

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
"EPISODE TWO" TRANSCRIPT

Written by

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Adapted from the novel
"The Count of Monte Cristo" by Alexandre Dumas

A Little Lucky Production

"The Count of Monte Cristo" contains mature content, including violence, suicide, discriminatory language, and other traumatic themes. Listener discretion is advised."

WE OPEN WITH THE THEME SONG, BUT LET IT FADE INTO NOTHING FOR A TRUE, FRESH START. 1

INT. MORCERF HOME - DINING ROOM 2

RIGHT WHERE WE LEFT OFF. THE COUNT HAS ARRIVED, IS GREETED BY ALBERT.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Monsieur le Comte! How wonderful for you to come.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: The pleasure is mine, Vicomte.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Please, just Albert. I am not the Vicomte de Morcerf around friends. But sit, join us. I was just speaking of our adventures in Rome.

LUCIEN DEBRAY: It sounds like quite the tale.

MAXIMILIAN: Monsieur le Comte, did you really face off against Luigi Vampa?

A DRAMATIC BEAT.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Yes.

THE ROOM MURMURS.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Luigi Vampa was no more than a bully. Had you been present, you would have responded the same.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Maximilian and Château-Renaud recently returned from fighting bullies of their own.

CHÂTEAU-RENAUD: If he did not rescue me in Constantinople, I would be dead.

MAXIMILIAN: Well, um. Like Monsieur le Comte said. Had you been present, you would have done the same.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Beauchamp is the chief editor of *L'Impartial*.

BEAUCHAMP: (in greeting) Count.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: And Lucien serves as Secretary to the Minister of the Interior.

LUCIEN DEBRAY: I'm stunned that you haven't gifted him copies of our biographies.

CHÂTEAU-RENAUD: Do not give him ideas.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Please, eat, Count! And everyone else as well. (to the Count) Surely you must be hungry. At least, well, I assumed.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Then I must apologize. Despite just arriving I am not hungry.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Not hungry?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I slept through most of my journey.

CHÂTEAU-RENAUD: You slept from Italy to France?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Indeed. In Arabia, I met a doctor who instructed me on the science of herbalism. Now, when I travel, I rely on an exact concoction of herbs to incite a restful, death-like sleep.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Fascinating.

BEAUCHAMP: What is this concoction, exactly?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Here.

THE COUNT REMOVES A SMALL PILLBOX FROM HIS JACKET, PASSES IT AROUND THE TABLE.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: The primary components are opium and hashish. Both of which I purchase myself to ensure their purity. You are welcome to it, but I warn you I do not exaggerate its abilities.

MAXIMILIAN: Is this an emerald?

BEAUCHAMP: The pillbox?

MAXIMILIAN: Look.

CHÂTEAU-RENAUD: That is absolutely a giant emerald.

MAXIMILIAN: It's like an egg.

BEAUCHAMP: Where did you acquire such a thing?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: From my collection. There were three, but I gifted the other two. One to a sultan and one to His Holy Father the Pope. And if one can't have all three, one may as well utilize the remainder.

LUCIEN DEBRAY: You hollowed out an emerald. To hold your drugs.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Yes.

THIS SINKS INTO THE GROUP.

BEAUCHAMP: So, uh, Count. What brings you to Paris?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: A bit of everything. Business, culture, real estate. I should hope to be fully integrated by week's end.

LUCIEN DEBRAY: That is an ambitious goal.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Forgive me if I have breached etiquette. I been abroad for so long that I am poorly attuned to Parisian customs.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: What Lucien means to say is that Parisian society is tightly-knit. Families have known each other for generations. Château-renaud's ancestors are known to have served at King Arthur's Round Table.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: And where have your ancestors sat, Monsieur de Morcerf?

ALBERT STAMMERS, IS SAVED BY...

MAXIMILIAN: Albert's father is a celebrated soldier from the Grecian campaigns.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I am familiar with those campaigns. A most noble endeavor.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: I hope to one day as be as noble as my father.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Hmm.

HE LETS IT SIT, SILENCE CLIMBING IN.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Count, perhaps I might provide a tour of my home? I am sure I can provide something more exciting to look at than food you are not eating.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I am most curious to see the current Parisian design styles.

