

= The Castafiore Emerald =

The Castafiore Emerald ( French : Les Bijoux de la Castafiore ) is the twenty @-@ first volume of The Adventures of Tintin , the comics series by Belgian cartoonist Hergé . It was serialised weekly from July 1961 to September 1962 in Tintin magazine .

The book was considered by critics to be an antithesis of the previous Tintin books as Hergé deliberately broke the adventure genre he had created , making it the only book in the Tintin series where the characters remain at Marlinspike Hall , Captain Haddock 's family estate in the fictional town of Marlinshire , England , and do not venture to another part of the world . The story tells of opera singer Bianca Castafiore 's holiday visit to Marlinspike Hall , and the subsequent theft of her emerald , which was given to her by the Maharajah of the fictional province of Gopal .

Although The Castafiore Emerald received critical acclaim for making its characters follow a lead of false trails , it was not a commercial success due to the experimental nature of its narrative . It was published as a book by Casterman shortly after its conclusion . Hergé continued The Adventures of Tintin with Flight 714 , while the series itself became a defining part of the Franco @-@ Belgian comics tradition . The story was adapted for the 1991 animated series The Adventures of Tintin by Ellipse and Nelvana .

= = Synopsis = =

Tintin and Captain Haddock are walking through the countryside of Marlinshire , England when they come across a Romani community camped in a garbage dump , and re @-@ unite a lost little girl named Miarka with her family there . The Romani explain that they are not allowed to camp anywhere else so Haddock invites them to the grounds of his estate , Marlinspike Hall .

Haddock has been trying for some time to get the local stonemason , Mr. Arthur Bolt , to fix a broken step in the Marlinspike foyer , but Bolt is never available . Shortly afterwards , Milanese opera diva Bianca Castafiore invites herself to Marlinspike Hall for a vacation . Haddock , who dislikes her company , decides to leave before she arrives but trips on the broken step and sprains his ankle . The doctor puts his foot and ankle in a cast and imposes a minimum of a fortnight 's bed rest . Castafiore then arrives with her maid , Irma , and pianist , Igor Wagner . Castafiore presents a parrot for Haddock called " Iago " to keep as a pet and fusses over him , to his great discomfort .

Some time later , two reporters from the magazine Paris Flash publish a story that Haddock and Castafiore intend to get married , on the basis of a misinterpreted conversation with the hard @-@ of @-@ hearing Professor Calculus . This results in an avalanche of congratulations from Haddock 's friends . Haddock is next forced to accommodate a television crew , who occupy Marlinspike Hall for an interview with Castafiore , during which a mysterious photographer , Gino , appears with the crew . Suddenly , Irma informs Castafiore that her jewels were stolen , and Tintin suspects Gino who runs away when there is a temporary power cut , to be the thief . Castafiore , however , finds the case containing her Jewels , earlier misplaced by herself . The next day , Castafiore shows Tintin and Haddock a copy of the magazine , Tempo Di Roma , with the front cover showing a picture of Castafiore taken at Marlinspike Hall without her permission , thereby revealing that Gino was a reporter for the magazine and not a thief .

A few days later , Castafiore 's most valuable jewel , an emerald , given to her by the Maharajah of the fictional province of Gopal , goes missing . After initially questioning Irma and Nestor , the detectives Thomson and Thompson suspect the Romani . Their suspicions are heightened when they find that a pair of golden scissors belonging to Irma in Miarka 's possession , though she claims to have found them . After the Romani depart , the police starts looking for them . Tintin also investigates Igor Wagner , whose behaviour Tintin finds suspicious , but finds out that the musician is simply sneaking out to indulge a horse @-@ gambling habit .

Castafiore leaves for Milan to perform an opera . When Tintin finds that the name of the opera is La gazza ladra ( Italian : The Thieving Magpie ) , he realises that the true culprit responsible for the theft of the emerald and the scissors is a Magpie . He later explains to Haddock that the scissors must have fallen out of the nest and was found by Miarka . Tintin retrieves the emerald and hands it

to Thomson and Thompson to return it to Castafiore . The stonemason mends the broken step , only for Haddock to step on it again .

= = History = =

= = = Background = = =

Following the culmination of the previous story , Tintin in Tibet ( 1960 ) , Hergé began planning his next adventure , seeking advice from the cartoonist Greg . Greg produced two plot outlines , Les Pilules ( " The Pills " ) and Tintin et le Thermozero ( " Tintin and the Thermozero " ) . Hergé began drawing the latter of these stories , but soon abandoned it . Instead , he decided to set his new Adventure entirely at Marlinspike Hall , the only instalment in the series to do this . This was the first and last adventure after The Secret of the Unicorn ( 1943 ) to be set entirely in Belgium , and he admitted that with his proposed scenario , it was difficult " to create suspense , a semblance of danger . " The titles that Hergé had previously considered for the book were : The Castafiore Affair , Castafiore 's Sapphire , The Castafiore Jewels and The Captain and the Nightingale , but The Castafiore Emerald eventually emerged as the favourite .

