



## The Family Corleone

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New York, 1933. The city and the nation are in the depths of the Great Depression. The crime families of New York have prospered in this time, but with the coming end of Prohibition, a battle is looming that will determine which organizations will rise and which will face a violent end.

For Vito Corleone, nothing is more important than his family's future. While his youngest children, Michael, Fredo, and Connie, are in school, unaware of their father's true occupation, and his adopted son Tom Hagen is a college student, he worries most about Sonny, his eldest child. Vito pushes Sonny to be a businessman, but Sonny-17 years-old, impatient and reckless-wants something else: To follow in his father's footsteps and become a part of the real family business.

An exhilarating and profound novel of tradition and violence, of loyalty and betrayal, *The Family Corleone* will appeal to the legions of fans who can never get enough of *The Godfather*, as well as introduce it to a whole new generation.

## **The Family Corleone Details**

Date : Published May 8th 2012 by Grand Central Publishing

ISBN : 9780446574624

Author : Edward Falco , Mario Puzo

Format : Hardcover 437 pages

Genre : Fiction, Mystery, Crime, Historical, Historical Fiction

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# From Reader Review The Family Corleone for online ebook

## Megan says

Okay, but not great. This is the prequel to "The Godfather," which basically fills out the backstories that are given very short descriptions in the first book: how Vito Corleone and the Corleone family came to power; the war of "10 years ago" as described in the first book; how Sonny came into his father's business; and Luca Brasi's back story.

Apparently Mario Puzo wrote this as a screenplay, which Falco then turned into this novel. The first half of the book definitely reads like a screenplay: stilted dialogue with overuse of Mafia/gangland slang (e.g. in one paragraph there were 3 different words used for "tommy gun"), and underdeveloped descriptions of the actions occurring. This improved about half way through the book (no idea why), which helped readability, but not the overall enjoyment of this book. The biggest flaw is that the account given as to what Sonny witnesses Vito do that Sonny uses as leverage to get Vito to allow him into the "family" is substantially different in this book than in "The Godfather." I can't understand why Puzo/Falco did this -- it makes no logical sense to change what has already been described.

If you're tempted to read this book, don't. Instead, re-read "The Godfather." The descriptions of the events that are covered in more detail in "The Family Corleone" are more than adequately described in "The Godfather," and it's a far superior book.

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## Gary Schantz says

This book is spot-on as a prequel to The Godfather. So many characters are coming back to life with each page...you can picture them vividly only younger.

Since its based on a screenplay that Mario Puzo had written, its no wonder the book seems to be a wonderful complement to the original. Not only does this book round out the original story (by filling in the pieces that the film The Godfather Part II did not), it also makes The Godfather's Return and Revenge seem even more awful because the writing in this book very Puzo.

Awhile back, I wrote that I thought Mark Winegardner's books had their moments but after having read The Family Corleone...I see even moreso that Mark Winegardner was merely writing his books out of thin air as opposed to rounding out the original characters as older people. He simply didn't involve the original storylines enough and brought in way too many characters that I didn't care about. He basically left Puzo's style out of those books.

Anyhow, it's good to have the Corleones back.

Hopefully, there is one more book left that could possibly flesh out the end of the Corleones and fix the damage of not only Winegardner's books but The Godfather Part III as well.

It would be great to see Michael's son grow up not only to take over the family busines but to be the last one in the family business. Whether he dies, goes to prison or becomes a rat wouldn't matter so long as the story finally had a good ending. They might even call the book: Centanni - 100 years of the Corleones.

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## Elizabeth B says

There many different ways to try and review this novel but I suppose the easiest way is the way that Paramount approached it when they launched the lawsuit against the Puzo estate...either the book will be terrible and a black mark against the Godfather legacy or it's an installment that will do well as another movie in the series and they want to claim their stake in it early so the money will go to them. My take? It falls at neither end of the spectrum people were anticipating.

