



The Corsican Brothers

Alexandre Dumas

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Alexandre Dumas weaves the compelling story of Siamese twins who are separated physically but never in spirit. When one of the brothers is murdered, the other leaves Corsica for Paris to avenge the killing. Dumas brings this thrilling tale to life with his fascinating descriptions of Italy and France and his powerful portrayal of the undying love of brother for brother. Newly designed and typeset in a modern 6-by-9-inch format by Waking Lion Press.

The Corsican Brothers Details

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From Reader Review The Corsican Brothers for online ebook

Vanessa Couchman says

Dumas père usually entertains, with his rollicking adventure stories. This time, though, I was a bit disappointed. Apparently, he rushed to visit Corsica after the publication of Prosper Mérimée's 'Colomba' and stayed in an ancestral home in Sollacaro, where he discovered some of the history and legends of Corsica. These provided the inspiration for 'Les Frères Corses'.

The premise is good: twin brothers who live apart (one in Paris, one in Corsica) are nonetheless bound together by their sibling and family ties. However, the first half, which is set in Corsica, is barely believable. The local characters are a pastiche and Dumas fails to evoke the deep and menacing resonance of Corsican history. Dorothy Carrington said that no one had managed to write a convincing novel about vendetta, and she was right.

Even so, this light read kept me turning the pages. Don't expect to get an authentic sense of Corsica from it, though.

Ana says

I don't know why I love stories about dueling so much. I guess it has something to do with the way the two parties have to fight. It's not even a "fight", it's a mind game designed to break the weakest man as soon as possible. It's endurance what the duel is about, not which of them is better.

Wonderful writing, but what could have I expected from the never aging Alexandre Dumas?

Krystal says

It's nothing too extraordinary however I did rather enjoy the dynamic between our narrator and the two brothers. There was a fast friendship with each and I love that; there's so much respect and willingness to help one another which you generally don't find without ulterior motives in the modern day. There's not a huge amount of action but there is heart, and the short story contains whispers of more fascinating, longer stories. I enjoyed letting the imagination run with this one.

The connection between the brothers I found to be quite endearing, though I felt there could have been more in detailing their relationship.

I enjoyed it-as I enjoy all I've read so far by Dumas-but it's more about character than adventure, which may deter fans of his other work.

John says

I was doing some minor research recently into people's ideas about twin telepathy, and was reminded of this book. I assumed I hadn't read it, so I hied me to Project Gutenberg to get myself a copy; I now think I *had*

read it, but so very long ago that it was a matter of dimly recalling various plot elements as they happened rather than being able to predict what might happen next.

Our narrator, who might as well be Dumas himself, is on a trip to Corsica. He takes lodgings at the home of Madame Savilia de Franchi and her son Lucien, and soon becomes involved with the doings of the family. He helps Lucien bring to a peaceful close a long-running vendetta between two families; this sequence has nothing to do with the main plot except, perhaps, to offer a different meaning to the title, because the feuding families are effectively twins of each other.

Lucien explains to the narrator that his identical twin brother Louis lives in Paris, and that he can sense that Louis is going through some sort of emotional trough. For, you see, there's an extrasensory bond between the two young men -- not telepathy, precisely; not so much thought transference as emotion transference. They also have the habit of seeing ghostly harbingers at important moments.

On return to Paris, the narrator makes the acquaintance of Louis and discovers that he is indeed going through emotional vicissitudes. He has fallen in love with the wife of a good friend who's away on business for a few months; he himself is acting with admirable restraint towards her, but now he's learned that the scoundrelly cad Chateau Renaud has been toying with her affections. The upshot is a duel between the two men, in which Louis loses his life. With astonishing speed Lucien, having been told by the spirit of his brother what has happened, arrives in Paris to demand a rematch . . .

This is an entertaining enough novella, albeit a tad long for what it has to say; the rather tedious digression about the feuding families becomes more irking the more I think about it! I've read very little Dumas, and none at all aside from this slimmish volume since my teens; I really must do something to improve this situation . . .

Perry Whitford says

Think *Corsican Brothers* and you think of swashbuckling adventure. Think Alexander Dumas and you think of swashbuckling adventure. Yet read the original and what you get is ... a ghost story.

We can all blame the Douglas Fairbanks, Jnr. film for that misperception, a movie that I now realise buckled its own swash on top of the bare bones of Dumas's idea. The separated Siamese twin brothers remain, the cutlasses and romance were picturesque additions.

What we have here is a four hundred year old feud, a supernatural family tradition and two duels. Dumas also provides a fascinating peek into the Corsican passion for Vendetta and the consequences to the region, i.e. the houses all have barricaded windows.

It's long been a belief that twins share an uncanny telepathy of feelings. The Corsican brothers empathy has a spooky explanation, which is splendidly rounded out in the finale.

I myself am a twin and faithfully report that I too experience my brother's hangovers every Saturday morning.

Zainab Ali says

I see people saying it's very short and rushed, but this is what I liked about it. I like how he describes the life in Corsica at that period. I like all those little stories about de Franchi's ancestors. It's a short story, and yet I was able to enjoy it and feel as if I were there with him, I could see the places and breathe the air, I felt as if I'd known the characters in person, all in less than 100 pages. It was a fun, little dventure with Alexandre Dumas, père.

Laura says

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Location 45:

La Corse est un département français; mais la Corse est encore bien loin d'être la France.

Location 841:

Maître Orlandi était, à ce qu'il paraît, de l'opinion de Louis XV; qui avait, comme on le sait, pour maxime que l'exactitude est la politesse des rois.

