



Dido and Pa

Joan Aiken

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Readers who have followed Dido Twite's escapades in *Black Hearts in Battersea* and *Nightbirds on Nantucket* will welcome her return in another wild adventure. Now back in print, *Dido and Pa* continues the *Wolves Chronicles*, the exhilarating and imaginative series that stemmed from Joan Aiken's classic *The Wolves of Willoughby Chase*.

Dido Twite is finally back home in London and reunited with her old friend Simon, now the Duke of Battersea and a favorite of King Richard. But no sooner does Dido start to settle in than her rascally father, Abednago, appears and drags her off into the night. Soon Dido finds herself caught up in the midst of another dastardly Hanoverian conspiracy: a plot involving a mysterious double for the king, the miraculous healing powers of music, and a spy network made up of abandoned street children called lollpoops. Meanwhile, out in the forest, starving wolves are closing in on the city . . .

Dido and Pa Details

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Author : Joan Aiken

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From Reader Review Dido and Pa for online ebook

LHbooks says

A return to form with London, Sophie, Simon and the Hanoverians all back in the action. Dido makes some choices about who she wants to be as she's thrown back together with her ne'er-do-well Pa. The beautiful language and attention to detail always make these books worth reading.

Hessie says

It was really hard for me to decide between 4 and 5 stars for this one. It really was fantastic in so many ways! The reunion between Dido and Simon was wonderful! Old and new characters become even more endearing and the plot is engaging. This book is also dark and deep. I have read other reviewers who called Dido's pa one of the best written villains of all time and I agree with them! Mr. Twite is anything but flat and Dido's internal conflict about his true character is very thought provoking. Ultimately, I think Dido shows incredible character by trying to give her pa a chance but still standing up to him and getting out when things get really bad. The story was much darker but not as gruesome as *The Stolen Lake*. I would highly recommend it in spite of a few flaws in the plot and the lack of a perfect resolution for Dido.

Edith says

A return to form after two (in my opinion) less than satisfactory entries in the *Wolves Chronicles*. Dido Twite is finally back in England and reunites with Simon and Sophie--and, unfortunately, her father, now known as Boris Breadalbane, chapel master to an evil Hanoverian margrave. Can Simon, Sophie, and their allies stop a nefarious plot to oust the newly crowned King Dick? (What a question!)

Aiken's *Wolves Chronicles* are formulaic, but when successfully constructed (which seems to be when they are set in England), what a formula! This particular novel is especially noteworthy because of its examination of the puzzling fact that there can be hugely redeeming qualities in even singularly unworthy people--like Dido's Pa. Truly touching at times.

This is a wonderful book full of scary things (like ravening wolves), so not for really little ones. Otherwise, highly recommended.

Celeste Ng says

One of the things I like best about Joan Aiken's *Wolves Chronicles* is that none of the books feel alike: each deals with a completely separate world (Nantucket at the height of the whaling era; South American jungles crossed with Arthurian legend; rural England crossed with Caribbean voodoo), and the plots and characters are so outlandish, that each book feels completely fresh. This was the first book where I realized that good people could die, which may be why it's stayed in my memory so clearly and is one of my favorites.

Jenn Estepp says

further adventures of dido twite. in this volume, she has barely made it back to london when her irascible father abducts her and involves her in the newest hanoverian plot. which of course must be thwarted, along with the help of simon, sophie and a host of homeless street urchins. slightly darker, in some ways, but also genuinely moving, dwelling in some deeper emotional territory than others in the series. neck and neck with "nightbirds" as my favorite in the series.

Elizabeth Brush says

all the weirds--also, the entrance of Is!

Liana says

Probably my favorite of the whole series. Has all of the characters, humor, darkness, quirky language, and mystery of all the others, but the bittersweet, complicated relationship between Dido and her father accompanies the intriguing plot like a secondary melody in one of Mr. Twite's masterfully-described musical compositions.

CC says

I love Aiken's Dido Twite adventures. Aiken always brings the right amount of historical authenticity and vivid world building. Her books make me dive into an alternate Victorian England where James III reigned. This is a world where kids grind carrots into coffee to sell it for cheap on the streets, create bands to help fend for themselves, and live at the mercy of the adults around them. (but give as good as they get). Aiken includes details that lend credence to her world; for instance, some of the street kids pay a small fee to sleep in-doors in a cellar, but specifically to rent a loop of hanging rope from which they can hang their upper body. They sleep with this large noose under their shoulders, their feet dragging on the floor, never quite standing but certainly not lying down, and it's the most respite any of them receive. Aiken doesn't use this for pathetic effect. She just shows the situation as it was and uses it to inform the characters' personalities and decisions.

In this novel, Dido finally confronts the difficult binary of an abusive, horrible person/father and gifted musician. She has trouble reconciling the two, and in fact, she never does. The music is beautiful, and Dido wonders if someday, the music will outlive the memory of her father, leaving only his better part (the music itself and nothing else). It's a moving portrayal of a child who has grown to see the real extent of her father's faults (to say the least) and accepts, with some disappointment, that there was nothing left to salvage in her relationship with her father, regardless of what used to be.

The plot, by the by, will not let you put down the book, and I read this in basically one sitting. I couldn't help it, and I loved every moment. I want more of Dido and hope this isn't the end, but if it is, there are plenty of other Aiken books to explore, and many more installments left in the Wolves Chronicles.