As a novel, the book is an entertaining read. It has the basic tenets of any mafia story present. It doesn't bother with characterization assumably because readers will already know the characters. And they ARE characters most Godfather fans will know. There is nothing new here. Touted as a "prequel" it's really not. Yes, it gives you some background on Vito but this is more Sonny's story which is unfortunate because most readers (and moviegoers) have found Sonny to be their least favorite character for decades now. Why he was the focus of this novel is questionable both in content and marketability. Vito's story comes out vaguely in bits and pieces, none of which are really unique or individual but merely the same tale always told in the Mafia genre: escape Sicily to make a new life, find American tough so you learn to be tough yourself and dastardly deeds are sure to follow. There is nothing to really demonstrate or explain why Vito became the character readers love so much later on. Sonny is explained in detail but, like many people, I don't care. It's the age old issue of answering questions no one asked.

A bigger issue that hit me personally was the lack of accurate research. The author chooses to bring in real life mobsters which is always a controversial choice. You have to be so amazingly diligent with your research when doing this and in this the author failed. I'm not talking about nit picky things that some will pick up on that I'm sure I missed because I never lived in New York (a few reviewers have mentioned streets that didn't exist at that time period, for example). These are all legitimate concerns with the novel - an author who chooses to make such mistakes can't be relied upon for the remainder of the story. My issue was a much bigger one that even an average reader will likely note: could there be more mentions of Al Capone? I mean, really, this got so tiresome. Vito is in NY and anyone who has done any nonfiction reading on the mafia knows that he would be answering to the likes of Luciano, Lansky and Costello and not Al Capone. Luciano and his family neither feared nor answered to Capone over in Chicago and most legitimate history books of the time will note how he was just a thorn in their side for his constant publicity. Even more damaging is the time period in question. 1934 is a big year for Vito and his family in the book and there are, again, numerous references to Capone coming out from Chicago and putting them in line. Well, even a quick google search will tell you that would simply be impossible. In 1932 Capone had his famous arrest for tax evasion and by 1934 has already been sent to Alcatraz. He wasn't even a blip on the radar anymore so the idea that he would influence any decisions in the NY mafia families borders on ridiculous.

The writing style was another thing that nagged me. It was clearly written with a screenplay in mind and this becomes more and more evident as the novel wears on. The first few chapters are much stronger in style: we are treated to inner thoughts, well written if sparse settings, and just a generally more flowing storyline. By midway, though, it degenerates into almost all dialogue. Even the descriptions of events are very timeline affected: he hits him, he bleeds, they clean their weapons and run away. Screenplay writing...not a novel. Visual yes but not a visual approach in the sense of a novel where we are taken through the tense emotions and regrets (or pleasure) such an event would cause. Will it transfer to the screen? Undoubtedly since it would require little rewriting to make it a screenplay. Does that make it great reading for a novel? Unfortunately, no.

Once I read a few chapters I sat back and realized that I should read this more as just another mafia novel than a novel about the Corleone family. And, as a standard mainstream mafia novel this book does well. Despite its flaws, it has all the basic tenets the novels in this genre have. It neither stands out from the crowd nor falls below the norm: it's just another average entry into the thousands of similar titles already out there. For many, this is unacceptable. By attaching the Godfather name and its legacy it is expected to rise above the masses and that the pages inside don't meet that expectation will disappoint to many readers.

So, back to Paramount's original worries: will it mar the good name of the Corleone family? No. It doesn't add or subtract anything to the story. It just is sort of...there. Neither good nor bad and kind of irrelevant. Entertaining as a novel, flawed in execution but not nearly bad enough to cause some great harm to the original Godfather. Is it such a resounding success that it deserves a movie that will make Paramount tons of money? No. With the cost of movie making these days, this novel is just not one that will stand the test of time. It lacks the emotional ties that brought the original to life. The writing style would clearly make it easy to adapt to screen but this is not a new story or even a creative retelling of an old one. Again, it's just...there.