ALBERT SHOOTS UP. THE COUNT FOLLOWS MORE GRACEFULLY.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Yes! We just updated our parlor. And I've brought back pieces from Rome you would appreciate. Come, this way. Oh. (to everyone else) You know how it is, do what you will. (to Count) This way. Now, you most likely saw this on your way in, but here is our parlor room...

THEY EXIT.

LUCIEN DEBRAY: Well.

BEAUCHAMP: Yes.

CHÂTEAU-RENAUD: He is interesting.

LUCIEN DEBRAY: Quite.

BEAUCHAMP: And very wealthy.

CHÂTEAU-RENAUD: Mmhmm.

MAXIMILIAN: I think I like him.

LUCIEN DEBRAY: Well, of course you do, Maximilian. You're poor.

OFF THE SNORTS OF THE PEANUT GALLERY TO...

INT. MORCERF HOME - PARLOR

3

ALBERT LEADS THE COUNT THROUGH THE ROOM.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Part of my mother's collection. The artist is... *boulangerie*?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Boulanger.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Right, yes. That's it. One of my favorite painters. And this is Decamps --

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: No Salvatore Rosa, but his work is more poetic.

THE COUNT STOPS WALKING, ALBERT DOESN'T NOTICE.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Yes, of course. Totally agree. And, because you have been to Arabia, you will appreciate these. My mother recently purchased a collection of tapestries from a ship returned from Japan! They're sitting in this corner for now, but soon -- Count?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: (jolted from thought) Hmm? Apologies, Vicomte.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: No need to apologize! You are looking at the most treasured item in the room. My true favorite.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: It is beautiful.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: It is a Robert Leopold. Dear friend of ours. My mother commissioned her own portrait as a gift for my father. We have roots in Catalonia, hence the costume and the backdrop of the sea. She is younger, here. Than she once was. But she has lost none of her beauty. My father hates this portrait. Argued over it for hours when he saw it. So now it hangs here.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: In your parlor.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: My mother has the respect and admiration of Paris, yet rarely entertains. (beat) Are you alright, Count?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: (recovering) The -- the craftsmanship is excellent.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: The Swiss have excellent attention to detail.

FOOTSTEPS SOUND FROM OUTSIDE THE ROOM.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Excellent timing. Father! Hey -- father! Fa-ther! Who is out there?

A SERVANT STEPS INSIDE THE ROOM.

SERVANT: May I assist you, Vicomte?

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Is my father home?

SERVANT: He is.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Well, go and fetch him. There is someone he must meet.

HE DOES.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: It is a stroke of luck my father is here now. He has assembly later. Oh, I should tell Beauchamp.

THE SERVANT GUIDES FERNAND DE MORCERF INTO THE ROOM.

FERNAND DE MORCERF: (sotto) Summoned like a servant under my own roof, impudent child --

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Father!

FERNAND DE MORCERF: (overly charming) Albert! And company. To what do I owe the honor?

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Father, you remember my adventures in Rome.

FERNAND DE MORCERF: How could I forget.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: This is the man who saved me. I have the honor of introducing you to the Count of Monte Cristo.

FERNAND DE MORCERF: Monsieur le Comte! Thank you for your service to our family. You will always be welcome in my house. Preserving our family's only heir is a debt that I cannot repay.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Think nothing of it. I have been admiring the portraits within your parlor.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: He appreciates the Leopold, father.

FERNAND DE MORCERF: The Leopold? Ah. Well, you are new to Paris. There is much that will refine your artistic palette.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I imagine my time here will well supplement years of travel and intense, personal study of global craftsmen, artistic styles, and scientific innovations. From multiple continents, of course.

FERNAND DE MORCERF: (inaudible) Pompous stranger mistakes laziness for good taste.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Did you say something just now?

FERNAND DE MORCERF: I did not.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: I heard something.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Perhaps there is something specific you wish to express?

FERNAND DE MORCERF: (stammering) No, Monsieur le Comte. You misread me. But I must be going, I am to speak this afternoon. We shall meet again, I hope.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Assuredly.

FERNAND DE
MORCERF: Good afternoon, then.

FERNAND TURNS, HASTILY LEAVES.

THE COUNT OF
MONTE CRISTO: Regrettably, I should depart as well.

ALBERT DE
MORCERF: So soon?

THE COUNT OF
MONTE CRISTO: I am to complete the inspection of my second property today.

