

# BURNING DAYLIGHT

BY JACK LONDON

AUTHOR OF "THE CALL OF THE WILD," "WHITE FANG," "MARTIN EDEN," ETC.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY DEARBORN MELVILLE

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## SYNOPSIS.

**CHAPTER I.**—Eliam Harnish, known as "Burning Daylight," celebrates his 30th birthday with a friendly crowd of miners at the Circle City Hotel. He is a general favorite, a hero and a pioneer in the new gold fields. The dance leads to heavy gambling in which over \$100,000 is staked. Harnish loses his money and his mine but wins the main contract of the district.

**CHAPTER II.**—Burning Daylight starts on his trip to deliver the mail with dogs and saddle. He tells his friends that the big Yukon gold strike will soon be on and he intends to be in it at the start. With Indian attendants and dogs he slips over the bank and down the frozen Yukon and in the gray light is gone.

**CHAPTER III.**—Harnish makes a sensationally rapid run across country with the mail, appears at the Tivoli and there is another characteristic celebration. He has made a record against cold and exhaustion and is now ready to join his friends in a dash to the new gold fields.

**CHAPTER IV.**—Harnish decides where the gold will be found in the up-river district and buys two tons of flour, which he declares will be worth its weight in gold before the season is over.

**CHAPTER V.**—When Daylight arrives with his heavy outfit of flour he finds the big flat desolate. A comrade discovers gold and Harnish reaps a rich harvest. He goes to Dawson, begins investing in corner lots and staking other mines and becomes the most prominent figure in the Klondike.

**CHAPTER VI.**—Harnish makes fortune after fortune. One lucky investment enables him to defeat a great combination of capitalists in a vast mining deal. He determines to return to civilization and give a farewell celebration to his friends that is remembered as a kind of blaze of glory.

**CHAPTER VII.**—The papers are full of "The King of the Klondike," and Daylight is feted by the money magnates of the country. They take him into a big copper deal and the Alaskan pioneer spins himself and the bewildering complications of high finance.

**CHAPTER VIII.**—Daylight is lured by the moneyed men and finds that he has been led to invest his eleven millions in a manipulated scheme. He goes to meet his distant business partners at their offices in New York City.

**CHAPTER IX.**—Confronting his partners with a revolver in characteristic frontier style, he threatens to kill them if his money is not returned. They are cowed into submission, return their stockings and Harnish goes back to San Francisco with his unimpoverished fortune.

**CHAPTER X.**—Daylight meets his fate in Dede Mason, a pretty stenographer with a cupped brother, whom she cares for. Harnish is much attracted towards her and interested in her family affairs.

## CHAPTER X.

Back in San Francisco, Daylight quickly added to his reputation. In ways it was not an enviable reputation. Men were afraid of him. He became known as a fighter, a fiend, a tiger. His play was a ripping and amazing one, and no one knew where or how his next blow would fall. The element of surprise was large. He balked on the unexpected, and, fresh from the wild North, his mind not operating in stereotyped channels, he was able in unusual degree to devise new tricks and stratagems. And once he won the advantage, he pressed it remorselessly. "As relentless as a Red Indian," was said of him, and it was said truly.

He was a free lance, and had no friendly business associations. Such alliances as were formed from time to time were purely affairs of expediency, and he regarded his allies as men who would give him the double-cross or ruin him if a profitable chance presented. In spite of this point of view, he was faithful to his allies. But he was faithful just as long as they were and no longer. The treason had to come from them, and then it was "Ware Daylight."

The business men and financiers of the Pacific coast never forgot the lesson of Charles Klinkner and the California & Altamont Trust Company. Klinkner was the president. In partnership with Daylight, the pair raided the San Jose Interurban. The powerful Lake Power & Electric Lighting corporation came to the rescue, and Klinkner, seeing what he thought was the opportunity, went over to the enemy in the thick of the pitched battle. Daylight lost three millions before he was done with it, and before he was done with it he saw the California & Altamont Trust Company hopelessly wrecked, and Charles Klinkner a suicide in a felon's cell.