So, overall opinion? Enjoy this book as a mafia novel and not a part of the Godfather story you already know. If you can do that, it should be an entertaining read.

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### **Maria Clara says**

Sencilamente inmejorable!!! Ahora, es pa' matar a Luca. Si hay un personaje en toda la novela que he odiado, sin lugar a dudas ha sido a este.

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### **Mike says**

The Family Corleone by Ed Falco (uncle of Edie Falco) started out as a film script by original "Godfather" author Mario Puzo. But after the disaster that was the third "Godfather" film, I can see why it was never made. Though I would also suspect that this novel is the first step towards getting the prequel film green-lit.

In "The Family Corleone," I see an attempt to go back to the roots of the Corleone saga and build on what people already know and love.

So...if you're a "Godfather" fan, you'll probably enjoy this book no matter what.

As I see it, these are the three main points of the book:

- 1) The story of Luca Brasi.
- 2) How Sonny Corleone became a gangster.
- 3) How Vito Corleone and the Corleone family rose to the top.

If any or all of those threads intrigue you, I advise you to check out the book.

Personally, I found Luca Brasi's story more interesting than much of the rest of the book. Luca is no one's

idea of a hero, that's for sure. But he dies so early on in the Godfather film and novel, it was always a little hazy why everyone feared him the way they did. We got just a taste of Luca's madness in the first Godfather novel when the death of the infant in the furnace was discussed. Luca and his exploits get a large amount of focus in the first half of the book. Once he joins up with the Corleones, however, the focus is mostly off of him.

The story of how Sonny becomes a gangster is the emotional core of the book. He has a foot in two worlds and must inevitably choose which one he's going to live in. Does he keep pulling heists with his Irish best friend (and keep his affair with the best friend's sister a secret)? Or does he come clean about his criminal ways to his father, join "the family" and marry the nice Italian girl who is in love with him? Anyone who knows the story of "The Godfather" knows what choice Sonny makes.

One of my pet peeves with this book--as a non-Italian reader--were the nearly constant exclamations in Italian (wow...do I wish I knew about the glossary of terms that was there at the back of the book all along). I expected a certain amount of them--as would any Godfather fan--but along the way I felt the author was trying too hard to use these exclamations to set the mood rather than work a little harder on the surrounding characters and plot.

Overall, I found the writing in "The Corleone Family" to be fairly average and not too exciting or noteworthy. If you have the characters in your head already from the films or the other books or novelizations, the author doesn't have to work as hard to explain them to the reader. And he doesn't. Nearly every major and minor character from the novel makes an appearance. Knowing what fate has in store for them--like Paulie Gatto and Lucy Mancini, for example--and seeing them in this novel as children is a bit surreal.

There is tragedy aplenty for all concerned in "The Family Corleone". While the Corleone "family" eventually rises to prominence in this novel, most of the characters you've never heard of before pay for that rise with their blood and pain.

But "The Corleone Family" did hold my attention. And when I was reading it on public transportation, I nearly missed my stop more than once, if that tells you anything.

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## **Bogdan Gavriiliuc says**

I love the universe painted by Puzo's vision. Even if it romanticizes violence, it shows some interesting relationships. One of my favorite relationships in literature has to be the one between Don Vito and Luca Brasi.

I particularly liked making connections to the Godfather (this being a prequel, it was interesting to see how things got to where they are). I also loved how all of the separate plots come together to culminate for the Corleones. I liked how the don had an internal fight with himself not being a gangster when being confronted by Sonny.

I also liked being immersed in the 30s. I know the way I see it is likely different than how it really was, but it's a nice picture.

My one complaint was that the climax at the end of the book was a bit of a let down. It's not a comment on the author, because it is what the don would have done, rather it's a complaint at how it had to be.

This is definitely worth the read if you're interested in finding out more details of the godfather universe.

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### **Katie Bananas says**

Madonna!!!! I'm absolutely speechless!! WOW!!!! This is exceptional!!!