ALBERT DE
MORCERF: Second property?

THE COUNT OF
MONTE CRISTO: In Auteuil. A complement to my primary residence on the Champs-Élysées.

ALBERT DE
MORCERF: Barely a morning and you have done so much.

THE COUNT OF
MONTE CRISTO: There is much to do, Albert. And much more to follow.

ACT BREAK

EXT. DANGLARS HOME - ENTRANCE

4

CARRIAGES AND QUIET CHATTER FILL THE
STREETS OF PARIS. THE WEALTHIEST AREAS
ALWAYS DO SOUND THE NICEST.

BERTUCCIO WALKS UP TOWARDS THE DOOR,
KNOCKS. A SERVANT OPENS IT.

SERVANT: *Bonne journée.*

BERTUCCIO: *Enchantée.* I have been asked to purchase the best horses in Paris and have found no finer than the two harnessed to your carriage.

SERVANT: I don't think they're for sale.

BERTUCCIO: Perhaps you would inquire.

SERVANT: But I don't think they're for sale.

BERTUCCIO: Please inquire with the master of the house.

SERVANT: Sure, but --

BERTUCCIO: If you could. *S'il vous plaît.*

THE SERVANT CLOSSES THE DOOR, HUSTLES AWAY. BERTUCCIO WAITS FOR HIM TO RETURN. HE DOES.

SERVANT: Per my master, these horses are worth at least sixteen thousand francs.

BERTUCCIO: My employer is prepared to offer thirty-two thousand for each dappled-gray. (beat) Please relay our offer.

THE SERVANT DOESN'T MOVE. BERTUCCIO CLEARS HIS THROAT, THE SERVANT SCAMPERS INSIDE.

HEAVIER FOOTFALL COMES FROM BEHIND THE DOOR. IT SWINGS OPEN, REVEALING DANGLARS.

DANGLARS: What is this about buying my horses?

BERTUCCIO: Your Excellency. Per my employer, I have an offer of thirty-two thousand francs for each of your steeds --

DANGLARS: If you spoke true and in honor of your master, then you would pay immediately. As a sign of good faith.

BERTUCCIO: *Oui, Monsieur.*

HE TAKES OUT A BILL FROM HIS JACKET.

BERTUCCIO: I have a signed bill here, all that is required is for me to add the agreed upon price and it is yours.

DANGLARS: (to Servant) Get a pen.

SERVANT: What?

DANGLARS: A *pen*, boy.

SERVANT: *Oui.*

HE SCAMPERS AWAY, RETURNS WITH A PEN. HE HANDS THE PEN TO BERTUCCIO, WHO QUICKLY FILLS OUT THE BILL. HANDS IT TO DANGLARS.

BERTUCCIO: Thank you, Monsieur. I shall take --

DANGLARS: Remove the harnesses. They were not included in the price.

BERTUCCIO: Of course, your Excellency. My master has provided his own. I shall leave yours by your carriage.

DANGLARS: See that you do.

BERTUCCIO: *Bonne journée --*

DANGLARS SLAMS THE DOOR IN HIS FACE.

INT. DANGLARS HOME

5

DANGLARS SPINS ON HIS HEEL, WAVES THE BILL IN FRONT OF HIM.

DANGLARS: (laughing) Thirty-two thousand francs for a pair of dying horses. A banker always turns a profit.

DANGLARS WALKS THROUGH HIS HOME, BACK TO HIS OFFICE.

INT. DANGLARS HOME - OFFICE

6

HE ENTERS, PICKS UP A BELL. RINGS IT.

THE SERVANT HUSTLES INSIDE.

SERVANT: *Oui, Baron.*

DANGLARS: When my wife arrives home, bring her to me at once.

SERVANT: *Oui, Baron.*

FROM THE ENTRYWAY, THE DOORBELL RINGS. NEITHER THE SERVANT NOR DANGLARS MOVES.

DANGLARS: Get that.

SERVANT: *Oui, Baron.*

HE SPRINTS AWAY. DANGLARS SIGHS, SITS. THE SERVANT RETURNS.

SERVANT: (out of breath) For you, excellency.

HE PLACES A CALLING CARD ON THE DESK.

SERVANT: A calling card. From the Count of Monte Cristo.

DANGLARS: Monte Cristo doesn't have a count.

SERVANT: He is in your foyer and wishes to speak with you regarding an account?

