

**Ian Tyson****"The Banks Of The Musselshell"**

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The Banks of the Musselshell

I stare up every evenin'  
At the distant Northern Star  
It leads us ever Northward  
Tells us that we are  
Lost alone in the Yellowstone  
In a land unknown to me  
Ten thousand miles from loved ones  
And our homes across the sea

We travel through this empty land  
The benches are all strewn  
With Bison bones that shine ghost white  
With the risin' of the moon  
And the gray wolf howls an answer  
As I try to sing on guard  
Indentured to these Texans  
In a land so wild and hard

When I hired on to Bill DuCharme  
In the heat of the Texas sun  
I was unaware of his darker side  
His quickness with a gun  
But I made a solemn promise  
To ride with him through hell  
And deliver this herd to the ends of the earth  
Or the mouth of the Musselshell

And I just turned 'bout sixteen  
When we hit that first cow town  
I drank my first strong liquor  
And the women whirled me round  
But of all the barroom angels  
And their soft forbidden charms  
I was stuck on blue-eyed Annie  
She belonged to Bill DuCharme

Chorus:

And the boy became a man  
That night in Annie's arms

Annie cried and begged me  
Beware of Bill DuCharme

We left that Texas cow town  
And we pointed that trail herd north  
But the first night when the moon was down  
I rode back to old Fort Worth  
They were closin' up the barroom  
They were rollin' up the floor  
And my heart was in my throat  
When I knocked on Annie's door

Repeat Chorus

And Bill DuCharme had one bad eye  
His face was a devilish red  
The results of a bygone prairie fire  
When he crawled back from the dead  
And every night in dreams  
I rolled in Annie's arms  
And I woke to face old Satan  
In the guise of Bill DuCharme

And each night across the campfire  
I would face that one bad eye  
Did he know that I'd betrayed him  
Had my hour come to die  
One promise he made good  
Yes, we followed him through hell  
Driven by this one-eyed Lucifer  
To the banks of the Musselshell

But now near the Yellowstone  
The snow begins to fall  
And soon this dreadful enterprise  
Will be ending for us all  
And it's then I'll need fast horses  
To fly to Annie's arms  
And stay one jump ahead of  
The guns of Bill DuCharme

Repeat Chorus twice

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