This is everything I wanted to read as an introduction to the Mafia and very well planned murder cases. The writing is extremely compelling and interesting that I read most of the book in the course of only two days. The chapters are well-deservingly long, they describe The Corleone Family and their attachés. It is a full novel, heavy with introductory murders of what's to come in The Godfather, I'm certain.

Ed Palco did an exceptional job at writing and describing intricately detailed characters, down to their dress, as well as describing the setting of each scene. It really did drive me nuts. The Mafia and their intricate planning and dealings were beyond amazing, I came to love and obsess over each of them.

He had so many hidden surprises, especially things I would never think of, as in the scene when Sonny had to kill Corks!!! I couldn't believe or even merely guess at the idea that this was possible, since they both knew each other at a young age. Palco approached it by a different and uncanny angle indeed. With Corks convinced that Sonny CANNOT kill him for how long and well they knew each other, Sonny revealed to him that Eileen, his sister is a whore, which Corks didn't appreciate of course. At the moment Corks jumped on Sonny to fight him, he got to Corks faster with his gun. He shot him in the heart and the bullet pierced his back.

I'm very excited that I finally read this introduction to dirty murder. The book had me guessing and constantly thinking without seize. It gathered all my emotions of anger and anxiety, as if I was with Mariposa and Vito, trying to find out who is my favorite to kill.

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### **Αλκιβ?αδης Βασ?λειος says**

Απλ?, perfetto!!! ???

Μια υπ?θεση με στοιχε?α ρεαλισμο? και ωμ?ς β?ας στην εποχ? της "ποτοαπαγ?ρευσης", αλλ? και με ιστορικ?ς αναφορ?ς σε γεγον?τα και πρ?σωπα ?πως τον Αλ Καπ?νε κ.α.

?σο για την οικογ?νεια των "Κορλε?νε", ο συγγραφ?ας ?χει δ?σει μια σεβαστ? και πιστ? εντ?ς εισαγωγικ?ν αντιγραφ? των χαρακτ?ρων, ?που γνωρ?ζουμε τον Β?το Κορλε?νε στα σαρ?ντα του, προτο? γ?νει ο Νον?ς των Νον?ν, τον θερμοκ?φαλο γιο του, "Σ?νι", ?που και ανυπομονε? να εισχωρ?σει στις μπ?ζνες του πατ?ρα του, και τον μικρ?τερο γιο του "Μ?ικλ" σε ηλικ?α δεκατρι?ν χρον?ν, στον οπο?ο ο Β?το ε?χε εναποθ?σει τις ελπ?δες του για το καλ?τερο δυνατ? μ?λλον της φαμ?λιας, αλλ?... ?σοι ?χουν διαβ?σει την ιστορ?α ? ?χουν δει τις ταιν?ες (τις οπο?ες και 'χω δει π?νω απ? 3 φορ?ς ???), γνωρ?ζουν πολ? καλ? την εξ?λιξη της ιστορ?ας! ???

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## Hasham Rasool says

'The Family Corleone' was nearly good as 'The Godfather'. Alhamdulillah!

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## Chris says

*Madon'!*, that was awesome. This book is not your garden variety franchise tie-in. This thing is the genuine article. The story was taken from an actual screenplay set down by Mario Puzo, so we know it has some authenticity. But Falco took it a step further and made one hell of a novel.

This is one of the best 5 books I've read this year, *capisc'*?

*The Godfather* is one of my favorite movies and novels of all time. *The Godfather Part II* is just behind it. This book, this genius of a captivating story, fits right in there. It's a prequel to *The Godfather* and sets it up wonderfully.

Luca Brasi does not sleep with the fishes in this book. He fucks the fishes.