DANGLARS: He claims to have an account with me?

SERVANT: I did not ask, your Excellency.

DANGLARS SIGHS HEAVILY.

DANGLARS: Why do I even bother. If he is here, bring him in.

THE SERVANT LEAVES.

DANGLARS: (sotto) Everyone wants to play with money they simply do not have.

THE SERVANT RETURNS, THE COUNT IN TOW.

SERVANT: Your Excellency. I present, the Count of Monte Cristo.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: (to Servant) *Merci*. (to Danglars) Monsieur le Baron Danglars, I presume?

DANGLARS: Yes. Welcome, Monsieur de Monte Cristo.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Count will do.

DANGLARS: Apologies. You may sit.

THEY DO.

DANGLARS: I was not aware that there was a Count of Monte Cristo.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: And I was not aware that the title of Baron made one so forgetful of the titles of others.

DANGLARS: In Paris, Count, our government is of the people. All people are citizens, regardless of their status.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I understand completely. A true citizen of his people would demand to be called baron by his equals, his excellency to his betters, and citizen to those he claims as friends. (beat) Fortunately, it appears we can become friends.

DANGLARS: Can we?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Here.

HE TAKES OUT A LETTER, HANDS IT TO DANGLARS.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: A more formal introduction.

DANGLARS OPENS THE LETTER.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Prior to my arrival in Paris, I spoke with the firm of Thomson and French, whom I have steadily done business with over the past few years.

DANGLARS: You seek to open an unlimited line of credit?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I was told you had funds to support such a thing.

DANGLARS: Well, yes. But an unlimited line of credit -- it is so vague a term --

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: In my experience, "unlimited" simply means "unlimited." Unless, oh. Do you not speak French?

DANGLARS: Perhaps if you could tell me exactly how much you would intend to draw on an account with me.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Baron. If I knew exactly how much funding I required then I would not have requested an unlimited amount.

DANGLARS: Monsieur le Comte. If you were, to say, draw a million francs --

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: A million? What use would one million francs be to me?

THE COUNT REMOVES TWO BONDS FROM HIS JACKET, SHOWS THEM TO DANGLARS.

DANGLARS: That is --

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: The one million I carry on my person, yes. If you are not interested in my business, I can venture elsewhere.

DANGLARS: I would be most honored to take on your business, Monsieur le Comte. You must understand. Such an entrance can raise concerns --

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: And do you have any other inquiries or concerns?

DANGLARS: I assure you, Monsieur le Comte. No friend has ever found my coffers wanting.

MADAME DANGLARS (OS): WHERE IS HE?

CLACKED HEELS ECHO DOWN THE HALLWAY, TOWARDS THE OFFICE.

DANGLARS: Excuse me, Monsieur le Comte.

THE DOORS SLAM OPEN. MADAME DANGLARS STORMS IN.

MADAME DANGLARS: What have you done with my horses?

DANGLARS: Hermine --

MADAME DANGLARS: Just because I am out for tea with Lucien --

LUCIEN DEBRAY: (weakly) Hello.

MADAME
DANGLARS: -- does not mean you may sell my steeds which I bought with my money that I earned and harness them to the most ghastly carriage I have ever seen! Do you deny it?

DANGLARS: No.

SHE WHACKS HIM.

MADAME
DANGLARS: How dare you! Selling! My! Horses!

DANGLARS: Hermine --

MADAME
DANGLARS: If it were not for me you would only have trinkets and baubles.

SHE WHACKS HIM HARDER.

DANGLARS: Stop this --

THE COUNT OF
MONTE CRISTO: Madame, are you inquiring about the two gray horses chained to a black carriage?

MADAME DANGLARS STOPS. TURNS TO THE
COUNT, NOW REALIZING THEY ARE NOT IN
PRIVATE.

MADAME
DANGLARS: Yes.

THE COUNT OF
MONTE CRISTO: Then the fault is mine, Madame. Not your husband's. I sent my servant to acquire the most beautiful horses in Paris, and it appears that he has purchased yours.

MADAME
DANGLARS: Oh.

THE COUNT OF
MONTE CRISTO: An insult I did not intend to make, I assure you.

MADAME
DANGLARS: Well. That is a different matter entirely --

THE COUNT OF
MONTE CRISTO: On the contrary. You are Madame Danglars, I take it?

