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THE STAR ROVER

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**JACK LONDON
THE STAR
ROVER**

Introduced by
**T.C. CAMPBELL
& HUGH COLLINS**

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Introduction

HUGH COLLINS

A JAIL WARDER once called me an animal. I had been battered twice a day for five days solid. I was kept in a strait jacket after the beatings. I literally wanted to die, but those deepest instincts of the organism known as the human body prevailed. I lived in a rat-littered underground dungeon for more than a year. My skin became an infestation of insects. We lived – dined *with* each other – down there, in that black hole in the ground. Animals are incorruptible. You can beat a dog into submission, but the human brain is much more complex: some may obey, some simply die – and yet, some remain unable to submit themselves, they become durable, resisting all forms of punishment.

While living in the strait jacket I stopped resisting. The accumulated experiences of a lifetime became an alternative world filled with memories – my past. I lived within the sanction of memory, exploring each moment, as each motion revealed previous lives, from the past. I felt the experience of travelling, the brightness of daylight, sensations one might associate with observation – but without an actual observer.

The death of the will to resist set something free to roam effortlessly throughout these fields filled with the familiarity of smells, sounds, and images from the boundless past which seemed beyond normal visceral body levels, far beyond the dungeon, or those tight threads of the strait jacket.

The distinct banging of a steel door crashing open would bring me hurtling back from limbo, back to the dungeon, to