Recommended for anyone who enjoys Victorian England fiction, adventures yarns that span London end to

end, and royal plots that would make Alexandre Dumas grin and turn the page.

eve says

my favorite book in the series, probably because i read it later, in my twneties instead of in middle school. the tone and themes are definitely darker and more complicated. The most interesting part is Dido's relationship with her father and her very conflicted feelings toward him. She knows he's never up to any good, is neglectfully cruel, and a drunk, but she loves his music and can't forget that he is after all her father.

Contains my favorite Dido line ever: "Simon! We thought as you was galloping twenty different ways inside of a pack of wolves! The papers said as you'd hopped the twig!"

Kirsten says

Another volume in the wonderful series that began with *The Wolves of Wiloughby Chase*. Dido Twite is finally joyfully reunited with her old friend Simon, who is now the Duke of Battersea, only to be stolen away by her father before she and Simon can be properly reunited. Abednego Twite once again has a nefarious scheme to unseat King Richard, and he is determined that Dido will help him, like it or not. As always with the books in this series, Aiken neatly balances humor and grim reality, although this book isn't as fanciful as some of the others. One of the reviewers, in articulating why she thinks Dido is one of the finest female characters in children's literature, describes her as "resourceful, irreverent, intelligent, moral, funny, and completely unsanitized," which I think is perfectly accurate and does well at describing just what's so great about Dido. The other thing I love is that Dido has clearly grown and changed since her first appearance in *Black Hearts In Battersea*. She is still definitely the same girl, but older and wiser. Great stuff; I would give my eyeteeth to write half so well as Joan Aiken does.

Windy2go says

I love Joan Aiken. This little paperback was in the guest room bookshelf at my parents' house, so I picked it up. Joan is a quick read, zingy characters, fun plots. I had a good time reading Dido and Pa (and was sorry to discover that we did always mis-pronounce Dido's name -- it rhymnes with "Died-Oh" because the other characters occasionally called her "Died-Oh Fright". I was actually reading this book in the car on the way to the airport and didn't get the last few pages done! So I'm not entirely sure how everything was resolved.

Carrie says

I'm still following that Died o'Fright around. Each adventure saves the king, this time it's King David Jamie Charlie Neddie Geordie Harry Dick Tudor-Stuart. The best part about this one is that we are reunited with Simon and Sophie, who we haven't seen since book two.

Tammie Groeneman says

Not as good as *The Wolves of Willoughby Chase* or *Black Hearts in Battersea* but there are some great parts. The “lollpoops” as well as some other interesting names and words make this story delightful, but, overall, the storyline doesn’t flow as well as the others in the series.

Jackie says

I first read this book (this entire series) fourteen years ago. Since then, it's been one of my favorite books of all time and Dido Twite one of my favorite characters. *Dido and Pa* is the *Silver Chair* of the *Wolves Chronicles*. It's darker, more complex, and it asks some very good questions. Most importantly:

How *can* somebody write such music - and act so?

I can see why Joan Aiken shifted focus to *Is* for a couple books, and then returned to Dido's earlier adventures. Between the opening and the closing of *Dido and Pa*, Dido grows up.

What makes her? Dido Twite is my favorite character, and of all the books she appears in this really is Dido at her best, but ultimately *Dido and Pa* is less about Dido and more about Pa. Abednego Twite is the best villain I have ever encountered in any book, written for children or written for adults. He is the perfect villain because his villainy is commonplace, because he has the capacity for eliciting great sympathy, and because, ultimately, he doesn't care about anyone but himself. He's a brilliant musician, but he is an awful father and an even worse human being. Seeing Dido, someone who literally circumnavigated the globe on the strength of her own heart and smarts, falling back into old patterns with her father is chilling. She has the upper hand now--she's just as likely to whack him upside the head as receive a whack upside the head--but she still seeks his approval and affection. Even when she knows she shouldn't. Her frustration with herself is the truest thing about this book.

I could say so much more; I've been writing this review for the past fourteen years. I haven't even mentioned the glory of Podge. Nonetheless, I'll end with this: Jo March, Anne Shirley, and Dido Twite all turn down proposals from the boys they grew up with, at least initially. Some of the refusals even stick. When I first read *Dido and Pa* I was ten and in the throes of my first ever fictional character crush. I couldn't *believe* that Dido would turn down Simon. It was incomprehensible.

It's always worth reading books like this again as an adult. Good job, Dido. No matter how complicated it might make your life, never stop being you.

Books Kids Like says

At Mrs. Bloodvessel's house in London, Dido learns of a Hanoverian plot to kill the heads of state and replace the king with an imposter named Van Doon. This imposter is staying at Margrave Eisengrim's house, and Dido is forced to teach him the king's speech and mannerisms. During the lessons, Dido tells Van Doon about the Margrave's deception. Meanwhile, the Margrave sends for Simon. He is away from home hunting wolves, and Sophie, Simon's twin sister, takes his place. Sophie's true identity is discovered, and she is kidnapped. Earlier, Dido and Van Doon had befriended an orphan named Is. Figgin, Is' cat, enters the

Margrave's house through a chimney and finds Sophie in the Margrave's dungeon. After Sophie's rescue, they go to Podge Greenway's house where they are reunited with Simon. The group hatches a plan to thwart the margrave. While Van Doon escapes to Penelope Twite's house in the woods, Dido and her friends take care of the Hanoverians in London.