Hergé 's depiction of Bianca Castafiore in the story ? a famous opera singer , pursued by the press , and changing her outfit for every occasion ? was influenced by the life of the opera singer Maria Callas . One of the new characters that Hergé introduced into the story was the stonemason Arthur Bolt ( M. Boullu in the original French version ) , whose characterisation was based on a real individual who worked for Hergé . Hergé 's depiction of the paparazzi within the story may have been influenced by his own repeat encounters with the press throughout his career . The reporter and the photographer , Christopher Willoughby @-@ Droupe and Marco Rizotto ( Jean @-@ Loup de la Battellerie and Walter Rizotto respectively in the original French version ) of the Paris Flash , are introduced into the series here , and would later be retroactively added into a re @-@ drawing of The Black Island ( 1938 ) by Bob de Moor , also making a reappearance in Tintin and the Picaros ( 1976 ) . The idea of having a proposed marriage between Castafiore and Haddock was based on a reader 's suggestion that Haddock marry .

On page 17 of the book , Jolyon Wagg mentions Castafiore 's Emerald to be a gift from , in his own words , " some character , Marjorie something or other ... " , to which Castafiore corrects Wagg by saying it was from the Maharajah of Gopal . The Maharajah of Gopal does not make an appearance in The Adventures of Tintin , but is one of the title characters in The Valley of the Cobras ( 1956 ) , which is a part of another Franco @-@ Belgian comics series created by Hergé , The Adventures of Jo , Zette and Jocko ( 1935 @-@ 1958 ) . Hergé also introduced the Romani people , members of whose community had previously appeared in Destination New York ( 1951 ) , another book from The Adventures of Jo , Zette and Jocko . The idea of including them in the story was inspired by an occasion on which Hergé came across a Romani gypsy camp near to his country home in Céroux @-@ Mousty . To ensure that his depiction of them had some accuracy , he approached Father Rupert in Verviers , who had some experience with the community , reassuring him that " The episode with the Romas will not pain you " .

The Castafiore Emerald was also one of the few instances of romance seen in The Adventures of Tintin , which begins when Calculus breeds a new variety of white @-@ coloured roses , and names it " Bianca " in honour of Castafiore . At her departure , Calculus presents a bouquet of the roses he created to Castafiore , who happily receives them and embraces Calculus , kissing him in the process . Unlike Haddock , who resents being kissed by Castafiore , Calculus willingly accepts it and blushes . Calculus also makes an imperfect attempt at colour television , which according to Michael Farr , was " some five years ahead of its day . "

= = = Influences = = =

The incident of the unwelcome band playing outside Marlinspike Hall , called the " Marlinspike Prize

Band " ( Harmonie de Moulinsart in the original French version ) , was based on a similar experience of Hergé 's who was also obliged to serve a band with drinks . To add insult to injury , they gave a toast to " Spirou " , the cartoon character created by Robert Velter . Another influence for the band was a cutting of the " L 'Orpheon France " band . Whenever Castafiore fears her jewels her stolen , her expressions , which involve placing her hands on her face , were influenced by a photograph of her model in real life , Maria Callas , taken by Cecil Beaton in 1957 . In page 43 of the book , Tintin is shown reading Robert Louis Stevenson 's novel Treasure Island ( 1883 ) , which was also one of Hergé 's favourite books . The depiction of the Romani wagons and clothing was closely modelled on photographs of Romani communities that Hergé had consulted , and he depicted members of the group engaged in basket weaving and fortune telling after reading that the Romani engaged in such activities in the Oxford English Dictionary .

The book alludes to the well @-@ known French weekly Paris Match in its depiction of the reporters from the magazine Paris Flash and jibes at its reputation for the questionable accuracy of the articles . Hergé 's use of the word Paris Flash is also based on a previous encounter of his with the Paris Match when it featured an " error @-@ ridden " article on him . It also mentions a fashion designing company named Tristan Bior , based upon the French luxury goods company , Christian Dior . Andy ( André in the original French version ) , the director of the television crew belonging to the fictional company , Supavision , was compared by Farr to an employee of Belgian Television , Jacques Cogniaux . In a tribute to Auguste Piccard , Calculus ' model in real life , Castafiore greets him as a famous balloonist . Hergé also inserted references to previous stories in the narrative ; he included the three models of the Unicorn , originally featured in The Secret of the Unicorn , in a background scene at Marlinspike Hall .

= = = Publication = = =

The Castafiore Emerald was serialised weekly from 4 July 1961 to 4 September 1962 in Tintin magazine and published in book form as Les Bijoux De La Castafiore by Casterman in 1963 . For the English version of the book , the gramophone record that Tintin receives from Castafiore , which is the " Jewel Song " from Charles Gounod 's Faust , is titled " Margarethe " , the name by which Gounod 's opera is known in Germany but not in England .

