:</p> <p>"They made Sixty Mile, which is a fifty-mile run, on the first day; and the second day saw them booming up the Yukon well on their way to Pelly. But such splendid running was achieved not without great trouble and vexation on the part of Francois. The <b>insidious</b> revolt led by Buck had destroyed the solidarity of the team. It no longer was as one dog leaping in the traces."</p> <p>Define the word insidious on your vocabulary chart.</p>	<p>The text states: "The encouragement Buck gave the rebels led them into all kinds of petty misdemeanors. No more was Spitz a leader greatly to be feared. The old awe departed, and they grew equal to challenging his authority." The dogs begin to challenge Spitz by stealing his food, whining more, and fighting amongst themselves. The team becomes less productive, as the fighting and the constant challenging leads the team to move more slowly. The text states that "Buck had destroyed the solidarity of the team." In addition, Buck's actions cause the owners to be constantly vigilant for any fighting amongst the dogs. Francois, who at first laughed at Buck's attack on Spitz, becomes troubled because of the decline of the team.</p>

<p>How do Buck's actions impact the other dogs? How do Buck's actions impact the owners, Francois and Perrault? How do Buck's actions impact the team as a whole? Cite textual evidence.</p>	
<p>8. What do these incidents, along with the opening of Chapter 3, foreshadow?</p>	<p>The incidents and the opening of chapter 3 suggest that Buck's transformation is continuing, and that he will continue to challenge Spitz for leadership until one of them is killed. This is foreshadowed by the conversation between Francois and Perrault, and the way in which Spitz and Buck continue to attack one another throughout the text.</p>
<p>9. Reread the following lines from the text:</p> <p>In a flash Buck knew it. The time had come. It was to the death. As they circled about, snarling, ears laid back, keenly watchful for the advantage, the scene came to Buck with a sense of familiarity. He seemed to remember it all--the white woods, and earth, and moonlight, and the thrill of battle....To Buck it was nothing new or strange, this scene of old time. It was as though it had always been, the wonted way of things.</p>	<p>These lines are significant because they emphasize Buck's primitive nature and his instincts. The text states, "the scene came to Buck with a sense of familiarity. He seemed to remember it all--the white woods, and earth, and moonlight, and the thrill of battle...." This implies that Buck has been in this situation or experience before. The author intends to show that Buck's primitive instincts are awakened within him. Like the wolves and wild dogs who came before him, Buck continues to recognize and rely on his natural instincts to sustain him in the wild, and to prepare him to fight Spitz.</p>

<p>What is the significance of these lines? What do they reveal about Buck?</p> <p>10. Reread the following lines from the text:</p> <p>But Buck possessed a quality that made for greatness--imagination. He fought by instinct, but he could fight by head as well he rushed, as though attempting the old shoulder trick, but at the last instant swept low to the snow and in. His teeth closed on Spitz's left fore leg. There was a crunch of breaking bone, and the white dog faced him on three legs. Thrice he tried to knock him over, then repeated the trick and broke the right fore leg.</p> <p>What is the significance of these lines? What do they reveal about Buck?</p>	<p>These lines are significant because the author suggests that it is not only Buck's awakened instincts <u>but also</u> his ability to reason and think that enable him to defeat Spitz. The text states that Buck was made for greatness because of his "imagination." While he fought by instinct, he also was able to "fight by head as well he rushed." In his fight with Spitz, Buck tricks Spitz into thinking he will attack him from the shoulder, but then at the last moment sweeps in and bites Spitz on the leg. This injures Spitz, and eventually it is this same trick that pushes Spitz down so that Buck can prevail.</p> <p>By including these lines in the text, the author shows that Buck uses instinct and his reasoning to prevail in the wild, making him superior to other dogs.</p>
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