



The Shadow Riders

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Dal and Mac Traven fought on opposite sides of the Civil War but rode home together to start rebuilding the family ranch. Instead, they discovered the chilling aftermath of a guerrilla rampage of terror. It was said no force in Texas could stop these raiders on their bloody path to Mexico. But now the raiders had the Travens' sister and Dal's girlfriend, Kate Connery, held captive. Now they had the Travens on their trail and even though it would be just Mac and Dal and their brother Jesse and Uncle Jack against thirty killers, the Travens would keep on coming. For as Kate Connery kept telling the other women hostages, "The Travens will never stop until we are free or they are dead."

From the Paperback edition.

The Shadow Riders Details

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Author : Louis L'Amour

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From Reader Review The Shadow Riders for online ebook

Tim says

THE SHADOW RIDERS by Lois L'Amour follows Mac Travern and his brother Dal's return home from the Civil War, only to find that their family has suffered an attack that has resulted in the capture of the surviving members, who have been taken hostage. Mac unravels the story of what has taken place through a neighbor and from his uncle, and they set off to rescue their kin and punish those responsible. Determination and tenacity are required of the brothers on the difficult path they've chosen to follow, with no room for delays or failure to reach their kin in a short amount of time.

Lois L'Amour wrote an incredible amount of western novels, and there is a consistent level of quality of them making it easy to want to read most or all of what he's written. Several years ago I had read this book, and my remembrance was that it wasn't one of my favorites by him. Re-reading it as the monthly selection for the Goodreads group "American Westerns" gave me a chance to re-evaluate this novel, and I liked it this time around. Action was sufficient with storyline and characters well done, and had the unusual addition to a western L'Amour has occasionally used (not often, like everyone and his brother having been taught to box by Jeb Mace..) being that of a pirate who's now on dry land, but still a force to be reckoned with. Solid western story based on rescue and retribution.

4 stars.

D. E. says

The Civil War has ended and two brothers are heading home to Texas. One in blue and one in grey. When they arrive the women folks have been kidnapped and have been taken to the Gulf Coast for shipment into slavery. The chase is on and is led by Tom Selleck and Sam Elliot as the two brothers. The novel is an excellent read and the made for TV movie is excellent.....DEHS

Audrey says

Mac stepped down from his horse and turned the body over with his boot toe. The man's nose had been broken. There was an ugly welt on his cheekbone and the skin was split, but his throat had been pierced and torn.

"What in God's world?" Mac said. "Would you look at that!"

"Kate," Dal said.

"*Kate?* Are you crazy?"

"No, sir. Kate, with the end of a stick. I showed her how. Don't you remember what we learned from that character named Dugan? To thrust with a stick, not strike?"

Mac stared at the body. "Dal, take some advice from your big brother. If you marry that girl, be nice to her. You hear me?"

Synopsis: Two men must ride like the Dickens (or whatever the appropriate Old West saying would be) to save a bitter Confederate veteran from selling a band of kidnapped maidens into overseas slavery.

Mac Traven rides into an unnamed town just in time to save his brother Dal from being robbed and killed, and after a tearful reunion, the two Civil War veterans head back to the family ranch, weary and worn. But a cheerful homecoming is not in the cards: on their way back, they learn that one Colonel Ashford, bitter about the South's surrender, is waging his own one-man war, and financing it by kidnapping womenfolk.

(Which I would not have thought would be the best savings plan, but then again I am not actively planning to invade anything.)

And oh noes, he has kidnapped Dal's fiancée, Kate. Who may or may not think he died in the war and may or may not be having it off with one of the neighbors.

Let's ride...

From there, it's just a lovely Can-this-macguffin-be-saved-in-time Western, complete with lush and region-appropriate plants, horses a-plenty and men realizing that they are Starting Down The Wrong Path. A nice surprise in all of this is the much sought-after Kate, who is steely-eyed and determined, smart and courageous, and who kills people. No wonder everyone wants to marry this chick.

It's a romp. A romp with horses, true, but a romp nonetheless, in the very traditional flavor of L'Amour Westerns. The romantic intrigue between Dal and Kate is nicely downplayed--as in the whole story does not stop simply so they can hash things out--and Mac Traven is cast from the school of strong, caring and quick-drawing L'Amour heroes. And he graduated at the top of his class.

Elizabeth Kuehne says

Not quite as good as many of his books, though I can see why this one was chosen for Tom Selleck and Sam Elliott. It is a solid plot for a screenplay. I like some of his other books better for content.

Jada 📚?? says

Ok so after finishing Cutting for Stone I wanted a light short read and so I picked Shadow Riders which is my very first read by Louis L'Amour...and he has so many! Likes: his descriptions of the range, nature, how he writes out the action was amazing. I could easily envision what was going on plus from the few westerns and gun draws I've seen on tv. Dislikes: kinda repetitive and slow at times. Reading this makes me want to see what other action/westerns might be out there! I also learned thing or two about guns used around the civil war.