So it was that Daylight became a successful financier. He did not go in for swindling the workers. Not only did he not strike the heart for it, but it did not strike him as a sporting proposition. The workers were so easy, so stupid. It was more like slaughtering fat, hand-reared pheasants on the English preserves he had read about. The sport, to him, was in way-laying the successful robbers and taking their spoils from them. The grim Yukon life had failed to make Daylight hard. It required civilization to produce this result. In the fierce, savage game he now played, his habitual geniality imperceptibly slipped away from him, as did his lazy Western drawl.

He still had recrudescences of geniality, but they were largely periodical and forced, and they were usually due to the cocktails he took prior to mealtime. In the North he had drunk deeply and at irregular intervals; but now his drinks became systematic

joy fit. That's what counts, I suppose; and there's no accounting for taste." Despite his own superior point of view, he had an idea that she knew a lot, and he experienced a fleeting feeling like that of a barbarian face to face with the evidence of some tremendous culture. To Daylight culture was a worthless thing, and yet, somehow, he was vaguely troubled by a sense that there was more in culture than he imagined.

Again, on her desk, in passing, he noticed a book with which he was familiar. This time he did not stop, for he had recognized the cover. It was a magazine correspondent's book on the Klondike, and he knew that he and his photograph figured in it, and he knew, also, of a certain sensational chapter concerned with a woman's



The Cocktails Served as an Inhibition.

suicide, and with one "Too Much Daylight." After that he did not talk with her again about books. He imagined that erroneous conclusions she had drawn from that particular chapter, and it stung him the more in that they were undeserved. He pumped Morrison, the clerk, who had first to vent his personal grievance against Miss Mason before he could tell what little he knew of her.

"She comes from Siskiyou County. She's very nice to work with in the office, of course, but she's rather stuck on herself—exclusive, you know." "How do you make that out?" Daylight queried.

"Well, she thinks too much of herself to associate with those she works with, in the office here, for instance. She won't have anything to do with a fellow, you see. I've asked her out repeatedly, to the theater and the chutes and such things. But nothing doing. Says she likes plenty of sleep, and can't stay up late, and has to go all the way to Berkeley—that's where she lives. But that's all hot air. She's running with the University boys, that's what she's doing. She needs lots of sleep, and can't go to the theater with me, but she can dance all hours with them—I've heard it pretty straight that she goes to all their hops and such things. Rather stylish and high-toned for a stenographer, I'd say. And she keeps a horse, too. She rides astride all over those hills out there. I saw her one Sunday myself. Oh, she's a high-flyer, and I wonder how she does it. Sixty-five a month don't go far. Then she has a sick brother, too."

"Live with her people?" Daylight asked.

"No; hasn't got any. They were well to do, I've heard. They must have been, or that brother or hers couldn't have gone to the University of California. Her father had a big cattle-ranch, but he got too fooling with mines or something, and went broke before he died. Her mother died long before that. Her brother must cost a lot of money. He was a husky one, played football, was great on hunting and being out in the mountains and such things. He got his accident breaking horses, and then rheumatism or something got into him. One leg is shorter than the other, and withered up some. He has to walk on crutches. I saw her out with him once—crossing the ferry. The doctors have been experimenting on him for years, and he's in the French Hospital now, I think."

All of which side-lights on Miss Mason went to increase Daylight's interest in her. Yet, much as he desired, he failed to get acquainted with her. He had thoughts of asking her to luncheon, but his was the innate chivalry of the frontiersman, and the thoughts never came to anything. He knew a self-respecting, square-dealing man was not supposed to take his stenographer to luncheon. Such things did happen, he knew, for he heard the chaffing gossip of the club; but he did not think much of such men and felt sorry for the girls.