MADAME
DANGLARS: *Enchantée.*

THE COUNT OF
MONTE CRISTO: Forgive my misstep. I will return your horses as soon as possible.

DANGLARS: The agreement --

MADAME Your agreement --
DANGLARS:

THE COUNT OF Will be honored. What are two horses amongst two dear
MONTE CRISTO: friends?

DANGLARS: I suppose that that will do.

THE COUNT OF It is settled. Monsieur Baron, I shall send my
MONTE CRISTO: associate tomorrow to pick up my first withdrawal.
Let us say, six million? And Madame Danglars, again,
my deepest apologies.

HE TAKES HER HAND, KISSES IT.

THE COUNT OF I shall see myself out.
MONTE CRISTO:

AND SO HE DOES.

MADAME (the Count's influence fading) Who was that?
DANGLARS:

DANGLARS: A new client. The Count of Monte Cristo.

MADAME Who requires six million francs?
DANGLARS:

DANGLARS: Does it matter? The profits will be excellent. Who
cares what he does with it or what kind of man he is?

LUCIEN CLEARS HIS THROAT.

LUCIEN DEBRAY: Actually, I can answer that.

AND THIS SEGUES INTO A...

MONTAGE - PARISIAN RUMOR MILL

7

LUCIEN'S STORY LEADS INTO A CLASHING
SOUNDSCAPE OF REGALED TELLINGS OF THE
COUNT AND ALBERT'S MEETING IN ITALY.
VOICES OVERLAP, MELDING INTO A SINGULAR
SOUNDSCAPE - CREATING AUDIO NOT UNLIKE A
MUSICAL, SFX-HEAVY MOMENT WITHIN THE
EPISODE.

(BELOW ARE LINES TO BE INCLUDED IN THE
MONTAGE, WILL NOT NECESSARILY BE USED IN
FULL AND IN THIS ORDER.)

LUCIEN DEBRAY: Albert de Morcerf and Franz d'Epinau met The Count of
Monte Cristo in Rome. During Carnevale.

BEAUCHAMP: He rides out that night and walks directly into the bandits' lair, demanding to speak to their leader himself. And as soon as he...

CHÂTEAU-RENAUD: He is fabulously wealthy. Tosses rare jewels around as if they are nothing.

MAXIMILIAN: He is well-traveled, well-spoken, and impeccably mannered.

SERVANT 1: He's very imposing. Dark hair, darker eyes. If he wasn't so terrifying, I think I'd love him.

MADAME DANGLARS: He wants six million francs on his person. Six million! He has an unlimited line of credit. With my husband, of course.

WOMAN 2: Is he handsome?

WOMAN 1: Handsome and unmarried.

SERVANT 3: I heard he fought ten bandits.

SERVANT 4: I heard it was twenty.

SERVANT 2: I heard he punched the leader in the face.

MAN 1: His servant went to another estate to buy the finest horses in Paris.

DANGLARS: He did open a line of credit with me. But I still have the better of the deal.

MAN 3: He paid seventy thousand francs for two horses. Out of pocket!

MAN 1: The wife went ballistic.

FERNAND DE MORCERF: He seems perfectly civil, but I hardly understand the commotion around the man. Paris sees new faces all the time.

THE MONTAGE BUILDS TO A CRESCENDO
ALONGSIDE ACCOMPANYING MUSIC. THEN, STOPS
SHORT. IN-WORLD SFX SHIFTS TO...

EXT. DANGLARS HOME

8

MADAME DANGLARS WAITS OUTSIDE WITH MADAME
DE VILLEFORT AND HER YOUNG SON, EDUARD.

MADAME DANGLARS: He offers the most gracious apology and immediately departs. I don't know when he's returning the horses. You know the Baron. Terrible with deal terms. So for me, it is out of sight, out of mind.

EDUARD DE VILLEFORT: *Maman, I am bored.*

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: We are leaving soon, my pet. (to Madame Danglars) You were saying.

MADAME DANGLARS: Well, obviously I'm concerned about getting the horses. And yet, he returns them within the hour.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: Really?

EDUARD DE VILLEFORT: *Maman.*

MADAME DANGLARS: And not only that. But, look. Here.

A CARRIAGE PULLS UP IN FRONT OF THEM, STOPS. MADAME DANGLARS LEADS MADAME DE VILLEFORT TO THE HORSES.

