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Beau Geste



Synopsis

A group of Legionnaires reaches Fort Zinderneuf to find everyone dead, and a note in one of the sergeant's hands confesses to the theft of a precious gem called "the Blue Water." The mystery of the gem and the deaths actually begins 15 years earlier. A kindly woman named Thatcher is raising 3 orphans, the Geste brothers, and to support them she sells the family jewel, the Blue Water, and replaces it with a fake. Young Michael "Beau" Geste and his brothers witness this deed, and to protect their guardian, they steal the phony gem and join the Foreign Legion. The mystery begins to unfold when the brothers are sent to North Africa and encounter a tyrannical sergeant.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Somehow I doubt that the generation of kids growing up today, whelped on Doom and Lara Croft, have the same romantic love of the French Foreign Legion that we did when we were kids. The concept of this fighting force made up of desperate men of all nations, given a new lease on life because they did not have to give their real name or background when they signed up, lent itself easily to fiction and to childhood fantasy. I don't remember all of the Foreign Legion movies we watched but Abbott and Costello in the Foreign Legion (1950) and March or Die (1977) [bad movie, great tagline: "In the French Foreign Legion, you march or you die!"] spring to mind, and of course the greatest of them all was Beau Geste (1939). Directed by William Wellman and starring Gary Cooper, Ray Milland, Robert Preston, Brian Donlevy and Susan Hayward, it was one of those movies you had to watch every time it was on. Happily, the original novel is nearly its equal. The three Geste brothers, orphaned early in life, are raised by an Aunt. Their raucous youths are filled

with the literature of adventure and ritualized horseplay centered around these myths and legends. So when the family's prized Blue Water sapphire turns up missing, each of the young men confesses to being the thief in order to protect the others and one by one they head off to join the French Foreign Legion. As luck would have it, they meet up in the deserts of Africa where they fall under the command of the malevolent Sergeant Lejaune. Not content to merely be a martinet, Lejaune sets his sights on stealing the jewel, which rumor holds to be in their possession.

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