## CHAPTER XI.

Daylight was in the thick of his spectacular and intensely bitter fight with the Coastwise Steam Navigation Company, and the Hawaiian, Nicaraguan, and Pacific-Mexican Steamship Company. He stirred up a bigger muss than he had anticipated, and even he was astounded at the wide ramifications of the struggle and at the unexpected and incongruous interests that were drawn into it. Every newspaper in San Francisco turned upon him. It was true, one or two of them had first intimated that they were open to subsidization, but Daylight's judgment was that the situation did not warrant such expenditure. Up to this time the press had been amusingly tolerant and good-naturedly sensational about him, but now he was to learn what virulent scurrilousness

an antagonized press was capable of. Every episode of his life was resurrected to serve as foundations for malicious fabrications. Daylight was frankly amazed at the new interpretation put upon all that he had accomplished and the deeds he had done. From an Alaskan hero he was metamorphosed into an Alaskan bully, liar, desperado, and all-around "bad man." The whole affair sank to the deeper depths of rancor and savagery. The poor woman who had killed herself was dragged out of her grave and paraded on thousands of reams of paper as a martyr and a victim to Daylight's ferocious brutality.

He was like a big bear raiding a bee-hive, and, regardless of the stings he obstinately persisted in pawing for the honey. He gritted his teeth and struck back. Beginning with a raid on two steamship companies, it developed into a pitched battle with a city, state and continental coast line. Allied with him, on a splendid salary, with princely pickings thrown in, was a lawyer, Larry Hogan, a young Irishman with a reputation to make, and whose peculiar genius had been unrecognized until Daylight had picked up with him. It was Hogan who guided Daylight through the intricacies of modern politics, labor organization, and commercial and corporation law. It was Hogan, prolific of resource and suggestion, who opened Daylight's eyes to undreamed-of possibilities in twentieth-century warfare; and it was Daylight, rejecting, accepting, and elaborating, who planned the campaigns and prosecuted them. With the Pacific coast, from Puget Sound to Panama, buzzing and humming, and with San Francisco furiously about his ears, the two big steamship companies had all the appearance of winning. It looked as if Burning Daylight was being beaten slowly to his knees. And then he struck—at the steamship companies, at San Francisco, at the whole Pacific coast.

It was not much of a blow at first. A Christian Endeavor convention was being held in San Francisco, a row was started by Express Drivers' Union No. 927 over the handling of a small heap of baggage at Ferry Building. A few heads were broken, a score of arrests made, and the baggage was delivered. No one would have guessed that behind this petty wrangle was the fine Irish hand of Hogan, made potent by the Klondike gold of Burning Daylight. It was an insignificant affair at best—or so it seemed. But the Teamsters' Union took up the quarrel, backed by the whole Water Front Federation. Step by step, the strike became involved. A refusal of cooks and waiters to serve scab teamsters or teamsters' employers brought out the cooks and waiters. The butchers and meat cutters refused to handle meat destined for unfair restaurants. The combined Employers' Associations put up a solid front, and found facing them the 40,000 organized laborers of San Francisco. The restaurant bakers and the bakery wagon drivers struck, followed by the milkers, milk drivers and chicken pickers. The building trades asserted its position in unambiguous terms, and all San Francisco was in turmoil.

But still, it was only San Francisco. Hogan's intrigues were masterly, and Daylight's campaign steadily developed. The powerful fighting organi-



"It Sure Beats Country Places and Bungalows at Menlo Park," He Commenced Aloud.

zation known as the Pacific Slope Seaman's Union refused to work vessels the cargoes of which were to be handled by scab longshoremen and freight handlers. The union presented its ultimatum, and then called a strike. This had been Daylight's objective all the time. Every incoming coastwise vessel was boarded by the union officials and its crew sent ashore. And with the seamen went the firemen, the engineers and the sea-cooks and waiters. Daily the number of idle steamers increased. It was impossible to get scab crews, for the men of the Seaman's Union were fighters trained in the hard school of the sea, and when they went out it meant blood and death to scabs. This phase of the strike spread up and down the entire Pacific coast, until all the ports were filled with idle ships, and sea transportation was at a standstill. The days and weeks dragged out, and the strike held. The Coastwise Steam Navigation Company and the Hawaiian, Nicaraguan, and Pacific-Mexican Steamship Company were tied up completely. The expenses of combating the strike were tremendous, and they were earning nothing, while daily the situation went from bad to worse, until "peace at any price" became the cry. And still there was no peace, until Daylight and his allies played out their hand, raked in the winnings, and

allowed a goodly portion of a continent to resume business.