MADAME DANGLARS: He returns both horses adorned with these.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: The harnesses?

EDUARD BEGINS TO WAIL.

MADAME DANGLARS: The rubies.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: Oh my -- they're real?

MADAME DANGLARS: Yes.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: But they are massive.

MADAME DANGLARS: Lucien says that the Count is rather relaxed with his jewels.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: Well, if Lucien says it. Eduard, stop that at once!

EDUARD DE VILLEFORT: I want to go home!

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: The carriage is here, *mon choux!* (to Madame Danglars) Have they been inspected?

MADAME DANGLARS: Yesterday. The Baron seems to suspect his newest client at every turn. I told him to leave the investigating to your husband, but you know.
(MORE)

You shall have to let me know how they ride. I have not used the horses since they have been returned.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: My interest is certainly piqued in this Count of Monte Cristo.

MADAME DANGLARS: I hear he is to attend the Opera this week.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: Noted.

EDUARD SOMEHOW WAILS LOUDER.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: I believe we must be going. Thank you again, for lending us your carriage.

MADAME DANGLARS: Of course.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT AND EDUARD ENTER THE CARRIAGE.

MADAME DANGLARS: Goodbye, Eduard! I shall see you next time.

EDUARD DE VILLEFORT: You're ugly.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: Eduard! Get inside! He is so young.

MADAME DANGLARS: And so foolish for his age. Enjoy the ride home, Madame de Villefort.

THE CARRIAGE DOOR SHUTS. IT BEGINS TO ROLL AWAY.

INT. CARRIAGE

9

MADAME DE VILLEFORT AND EDUARD SETTLE INTO THEIR SEATS.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: Eduard, you were very rude to Madame Danglars.

EDUARD DE VILLEFORT: I thought I wasn't supposed to lie.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: No, you only lie when it benefits you. If you have no reason to speak, then you have no reason to lie. Do you understand?

EDUARD DE VILLEFORT: I'm thirsty.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: And we shall get you a very nice glass of lemonade, *mon choux*. Come, sit by me.

THE CARRIAGE SWERVES, PICKS UP PACE.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: Keep your eyes on the road!

IT GETS FASTER, WILDER. MADAME DE VILLEFORT AND EDUARD ARE THROWN FROM THEIR SEATS.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: Excuse you!

THE HORSES BRAY LOUDLY, BREAK INTO A FULL GALLOP. SOMETHING IS VERY WRONG.

EDUARD STARTS TO CRY.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: Stop the carriage! I said, stop the carriage!

THE HORSES ARE OUT OF CONTROL. THE CARRIAGE WHEELS SPIN WILDLY, SWINGING THE VEHICLE FROM SIDE TO SIDE AND THE RIDERS WITH IT. PEDESTRIANS AND OTHER DRIVERS SHOUT AT THE DANGER OF IT ALL. AT SOME POINT, EDUARD STOPS CRYING.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: Help us! Somebody help us!

FROM OUTSIDE THE CARRIAGE, WE HEAR ANOTHER HORSE'S GALLOPING JOIN THE FRAY.

RIDER (OS): Hyah!

MADAME DE VILLEFORT WHIMPERS IN FEAR AS, OUTSIDE, THE HORSES ARE WRANGLLED BY A RIDER. THE HORSES NEIGH, THE CARRIAGE SCREECHES TO A HALT.

THE SCENE CALMS. MADAME DE VILLEFORT'S BREATHING TAKES UP THE SOUNDSCAPE.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: Get up, Eduard. We are getting out. Eduard? Eduard!

EDUARD IS UNCONSCIOUS. MADAME DE VILLEFORT LUNGES FOR HER SON, TRIES TO SHAKE HIM AWAKE.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: Wake up, Eduard! Help! Somebody help, my son --

THE CARRIAGE DOOR OPENS. IT IS THE RIDER.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: My son. He -- he is not waking up --

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I will save him.

THE RIDER IS THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: But you will have to give him to me.

AND MADAME DE VILLEFORT OBEYS HIM.

ACT BREAK

INT. THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO'S HOME - PARLOR 10

THE COUNT CARRIES EDUARD INSIDE, MADAME DE VILLEFORT FOLLOWS.

