

White Fang

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Chapter 4

4 The Camp

The men and their dogs went a long way down the little river, and Kiche and White Fang followed. At last they arrived at the big Mackenzie River. Here they stopped, and began putting up their tepees. White Fang watched. Soon around him were great tall tepees. He could not see the mountains or the river any more. He could only see tepees.

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White Fang was frightened of the tepees at first. But he watched women and children going in and out of them. He saw other dogs trying to get into them, too. And his fear quickly disappeared.

Kiche was tied up at the camp once more. At first White Fang stayed by her side, but after a while he went to look around. Soon a puppy came towards him. The young dog did not seem dangerous and White Fang wanted to be friendly. But the puppy, whose name was Lip-lip, was not friendly. He liked frightening other puppies so he showed his teeth when he saw White Fang. They walked around each other, growling.

Then suddenly, Lip-lip jumped forward and bit White Fang's shoulder. White Fang cried out in pain. He tried to bite back at Lip-lip. But Lip-lip had fought many fights. He bit White Fang again and again. At last, White Fang ran crying back to his mother.

Kiche licked White Fang's cuts. She wanted him to stay with her. But he was too interested in everything around him. So a few minutes later he went away again. This time he saw Gray Beaver doing something with sticks. Women and children were bringing more sticks to the Indian. White Fang went closer and watched. Suddenly he saw a color like the sun in the sticks. White Fang knew nothing about fire. He moved forwards towards it. He touched it with his nose and put his tongue into it.

For a moment he could not move. Then he ran back, crying out in pain. It was the worst hurt he had ever known. He tried to lick his nose, but his tongue was burnt, too. He cried and cried. But Gray Beaver and the other animals laughed. And the more White Fang cried, the more they laughed at him.

Suddenly White Fang did not want them to laugh at him

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anymore. Their laughter was hurting him as much as the fire. He turned and ran back to Kiche.

That night, White Fang lay awake by his mother's side. His nose and tongue were hurting, but he was worried about something else. He wanted to be in his old home. He wanted the quiet of the river and the little cave. Here, the dogs were always fighting and the man-animals were always moving around. It was too noisy. White Fang wanted his old home in the riverbank.

In his first days at the camp, White Fang ran around exploring. He was learning more and more about the man-animals. He was learning how powerful they were. Like his mother, Kiche, White Fang was beginning to do what they wanted. When they walked towards him, he moved out of their way. When they called him, he came. When they told him to go, he ran away quickly. He knew that he had to please the man-animals. When he did not please them, they hit him.

White Fang learned quickly about life in the camp. He learned that the women were kinder than the men. He learned that the children liked to throw stones at the dogs.

Lip-lip made White Fang's life in the camp difficult. Every time White Fang left his mother's side, Lip-lip followed him. And as soon as there were no man-animals near, Lip-lip started a fight. Lip-lip won the fight every time, so he enjoyed it very much.

But although White Fang hated the fights with Lip-lip, he was not frightened. He was already a fierce little cub, but he became even fiercer. White Fang could not play with the other puppies in the camp because of Lip-lip. As soon as White Fang came near the puppies, Lip-lip fought with him. So White Fang grew up quickly. He could not play,

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so he became clever instead. He learned to find meat and fish in the camp. He watched everything and listened to everything. And he learned to stay away from Lip-lip.

At last, one day, Gray Beaver untied Kiche. White Fang was very excited. He went happily with her around the camp. And because he was with his mother, Lip-lip stayed away from him.

Later that day, Kiche and White Fang went close to the woods by the camp. Kiche stopped as they got closer, but White Fang went on. He wanted his mother to come with him. He ran back to her and licked her face. Then he ran on again. But she did not move. She could hear the call of the Wild too. But she could also hear a louder call—the call of man. After a while, Kiche turned and walked slowly back towards the camp.

White Fang sat down by a tree and cried quietly. He could smell the pine trees, and he was remembering his life in the Wild. But he was still a puppy. The call of his mother was stronger than the call of the Wild. So after a moment, he got up and walked slowly after her.

In the Wild, an animal never has a long time with its mother. But for White Fang, the men made the time even shorter. Gray Beaver sold Kiche to another man, who was going away up the River Mackenzie. When the man put Kiche into his canoe, White Fang tried to follow her. The man pushed him away, and set off up the river. But White Fang jumped into the water and swam after them. He could hear Gray Beaver shouting at him to come back.

Then Gray Beaver got into his canoe, and went after White Fang. He pulled the cub out of the water, and hit him hard, again and again. White Fang cried out in pain. Even when Gray Beaver stopped hitting him, White Fang went on crying. The man threw him down into the bottom of the

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canoe, and kicked him. Suddenly White Fang bit hard into Gray Beaver's foot.

This time Gray Beaver hit White Fang even harder than before. White Fang thought it was bad the first time. But this time, it was terrible. When Gray Beaver threw him down in the boat again, his little body hurt all over. And when Gray Beaver kicked him again, White Fang did not bite. He knew now that he must never bite a man-animal.

When the boat arrived back at the riverbank, Gray Beaver threw White Fang onto the grass. The cub pulled himself up, shaking and crying. Lip-lip was standing on the river bank, watching. He jumped onto White Fang, biting into him with his teeth. But Gray Beaver kicked Lip-lip away. When their animals did something wrong, the man-animals hurt them. But they did not let other animals hurt them too.

That night, when everything was quiet, White Fang remembered his mother. He cried so loudly that he woke up Gray Beaver. And Gray Beaver hit him again. After that, he only cried quietly when the man-animals were near. But sometimes, he went off to the edge of the woods by himself. And then he cried out loud.

He wanted to run away back into the Wild. But he hoped his mother would come back to the camp. So he had to wait for her. And he was not unhappy. He was learning how to get along with Gray Beaver. He learned to do exactly what Gray Beaver told him. And then he did not get hurt. Sometimes Gray Beaver even threw White Fang a piece of meat. That made him feel happy. Gray Beaver never spoke kindly to White Fang. He never stroked his back. But White Fang was starting to like the man-animal. Although he did not know it, he was also starting to like camp life.

1. Read Chapter 4 and answer the questions.

1. What problems did White Fang have in the camp at first?

2. What problem did White Fang have with the fire?

3. Why could White Fang not play with the other puppies?

4. Why did Kiche not want to go back to the wild with White Fang?

5. Why did Kiche have to go away?

6. What happened when White Fang tried to follow Kiche?

7. What did man-animals do to them all the time. What did wolves have to do?