Dirk Mast says

One of the best Western fiction writers.

Outstanding writing. Easy to read. Informative. Good plot and character development. I've reread his books

many times over the years.

Allen says

Not a great book. Maybe the movie is better?

HornFan2 (Mike) says

Along with Conagher, the Shadow Riders are my two favorite books from Louis L'Amour.

The Shadow Riders starts with a bang, as two brothers Dal and Mac Traven return to Texas from fighting in the Civil War on opposite sides and are heading back to their family ranch.

L'Amour jumps right into this one, faster than other authors have, but that's why I always liked his Westerns and like that he got right into the action.

The Traven brothers discover that for former Confederate Colonel Henry T. Ashford the War isn't over, he leads a army of renegades and killers, as they cross Texas, they raid ranches, stealing horses, cattle, supplies, money and kidnapping any women they find.

Unfortunately Ashford makes two mistakes, first raiding the Traven ranch, shooting the brothers father, then take their younger Sister Delcie and their hurt younger brother Jessie and second they grab Dal's girlfriend Kate Connery, who is a tough minded lady.

The Traven brothers are hot on the trail following Ashford's group, when they meet up with their Uncle Happy Jack and team up with the goal to free the women.

To know the rest of the story, you'll just have to read, the Shadow Riders.

It's quite a good read, loaded with twist and twist, overloaded with action and all the ingredients a Western should have and it's one of L'Amour's best books.

Frank_42 says

The Shadow Riders, by Louis L'Amour is a thrilling book that is set in Texas right after the end of the Civil War. Mac Traven was a Union officer and his brother Dal was a Confederate officer. On the way home from the war, they meet up in a town where Dal is being held up by five men. Once Mac shoots the men and gets away with Dal, they travel back to their house together. Upon arriving, they find their home deserted. They go to their neighbor and ask her what happened. She said that Colonel Ashford came along and attacked and took Dal's girlfriend, the Traven's sister and their younger brother that they wounded. Dal and Mac followed the trail of Colonel Ashford. Along the way, they found their uncle "Happy Jack" and asked him to help them find the girls. They tracked them to the beach where a ship was supposed to come to take the girls, but there was a big storm and the ship didn't come. Mac, Dal and Happy Jack hid in the bushes and devised a plan to rescue the girls.

Louis L'Amour is an author that writes about the struggles and heroism of normal people in the Wild West in the 1800's.

Dallin Perry says

An enjoyable, quick read. Glad to be back in Texas.

Edwin says

A solid traditional Western that doesn't really stand out from some of L'Amour's best work. The story focuses mostly on the two Traven brothers, although Happy Jack and the heroic Kate Connery were probably the more interesting characters. The novel doesn't waste anytime getting into the story and then continues the fast pace to a satisfying climax and a perhaps somewhat abrupt ending.

Jack says

I like reading Louis L'Amour books because you will not find a more compact, precisely-written story. No words are wasted and the story flows quickly from one chapter to the next. Yes, L'Amour was formulaic. No, there are rarely any surprises in his books. They are stories about challenges, ethics, morals and hardships faced in the southwest and west from the period of just after the Civil War until the turn of the century. But, you don't always read L'Amour for depth and thoughtfulness, you read him first to be transported to a different time that is still very real to many a reader and captures the imagination. It is only after you're done reading that you begin to parse the lessons held within the book.

That said, there were points within this book that I found myself confused and having to re-read in order to determine what was being described. These parts seem to have been at either editing points (where he may have been asked to remove some material) or L'Amour was rushed in his writing. I found it to be a little jarring. It still didn't detract from it being a good yarn.

And yes, I saw the TV movie. I'm a huge fan of both Tom Selleck and Sam Elliott. They did justice to this book.

Hunter Falish says

Dal and Mac Traven are arriving home after a long drug out war they were busy battling in. They are expecting to come home to their wives and younger children. The thing is, when they return to their homes, they find nothing but piles of burnt rubble and ash. Upon further inspection, they find that their was a gang of at least 40 people who were present when the house and barn burnt. Dal can think of only one group of people that this could be. It has to be a war party led by the opposite side that they were battling. The general did not end battle, even after it was declared that both sides said the war was done. The other problem is, that they are know for stealing women and children, and selling them to other countries as slaves. Now the question is, can Dal and Mac find the women and children, and will they make it to their rescue in time?