THE COUNT PLACES EDUARD DOWN ON A COUCH, TAKES OUT A SMALL BOTTLE.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Breathe.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: What is that? Is he breathing? What is wrong with him? Oh, Eduard.

EDUARD WAKES, BEGINS TO COUGH. MADAME DE VILLEFORT CRIES WITH RELIEF.

EDUARD DE VILLEFORT: *Maman.*

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: Oh, Eduard. I thought I lost you. (to the Count) Thank you, Monsieur. You have my eternal gratitude.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: The life of an innocent is always worth risking one's own. May I offer you refreshment?

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: I -- yes, I do feel quite faint.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Bertuccio! Tea for our guest.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: Madame de Villefort, wife of Gérard de Villefort, Chief Prosecutor to His Majesty.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: *Enchantée, madame.* I remain in your service as long as you require.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: And who shall I name as my son's savior?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I am the Count of Monte Cristo.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: Monsieur le Comte. *Enchantée.*

BERTUCCIO ARRIVES WITH TEA, SETS IT DOWN.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: Say, your potion. Just now.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: From my more recent travels. The scent is powerful enough to wake the dead. But should you ingest it, it can be lethal.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: What a useful combination.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Allow me the honor of providing you some. I have much to spare.

EDUARD BEGINS TO STIR.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: Oh, *mon choux!*

EDUARD DE VILLEFORT: *Maman.* This house is ugly.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: He does not know what he's saying.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Mmm.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: Perhaps I shall bring him home.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Nonsense, Madame. Bertuccio is my most trusted servant. He shall take you.

EDUARD DE VILLEFORT: You look funny.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: As well as your charming son.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: We could not possibly impose.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I have only taken you partway out of danger, Madame. Allow me to complete the journey.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT: Well, if you insist.

INT. VILLEFORT HOME - PARLOR

11

A TRANQUIL, DOMESTIC SCENE. VALENTINE DE VILLEFORT LIGHTLY PLAYS THE PIANO.

NOIRTIER SITS IN HIS WHEELCHAIR NEARBY.
HE GRUNTS.

VALENTINE DE
VILLEFORT: Yes, Grandfather?

SHE STOPS PLAYING, MOVES TO SIT WITH HIM.

NOIRTIER GRUNTS AGAIN.

VALENTINE DE
VILLEFORT: Of course, Grandfather.

VALENTINE POURS NOIRTIER A GLASS OF
WATER, SERVES IT TO HIM.

VALENTINE DE
VILLEFORT: Well done, Grandfather. If you keep this strength up, you may be able to serve yourself. (beat) I'm sorry, Grandfather. You know I tease. Permanent paralysis is permanent. What would you like me to play next?

NOIRTIER GRUNTS. (NOTE: HE'S GONNA DO A
LOT OF THIS. GET READY.)

VALENTINE DE
VILLEFORT: Again? Only for you, grandfather.

SHE GOES BACK TO THE PIANO.

VALENTINE DE
VILLEFORT: Because you are my favorite.

SHE BEGINS THE SAME SONG AGAIN.

MADAME DE VILLEFORT'S FOOTSTEPS ECHO IN
FROM ANOTHER ROOM.

MADAME DE
VILLEFORT
(OS): Gérard! Gérard!

NOIRTIER GRUNTS DISAPPROVINGLY.

VALENTINE DE
VILLEFORT: Grandfather!

MADAME DE
VILLEFORT
(OS): Gérard!

SHE ENTERS THE PARLOR WITH EDUARD.
VALENTINE STOPS PLAYING.

MADAME DE
VILLEFORT: Valentine. Have you seen your father?

VALENTINE DE
VILLEFORT: No, Stepmother.

MADAME DE
VILLEFORT: Typical. (shouting outside of the room) Gérard!

EDUARD DE
VILLEFORT: Maman, I want lemonade.

MADAME DE
VILLEFORT: Valentine, be a dear.

VALENTINE DE
VILLEFORT: Yes, Stepmother.

SHE RISES, LEAVES. FOOTSTEPS FROM THE
HALLWAY SIGNAL THE ENTRANCE OF VILLEFORT.

VILLEFORT: I cannot concentrate with your incessant racket!

MADAME DE
VILLEFORT: Husband. A most miraculous event has occurred.

VILLEFORT: Has it?