Bill says

That was about the shortest, most straightforward, and least brocaded Dumas story I have ever read. It is an enjoyable romp of revenge and the supernatural, and could easily have been included in Dumas' later book of spooky stories, "One Thousand and One Ghosts."

One of Dumas' earliest novels, and set in the present (1841), the book falls outside of Dumas' historical canon. We are therefore spared the twenty page historical digressions that sometimes inform but more often inflate his later novels, when he feels compelled to drop as much history on the reader as possible.

As a particular treat, Dumas himself is a main character!

Lastly, the village in the story, Sollacaro, is very near the archaeological site of Filitosia, so Agi, Eszti and I should be able to visit in May.

Alane Luzia says

Eu amava essa história e dizia sermos a sua verão feminina, eu e minha irmã. Li ainda bem menina no ensino fundamental.

Bogdan says

Short but entertaining. One of the few novels/novellas from Dumas with little historical background. It is mainly centered on twin brothers and the myths related to how one of the brothers can feel what the other feels.

Orsodimondo says

UN PRIVILEGIO PARTICOLARE

Molto divertente. Una costruzione narrativa affascinante. Un centinaio di pagine di puro diletto.

La prima versione cinematografica di questo romanzo risale all'epoca del muto, 1917, stesso titolo, regia di André Antoine.

L'io narrante è proprio Alessandro Dumas padre, scrittore già famoso, che intorno ai quarant'anni viaggia in Corsica per la prima volta, e nella biblioteca della casa dove riceve ospitalità scava una sua opera, "Impressioni di viaggio".

Per cui, da una parte è come se scrivesse una sorta di diario o reportage di viaggio, dall'altro invece siamo nel bel mezzo di un breve ma intenso romanzo.

Al centro, il tema della vendetta, dell'onore, e del doppio, esattamente come in "Il conte di Montecristo".

La seconda è del 1939, sempre in bianco e nero, firmata a quattro mani da Robert Siodmak e Géo Kelber. Non riesco a trovare nessuna immagine, neppure della locandina. Qui un ritratto di Siodmak, del quale come minimo ricorderò sempre "The Spiral Staircase".

Dumas intraprende un viaggio in Corsica. Si ferma per la notte presso la famiglia altolocata di un villaggio, emozionata nell'avere ospite il celebre scrittore. La famiglia è composta dalla madre con due figli gemelli ventenni (il doppio), Lucien che vive sull'isola e Louis che studia legge a Parigi.

C'è un'annosa contesa e Dumas accetta di accompagnare Lucien per fare da arbitro (la vendetta). Il giovane ha la facoltà di 'sentire' telepaticamente quello che sta succedendo al fratello gemello, ma anche di 'vedere' il padre morto.

Tornato a Parigi, il romanziere conosce anche l'altro fratello gemello, Louis: anche in questo caso si presta ad accompagnarlo a un duello.

La terza, e per ora ultima, è del 1961, firmata dall'italiano Anton Giulio Majano, che poi divenne una star della nostra televisione firmando alcune delle teleserie più celebri di quell'epoca, da "La cittadella" a "David Copperfield" a "La freccia nera", da "E le stelle stanno a guardare" a "L'amante dell'Orsa Maggiore.

Monty Cupcake ? Queen of Bloodshed ? says

Extremely underwhelming from the great author of The Count of Monte Cristo.

First part of the story is all about the different clothes the men are wearing, then the manners of traveling, the manners of politesse in Corsica, weapons history, ghost stories. I just didn't care at all about the characters or this story. And predictable.

Bettie? says

<http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/41881>

TRANSLATED BY HENRY FRITH

Opening: N the beginning of March, 1841, I was travelling in Corsica.

Nothing is more picturesque and more easy to accomplish than a journey in Corsica. You can embark at Toulon, in twenty hours you will be in Ajaccio, and then in twenty-four hours more you are at Bastia.

Once there you can hire or purchase a horse. If you wish to hire a horse you can do so for five francs a-day; if you purchase one you can have a good animal for one hundred and fifty francs. And don't sneer at the moderate price, for the horse hired or purchased will perform as great feats as the famous Gascon horse which leaped over the Pont Neuf, which neither Prospero nor Nautilus, the heroes of Chantilly and the Champ de Mars could do. He will traverse roads which Balmat himself could not cross without crampons, and will go over bridges upon which Auriol would need a balancing pole.

As for the traveller, all he has to do is to give the horse his head and let him go as he pleases; he does[Pg 6] not mind the danger. We may add that with this horse, which can go anywhere, the traveller can accomplish his fifteen leagues a day without stopping to bait.

Dave Turner says

An unusual one from Dumas père, a short rushed tale involving the supernatural as its main element.

To date I've read 'The Count of Monte Cristo' and all six installments of the 'd'Artagnan Romances' so I am used to Dumas père taking his time over a tale and being measured and highly interesting, but this book was much different. I was attracted to it as it was advertised as a Dumas story featuring Conjoined twins as main characters and being a big fan of M. Noirtier de Villefort (a paralytic old man in 'The Count of Monte Cristo', who despite his disability became such an expressive character with such depth) I thought this would be a story that would entertain me, but Dumas' tale is focused more on ghosts and the spooky side of things.

There is a flowing story here as the author usually writes, but I feel that, like Conan Doyle, Dumas writes

better when he avoids the pseudo-spiritual side of things.

DT 03/10/2013

David Jaquith says

Although Dumas' "The Corsican Brothers" delivers exciting moments and delicate prose, its utter predictability makes for an underwhelming story.