I thought that this book was okay, not the best book i've read by Louis L'Amour, but I also liked the storyline of the book as well. This book still followed some of the romance that is usually in his books, but it wasn't as in depth about the relationships that he normally is. I liked this fact, because it gave me more information about the plot of the story instead of relationship statuses. I also enjoyed the chase and the thrill of the book, as Mac and Dal had to find the war party and then had to figure out what they would do if they did catch up with them. The part about the story I did not like, was that it involved the kidnapping and trafficking of women and children to be sold as slaves. This is a very bad practice. I would recommend this book to young adults, and those who like the wild west.

Elisabeth says

I didn't really care for this one—it had an interesting enough setting and premise, but didn't live up to the potential involved. I think what put me off was the way it's written: a flat, dry, staccato style, and narration that jumps around among a large number of characters who were never fully described or fleshed out. Kate was the only one who came close to being a rounded character, but even then I never had any idea what she even looked like.

I notice a pattern with my reading L'Amour's books: I tend to like the earlier ones better. Many of the later ones just feel like they were written in a hurry, and even where there is interesting historical background involved, it's shoveled into the narration in chunks instead of woven throughout, which is somewhat the case in *The Shadow Riders*.

Adam says

At the beginning of this book, the scene is in a hospital. With a bunch of patients laying side by side. One of the McTraven brothers are among the healing. However he is recovering quickly and all is well. It turns out the brothers are returning home from the civil war, however when they return home their town has been ransacked.

The climax of this story comes when the McTraven brothers have to stop Colonel Ashton's band of renegades from reaping more havoc along the Mexican border. They must free the women and children and risk being shot from the much large group of bandits.

What mostly appealed about this book to me is the fact that it is a western book. However, there are also lots of great literacy tools inside. It uses suspense and all sorts of great elements to make sure you're guessing at every turn.

I would definitely recommend this book and any book from this author to anyone. But it would probably be toward a certain crowd because I can imagine many people would find it boring, unfortunately.

Ed says

This novel takes place on the Gulf Coast of Texas, immediately following the Civil War. Sam Elliott, Tom Selleck, and Jeff Osterhage wanted to film another western together after they did *The Sacketts* (1979). They contacted "Sacketts" writer Louis L'Amour and asked him to write a story idea for them. This 1982 novel became the 1982 TV-movie of the same name, with the three actors again playing brothers. Run of the mill western but it's easy to see the cinematic possibilities.

Western - Dal and Mac Traven come back from fighting on opposite sides of the Civil War. They wanted only to reclaim their old lives ...but one man held their future hostage. Colonel Henry T. Ashford had gathered an army of criminals and renegade soldiers, leading them on a path of destruction and kidnapping through Texas to the Gulf. Among Ashford's captives were the Travens' sister and Dal's tough-minded fiancée, Kate. Now Mac and Dal take up arms once again and ride together against Ashford's army —ready to fight another war, if that's what it takes to win the freedom of the women they love.

Jacob says

The story is about brothers who fought on opposite sides during the Civil War. They now ride home together and have to fight off groups of raiders. They were good men that both went off to fight for what they believed in. You can really admire someone that can sacrifice everything and tries to be their best, and come home from something that they may not have wanted to be apart of, and rebuild from where they were. They brothers had to now follow raiders as they posed a threat to their family and the way they lived.

I could really connect with Mac Travern. He fought for the North and stood for what was right. In times of distress and questionable action, Mac would always choose the path that was morally right. He was a strong man with a handlebar mustache, who rode tall on horseback. The image of Mac just portrays a heroic figure to the story. Mac was a great shot and would do anything to protect his loved ones. Mac is a man that you could connect with on a personal level.

I really enjoyed the book for the adventure and plot. My favorite part was when four men trailed out to stop a group of murderers and their path of blood. Four men went against a group of 30 men, that no force has been able to stop before. I would strongly recommend this book for the adventure and attention drawing it has throughout the whole story.

Matt Gomez says

It dawned on me just a few months ago that I had never read a proper western. I was familiar with Louis L'Amour, but had no idea what book to start with. I randomly picked this one from the assortment of L'Amour novels available in my library. It was definitely a fun, light read. There's not a ton of depth to the characters, but the story and action have that classic western feel that makes you crave coffee from a campfire and some good, old-fashioned frontier justice. The premise is solid: two brothers who fought on opposite sides of the civil war return home to find that a sore-loser Confederate had assembled a band of mercenaries and stolen their horses and women. From there, the story gallops along in pretty predictable fashion. I'd definitely recommend this if you're in the mood for a western.

Jonah Micheal - The Fast shooting Tribute From Dauntless says

i couldit but it down

Benjamin says

Louis L'Amour doesn't waste time with too much flowing prose (although there is some), and gets straight to the point of each scene, moving from one thing to another so that, while short, *The Shadow Riders* feels bigger than it is, what with everything going on. His omniscient POV makes for an interesting story, since the reader knows what's going on inside every character's head, which I liked. I've only read a handful of Westerns, but I liked this quite enough that I may not wait a few years before reading another.