Daylight's coming to civilization had not improved him. True, he wore better clothes, had learned slightly better manners, and spoke better English. But he had hardened, and at the expense of his old-time, whole-souled geniality. Even his human sympathies were descending. Playing a lone hand, contemptuous of most of the men with whom he played, lacking in sympathy or understanding of them, and certainly independent of them, he found little in common with those to be encountered, say at the Alta-Pacific. In point of fact, when the battle with the steamship companies was at its height and his raid was inflicting incalculable damage on all business interests, he had been asked to resign from the Alta-Pacific. The idea had been rather to his liking, and he had found new quarters in clubs like the Riverside, organized and practically maintained by the city bosses.

One week-end, feeling heavy and depressed and tired of the city and its ways, he obeyed the impulse of a whim that was later to play an important part in his life. The desire to get out of the city for a whiff of country air and for a change of scene was the cause. Yet, to himself, he made the excuse of going to Glen Ellen for the purpose of inspecting a brickyard which Holdsworthy had sold him. He spent the night in the little country hotel, and on Sunday morning, astride a saddle horse rented from the Glen Ellen butcher, rode out of the village. The brickyard was close at hand on the flat beside the Sonoma Creek.

Resolving to have his fun first, and to look over the brickyard afterward, he rode up the hill, prospecting for a way across country to get to the knolls. He left the country road at the first gate he came to and cantered through a hayfield. The grain was waist-high on either side the wagon road, and he sniffed the warm aroma of it with delighted nostrils. At the base of the knolls he encountered a tumble-down stake-and-rider fence.

He tethered the horse and wandered on foot among the knolls. Their tops were crowned with century-old spruce trees, and their sides clothed with oaks and madroños and native holly. But to the perfect redwoods belonged the small but deep canyon that threaded its way among the knolls. Here he found no passage out for his horse, and leading the animal, he forced his way up the hillside. On the crest he came through an amazing thicket of velvet-trunked young madroños, and emerged on an open hillside that led down into a tiny valley. The sunshine was at first dazzling in its brightness, and he paused and rested, for he was panting from the exertion. Not of old had he known shortness of breath such as this, and muscles that so easily tired at a stiff climb. A tiny stream ran down the tiny valley through a tiny meadow that was carpeted knee-high with grass and blue and white nemophila.

Crossing the stream, Daylight followed a faint cattle trail over a low, rocky hill and through a wine-wooded forest of manzanita, and emerged upon another tiny valley, down which filtered another spring-fed, meadow-bordered streamlet.

"It sure beats country places and bungalows at Menlo Park," he commenced aloud; "and if ever I get the hankering for country life, it's me for this every time."

An old wood-road led him to a clearing, where a dozen acres of grapes grew on wine-red soil. A cow-path, more trees and thickets, and he dropped down a hillside to the southeast exposure. Here, poised above a big forested canyon, and looking out upon Sonoma Valley, was a small farmhouse. With its barn and outhouses it snuggled into a nook in the hillside, which protected it from the west and north. It was the erosion from this hillside, he judged, that had formed the little level stretch of vegetable garden. The soil was fat and black, and there was water in plenty, for he saw several faucets running wide open. Forgotten was the brickyard. Nobody was at home, but Daylight dismounted and ranged the vegetable garden, eating strawberries and green peas, inspecting the old adobe barn and rusty plow and harrow, and rolling and smoking cigarettes while he watched the antics of several broods of young chicks and the mother hens.

Nothing could satisfy his holiday spirit now but the ascent of Sonoma Mountain. And here on the crest, three hours afterward, he emerged, tired and sweaty, garments torn and face and hands scratched, but with sparkling eyes and an unwonted zestfulness of expression. He felt the illicit pleasure of a schoolboy playing truant. The big gaming table of San Francisco seemed very far away. But there was more than illicit pleasure in his mood. It was as though he were going through a sort of cleansing bath. No room here for all the sordidness, meanness and viciousness that filled the dirty pool of city existence. He was loath to depart, and it was not for an hour that he was able to tear himself away and take the descent of the mountain. Working out a new route just for the fun of it, late afternoon was upon him when he arrived back at the wooded knolls.