The Castafiore Emerald was the first book in The Adventures of Tintin that was published in England the same year ? 1963 ? it was published in Belgium and France . When Hergé read the English version of the book , he found it to be " absolutely delirious " and even suggested to the book 's translator , " You really would think that this was originally written in English . " In the original French version , Calculus explains about his invention and ignores Haddock 's attempt to refer to the latest developments in the United States . This is not seen in the English edition .

= = Critical analysis = =

The book was considered by critics to be an antithesis of the previous Tintin ventures . Michael Farr , author of Tintin : The Complete Companion , stated that in The Castafiore Emerald , Hergé permits Haddock to remain at home in Marlinspike , an ideal that the " increasingly travel weary " character had long cherished , further stating that if Hergé had decided to end the Tintin series , The Castafiore Emerald would have been " a suitable final volume " . He compared the story to the detective novels by Agatha Christie , in that the narrative was " littered from start to finish with clues , most of which are false " , misleading both Tintin and the reader . He felt that in setting the story entirely at Marlinspike , Hergé " deliberately broke the classic adventure mould he had created " , and in doing so " succeeded in creating a masterpiece in the manner of a well constructed stage comedy or farce " . Farr viewed the volume as " a tour de force " , noting that it was quite dissimilar to any other instalment in The Adventures of Tintin . As such , he felt that it would have been a suitable story on which to end the series . As a result of its " experimental , exceptional nature " , Farr believed that The Castafiore Emerald " never gained the public recognition it merits " , stating that while attracting " a loyal following " it had not become one of the most popular Adventures of

Tintin , something that he thought was " unjust " .

Jean @-@ Marc Lofficier and Randy Lofficier , co @-@ authors of the book , The Pocket Essential Tintin , described Hergé 's depiction of Castafiore in the story as " a force of nature " , praising the way that he depicted her many outfit changes . They described Mr Bolt as being both a " Godot @-@ like character " and as being akin to Basil Fawlty from the British sitcom Fawlty Towers , while adding that the broken step acts " like a Greek God 's curse " in the story that affects everyone except Castafiore . They interpreted The Castafiore Emerald as Hergé 's Nouveau Roman , in which he realises that he cannot improve upon the standard set in Tintin in Tibet and thus decides to " deconstruct his own myth and create the antithesis of a Tintin adventure . " Given that accidents and bad luck befall most of the characters in the story , Lofficier and Lofficier described the story as " a comedy of errors , a wonderful tribute to Murphy 's Law . " Ultimately , they awarded the story four stars out of five .

English screenwriter and author of Tintin : Hergé and his Creation ( 1991 ) , Harry Thompson stated that in The Castafiore Emerald , " everything is topsy @-@ turvy " , with obvious villains being shown to be harmless , and alleged crimes turning out to have not happened . He thought that Haddock was a clear parallel for Hergé himself in the story , representing his own desires and frustrations . Ultimately , he considered the volume to be " Hergé 's masterpiece " when it came to technical issues , representing " the high tide of his creative abilities " .

Hergé biographer Benoît Peeters described the story as " the most surprising of Tintin 's adventures " , with Hergé having been " determined to push his reexamination of the comic strip even further . " He noted that in the story , Castafiore 's " dramatic femininity " disrupted the " idea of sociability " that pervaded Marlinspike , with its " proper respect of space , a form of harmony in independence " . He added that " this casually alluring tale is one of the most subtly handled of the adventures ; a riot of clues , both real and false , give The Castafiore Emerald an unequaled density " , elsewhere referring to it as " a catalogue of mishaps with nothing or no one spared " . He described it as having brought to the foreground the " anarchist and non @-@ conformist tendencies of Hergé 's work " which had previously been shown in Quick & Flupke . He also saw the book as being " a sort of flashback " for Hergé , allowing him to relive events from his own past ; thus , Peeters thought that the constant renovations at Marlinspike represented the constant renovations at Hergé 's country home of Céroux @-@ Mousty , while Haddock 's time in the wheelchair represented his former wife 's Germaine time spent similarly disabled , and Castafiore was a parody of Germaine herself . Ultimately , he felt that the story ? " the last great adventure of Tintin " ? was " also a swan song " , for Hergé " did not dare to continue down this path , where not all of his readers had followed him " , and which had represented " a permanent loss of innocence . "

= = Adaptations = =

In June 1970 , a long article on The Castafiore Emerald by French philosopher and author , Michel Serres , appeared in the literary review , Critique , under the title , Les Bijoux distraits ou la cantarice sauve .

In 1991 , a collaboration between the French studio Ellipse and the Canadian animation company Nelvana adapted 21 of the stories into a series of episodes , each 42 minutes long . The Castafiore Emerald was the nineteenth episode of The Adventures of Tintin to be produced , although it ran half as long as most of the others . Directed by Stéphane Bernasconi , the series has been praised for being " generally faithful " , with compositions having been actually directly taken from the panels in the original comic book .