Seriously though, this was awesome backstory to the film or original novel, *The Godfather*. This is brilliant. A prequel that tells us how Santino (Sonny) Corleone got his bones. It tells us what the family is up to during some of the years between the flashback scenes of *Godfather II* and the beginning of *Godfather*. We get a great backstory on Luca Brasi, telling how he came to be part of the Corleone organization. And the best part of this prequel just might be that there is no Jar Jar Binks!

Lots of other great characters too, including some crazy Irish. But I don't want to give away any surprises that are packed in the cannoli. It's certainly not a spoiler that we'd get some background story on Luca and Sonny, not to anyone that's seen or read the original. But the stuff that happens. *Madre 'Dio!*. Go read this.

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## Michael Twist says

I was hesitant to accept the notion of another writer trying to carry on Mario Puzo's work and constantly found myself looking for weakness in Falco's writing, characterization, and flow. This soon proved fruitless, as Falco swept me into his storyline, filling in natural gaps and backstories that remained in Puzo and Coppola's brilliant portrayals of the Corleone family. A true student of the genre, and the Corleones in particular, Falco captures even the minutest of mannerisms and speech patterns that Godfather aficionados expect, even if only subconsciously. The reader is privy to a special variety of dramatic irony as we well know what lies ahead for the Don and his family, including Fredo, Tom, Sonny, Michael, and Connie. One can't help but to rearrange their Netflix queue in anticipation of allowing Falco's brilliant backstory to supplement the very savory main course involving the first two films, if not the third.

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## Frank says

This, a prequel, is really a book about ~~James Caan~~ Sonny Corleone and Luca Brasi. There is no build-up of a



mythic character like Vito Corleone, as there was in The Godfather. Vito is here, in this book, but if you read this before Godfather, you would not be impressed by him.

Sonny's character doesn't make for much of a story. He is just a hot-headed kid who fearlessly commits thefts and who wants to be part of the family business.

Luca Brasi makes the story interesting because he is so psychopathic! It is for his innate evil and cleverness that I gave the book 4 stars.

It is obvious that the character descriptions were written with the movie actors in mind. The description of Sal Tessio could easily be a description of Abe Vigoda. The same for Luca Brasi- while there was no physical description of him in The Godfather, there is one of him in this book, and the description fits the actor that played him in The Godfather only too well.

I recommend you read this, but after you read The Godfather.

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### **Ahmad Sharabiani says**

The Family Corleone (Mario Puzo's Mafia), Edward Falco, Mario Puzo

The Family Corleone is a 2012 novel by Edward Falco, based on an unproduced screenplay by Mario Puzo, who died in 1999. It is the prequel to Puzo's The Godfather. It was published by Grand Central Publishing and released May 8, 2012.

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### **J. says**

I had picked this book as my first Summer 2012 reading because well..it is The Godfather Saga and it was commissioned by the Puzo family. Big mistake. It was obviously written by an english teacher which is as tedious to read, as listening to a french teacher speaking french. The characters are limp and just silhouettes of the deep, interesting characters that Puzo and then Coppola created for our pleasure. Sonny is a slow witted, aggressive thug who hangs out with Irish punks. Luca is an animal (an the author plays into his storyline from the original book and not the movie as the book cover states). Most of the gore discribed (poorly) was unnecessary. This would have been fair fan fiction at best and the themes are copied directly from the works of Puzo and Coppola and show no creativity by the author.

Typically a book created to rob me of its purchase cost...let the buyer beware !

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### **Harold says**

I've been trying to be stingy with my 5 star reviews, saving them for something really great like Borges, but less than five for this book wouldn't do it justice. Generally my attitude towards an author continuing the

work of an earlier author is somewhat jaundiced. It just ain't nothing like the real thing, baby. Mike Winegardner's Godfather continuation made me cringe and I never read the second one he wrote. No interest whatsoever. Ed Falco, on the other hand, shows a real understanding of the original characters and the atmosphere of the original novel.

In the book I read before this, *The Lufthansa Heist*, I took a shot at the author's use of Italian slang. Not so in this book. Falco's got it right.

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