Daylight cast about for a trail, and found one leading down the side opposite to his ascent. Circling the base of the knoll, he picked up with his horse and rode on to the farmhouse. Smoke was rising from the chimney, and he was quickly in conversation with a nervous, slender young man, who, he learned, was only a tenant on the ranch. How large was it? A matter of one hundred and eighty acres, though it seemed much larger. This was because it was so irregularly shaped. Yes, it included the clay-pit and all the knolls, and its

boundary that ran along the big canyon was over a mile long. Oh, yes, he and his wife managed to scratch



A Sudden Envy of This Young Fellow Came Over Daylight.

a living without working too hard. They didn't have to pay much rent, Hillard, the owner, depended on the income from the clay-pit. Hillard was well off and had big ranches and vineyards down on the flat of the valley. The brickyard paid ten cents a outside yard for the clay. As for the rest of the ranch, the land was good in patches, where it was cleared, like the vegetable garden and the vineyard, but the rest of it was too much up-and-down. "You're not a farmer," Daylight said.

The young man laughed and shook his head.

"No; I'm a telegraph operator but the wife and I decided to take a two-years' vacation, and . . . here we are. But the time's about up. I'm going back into the office this fall after I get the grapes off."

As Daylight listened, there came to him a sudden envy of this young fellow living right in the midst of all this which Daylight had traveled through the last few hours.

"What in thunder are you going back to the telegraph office for?" he demanded.

The young man smiled with a certain wistfulness.

"Because we can't get ahead here . . ." (he hesitated an instant), "and because there are added expenses coming. The rent, small as it is, counts; and besides, I'm not strong enough to effectually farm the place. If I owned it, or if I were a real husky like you, I'd act nothing better. Nor would the wife." Again the wistful smile hovered on his face. "You see, we're country born, and after bucking with cities for a few years, we kind of feel we like the country best. We've planned to get ahead, though, and then some day we'll buy a patch of land and stay with it."

Daylight could not persuade himself to keep to the traveled roads that day, and another cut across country to Glen Ellen brought him upon a canyon that so blocked his way that he was glad to follow a friendly cow-path. This led him to a small frame cabin. The doors and windows were open, and a cat was nursing a litter of kittens in the doorway, but no one seemed at home. He descended the trail that evidently crossed the canyon. Part way down, he met an old man coming up through the sunset. In his hand he carried a pail of foamy milk. He wore no hat, and in his face, framed with snow-white hair and beard, was the ruddy glow and content of the passing summer day. Daylight thought that he had never seen so contented looking a being.

"How old are you, daddy?" he queried.

"Eighty-four," was the reply. "Yes, sirree, eighty-four, and spryer than most."

"You must a' taken good care of yourself," Daylight suggested.

"I don't know about that. I ain't loafed none. I walked across the plains with an ox team and fit Indians in '61, and I was a family man with seven youngsters. I reckon I was as old then as you are now, or pretty nigh on to it."

"Don't you find it lonely here?"

The old man shifted the pail of milk and reflected.

"That all depends," he said oracularly. "I ain't never been lonely except when the old wife died. Some fellers are lonely in a crowd, and I'm one of them. That's the only time I'm lonely, is when I go to Frisco. But I don't go no more, thank you 'most to death. This is good enough for me. I've been right here in this valley since '54—one of the first settlers after the Spaniards."

The old man chuckled, and Daylight rode on, singularly at peace with himself and all the world. It seemed that the old contentment of trail and camp he had known on the Yukon had come back to him. He could not shake from his eyes the picture of the old pioneer coming up the trail through the sunset light. He was certainly going some for eighty-four. The thought of following his example entered Daylight's mind, but the big game of San Francisco vetoed the idea.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

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