

1d- We've got to protect this frontier, Larry Mc Murtry, *Lonesome Dove*, 1985

The scene takes place in 1880. While on their way to Montana where they want to set up a ranch, Augustus McCrae and Woodrow Call meet soldiers.

“I’m Captain Weaver and this is Dixon, our scout,” the captain said. “Where the hell do you men think you’re taking these cattle?”

“We thought we were headed for Montana,” Augustus said lightly. “Where are we, Illinois?” Call was irritated with Gus. He would make a joke.

5 “No, but you’ll wish you were if Red Cloud finds you,” Captain Weaver said. “You’re in the middle of an Indian war, that’s where you are.”

“Why in hell would anybody think they wanted to take cattle to Montana?” Dixon, the scout, said. [...]

“We’ve heard there are wonderful pastures in Montana,” Call said. [...]

“There may be, but you cowpokes won’t live to see them,” Dixon said.

10 “Oh, well,” Augustus said, “we wasn’t always cowpokes. We put in some twenty years fighting Comanches in the state of Texas. Don’t these Indians up here fall off their horses like other Indians when you put a bullet or two in them?”

“Some do and some just keep coming,” Captain Weaver said. [...] “Those Indians killed a buffalo hunter and a woman, two days ago. Three weeks ago they wiped out a family southeast of here. If

15 you see them you’ll wish you’d kept your damn beeves in Texas.”

“Let’s go,” Call said, abruptly turning his horse.

“We need horses,” Captain Weaver said. “Ours are about ridden down.”

“Ain’t that what I said that you thought was so impertinent?” Augustus remarked.

20 “I see you’ve got extras,” Weaver said. “We’ll take them. There’s a man who sells horses west of Ogallala. You can buy some there and send the army a bill.”

“No, thanks,” Call said. “We like the ones we’ve got.”

“I wasn’t asking,” Weaver said. “I’m requisitioning your horses.”

25 Augustus laughed. Call didn’t. He saw that the man was serious.

“We need ‘em,” Dixon said. “We’ve got to protect this frontier.”

Augustus laughed again. “Who have you protected lately?” He asked. “All you’ve told

30 us about are people you didn’t protect.”

“I’m tired of talking,” Weaver said. “Go get the horses, Jim. Take a couple of men and pick out good ones.”

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