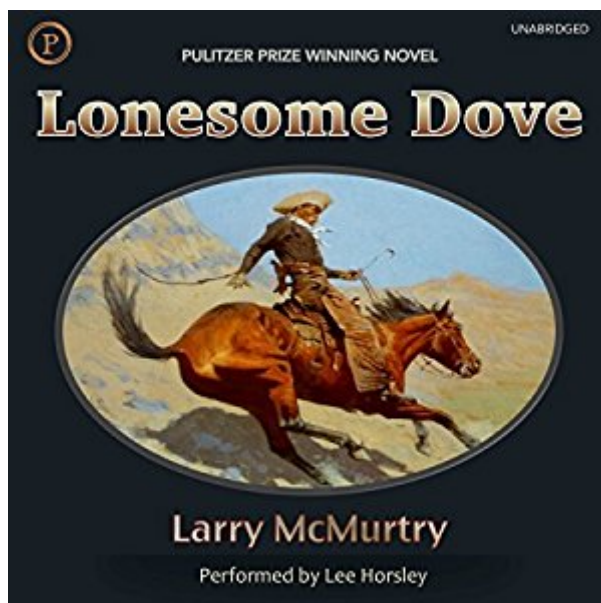


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Lonesome Dove



Synopsis

A love story, an adventure, and an epic of the frontier, Larry McMurtry's Pulitzer Prize-winning classic *Lonesome Dove*, the third book in the *Lonesome Dove* tetralogy, is the grandest novel ever written about the last, defiant wilderness of America. Journey to the dusty little Texas town of Lonesome Dove and meet an unforgettable assortment of heroes and outlaws, whores and ladies, Indians and settlers. Richly authentic, beautifully written, and always dramatic, *Lonesome Dove* is a book to make us laugh, weep, dream, and remember. --This text refers to the Turtleback edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Until I read this book, I generally avoided novels. Not so much any more. This is a beautifully written book to which I enthusiastically turned whenever the chance occurred. It held me throughout, and when I was finished, I found myself disappointed that I could no longer look forward to more reading. Kind of like the feeling when you've eaten that last piece of cake, and wish there was more. I am reluctant to offer any criticism, lest I discourage a potential reader from enjoying the experience., so let me offer this thought as a "comment" which may help your reading. There are a lot of characters, some of whom appear and then leave the plot line, others of whom keep reappearing. I was occasionally reminded of the difficulties in reading a Russian novel, and, in retrospect, wished I had prepared a list of the characters which might have made it easier to keep track of, and better understand the meaning of, their comings and goings. And the large cast in a story about a long cattle drive, from Texas to Montana, requires quite a few unlikely coincidences. But thees are well done, and apparent to the reader only in revisiting the story--as I read on, it all

made lots of sense. If I sound over-enthused, I will note that it did receive a Pulitzer Prize.

Deservedly

It took me a few chapters to settle into *Lonesome Dove* by Larry McMurtry and get used to the dialogue. I knew it was a Pulitzer Prize winning novel and could see right away that the prose was exemplary. It's very lengthy at 960 pages and yet, I didn't feel it was a long read. The story itself is a simple one about a group of cowboys, headed by two former Texas Rangers, on a 3000 mile cattle drive from Texas to Montana. But it isn't just a story about the expected trials and travails encountered along the way, *Lonesome Dove* is about the complicated relationships between the two primary, and the many secondary, characters. The tale unravels at a very steady pace which allows the reader time to absorb all the exquisite details of the landscape, towns and life on the Frontier and the riveting dramatic highs and lows. The large cast of characters, some who flow in and out of the narrative, are brilliantly portrayed. With their individual strengths, frailties and peculiarities so well defined, it's easy to keep track of them all. The author has an uncanny knack of writing distinct dialogue, with humour, sarcasm, hope, fear, resentment, anger, regret, longing and love, all equally well expressed. McMurtry lures us into complacency as he sets up the story, introduces the characters and the story begins to unfold. When the drama arrives, it's hard-hitting and gut-wrenching, Death is always near. The cowboys' skills, courage to overcome their fears and endurance of the weather and endless days and nights in the saddle on the cattle drive is striking. The author has the amazing talent of creating heart rending insights into the mental states of his characters. We see the petty jealousies between the men and how irritated with and intolerant of each other they become as their enforced time together on the trail lengthens. The story centers on the unspoken emotions and thoughts of the characters, Clara being the exception. She's used to speaking her mind and likes an argument as much as Gus does. The excessive anxiety and runaway thoughts which result in obsessiveness debunks the myth of the strong silent cowboy. Our cowboys are fragile and silent for the most part. The few female figures are complex, independent and damaged. I was surprised by the depth of their bitterness and how adversarial they were towards the males. Most of the men come off badly, Gus less so because he genuinely knows and likes women. As my favourite figure, Gus McRae will be a character I remember for a long time. I love his wit, honesty, wisdom and audacity and that he's as flawed a man as there ever was. I found myself disappearing into McMurtry's world and often replayed scenes as I fell asleep. *Lonesome Dove* will be one epic of the Old West that stays with me for quite a while.

Among my favorite novels, I have read Lonesome Dove at least 5 times over the course of the past 20 years. It is a remarkable work. When it first came out I had remember seeing it on shelves and based on the cover artwork, dismissing it as a Louis L'Amour type pulp novel. One of many mistakes made at that age. It was first recommended to me by a friend I met while serving in the Marines. My friend was and still is- a soulful, thinking fellow for whom I had the deepest respect. When I asked him "What is it about?", his response was unexpected. He did not say "Texas Rangers" or "a cattle drive". He said "old friends", and it put a hook in me that those other two descriptions wouldn't have. It is indeed about two old friends, "two of the most famous Texas Rangers that ever lived" in the words of one of its many entertaining characters, but I agree with my buddy's assessment. It is set in a cattle drive, but it is about the deep bonds of two old friends, that are very different people, but good friends nonetheless. My buddy and I have often compared our own friendship to that of Gus and WF Call. Of course, he gets to be Gus and admittedly, I am much more like Woodrow Call than Augustus McRae. Books to me are friends. And Lonesome Dove is one of my oldest friends that I return to again and again. Along with Les Miserables, and Gates of Fire, just to give you an idea what I consider to be a fine novel worthy of the title "Old Friend". I highly recommend Lonesome Dove to you who have not read it. And for those that have already as well.

I first read this book about 30 years. I love it so much that this is my third copy, the first two having fallen apart from consistent thumbing. It's a great adventure story and a great friendship story. I love both the novel and TV miniseries - if you've never been acquainted with either, by all means read the book first. I guess Larry McMurtry's ego is out of control and he thinks that everyone in the world has read or seen his work and knows everything about it. He wrote about a two-page introduction for this edition and (1) it interprets some symbolism that maybe should be better left to the readers; and, (2) it contains a really stupid spoiler that could render a good piece of the book useless for some readers. It's one of those things you wonder how it got past an editor, but maybe McMurtry's gotten too big to be edited.

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