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Nota di contenuto	Front matter -- Contents -- Acknowledgments -- Introduction -- Selected Bibliography -- A Note on the Text -- The Road -- Explanatory Notes -- About the Editor
Sommario/riassunto	In 1894, an eighteen-year-old Jack London quit his job shoveling coal, hopped a freight train, and left California on the first leg of a ten thousand-mile odyssey. His adventure was an exaggerated version of the unemployed migrations made by millions of boys, men, and a few women during the original "great depression of the 1890's. By taking to the road, young wayfarers like London forged a vast hobo subculture that was both a product of the new urban industrial order and a challenge to it. As London's experience suggests, this hobo world was born of equal parts desperation and fascination. "I went on 'The Road,'" he writes, "because I couldn't keep away from it . . . Because I was so made that I couldn't work all my life on 'one same shift'; because-well, just because it was easier to than not to." The best stories that London

told about his hoboing days can be found in *The Road*, a collection of nine essays with accompanying illustrations, most of which originally appeared in *Cosmopolitan* magazine between 1907 and 1908. His virile persona spoke to white middle-class readers who vicariously escaped their desk-bound lives and followed London down the hobo trail. The zest and humor of his tales, as Todd DePastino explains in his lucid introduction, often obscure their depth and complexity. *The Road* is as much a commentary on London's disillusionment with wealth, celebrity, and the literary marketplace as it is a picaresque memoir of his youth.