MADAME DE
VILLEFORT: Are you familiar with the Count of Monte Cristo?

VILLEFORT: No.

MADAME DE
VILLEFORT: Well, you are going to be. He just saved your son and heir --

VILLEFORT: Valentine is my heir.

MADAME DE
VILLEFORT: (ignoring) The Count is new to Paris and is the only topic of conversation. You will call upon him and offer your extended gratitude.

VILLEFORT: I am the Crown Prosecutor to His Majesty. I do not call upon people. People call upon me.

VALENTINE RETURNS WITH LEMONADE.

VALENTINE DE
VILLEFORT: Here, Eduard.

EDUARD DE
VILLEFORT: I got saved today!

VALENTINE DE
VILLEFORT: How very exciting!

MADAME DE
VILLEFORT: Valentine, take your brother and grandfather into another room. Your father and I have matters to discuss.

VALENTINE DE
VILLEFORT: Yes, Stepmother.

VALENTINE TAKES NOIRTIER'S WHEELCHAIR,
WHEELS HIM OUT OF THE ROOM.

VALENTINE DE
VILLEFORT: Come along, Eduard! (whispering to Noirtier) If we leave now, Grandfather, we avoid being collateral damage. But I wonder who shall win out?

NOIRTIER SNORTS.**EXT. THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO'S HOME**

12

VILLEFORT'S HEAVY FOOTSTEPS CLOMP UP THE STEPS. HE EMITS A HEAVY SIGH, KNOCKS ON THE DOOR.

BERTUCCIO ANSWERS.

VILLEFORT: *Bonsoir.* I am Gérard de Villefort, Crown Prosecutor to His Majesty the King. Is the Count of Monte Cristo at home?

BERTUCCIO: He is.

VILLEFORT: Please tell your master that I am here to see him.

BERTUCCIO: Of course. Please.

HE OPENS THE DOOR FURTHER. VILLEFORT WALKS INSIDE.

INT. THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO'S HOME - ENTRY

13

VILLEFORT'S FOOTSTEPS ECHO THROUGH THE GRAND SPACE.

VILLEFORT: If he is unavailable, perhaps I shall leave my card.

BERTUCCIO: The table to your left, Monsieur.

VILLEFORT: Hmm. Your table is rather full.

BERTUCCIO: The citizens of Paris have been most welcoming to Monsieur le Comte.

VILLEFORT: I see.

BERTUCCIO: Please follow me.

THEY WALK DOWN THE HALL TOGETHER. ONCE AT THE APPROPRIATE ROOM, BERTUCCIO KNOCKS.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
(OS)

Enter.

BERTUCCIO OPENS THE DOOR.

INT. THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO'S HOME - OFFICE

14

BERTUCCIO Monsieur Gérard de Villefort to see you.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Thank you, Bertuccio. Welcome, Crown Prosecutor. May I offer you refreshment?

VILLEFORT: No, thank you.

BERTUCCIO LEAVES, CLOSES THE DOOR BEHIND HIM. VILLEFORT MOVES TO SIT.

VILLEFORT: I am told you are owed my gratitude for saving my son and wife. I am here to pay you that gratitude. So. Thank you.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I find one's drive to fulfill a self-imposed duty weighs less than the recipient's gratitude of receiving it. How fortunate we are that your wife and son ended up close to my residence.

VILLEFORT: You were close by.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Please, sit.

THE COUNT SITS. VILLEFORT LINGERS.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: If we remain split between seated and standing perhaps you could pour my tea.

VILLEFORT SITS QUICKLY, BUMPING INTO A TABLE.

VILLEFORT: Apologies.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: No need. That board has remained stagnant for months. Do you play?

VILLEFORT: Chess? No. I have little time for amusements.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Interesting.

THE COUNT STANDS, WALKS TOWARDS THE CHESS BOARD. SITS.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I studied the game in India. Where it originated, of course. I have never found it an amusing exercise.

HE MOVES A PIECE.

VILLEFORT: I do not play --

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: It is not for you. I play against myself.

HE TURNS THE BOARD, MOVES ANOTHER PIECE. HE'LL CONTINUE THIS THROUGHOUT THE CONVERSATION.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I too have little time for amusements, Monsieur de Villefort. Do you attend balls?

VILLEFORT: Rarely.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Agreed. A societal necessity, if anything.

VILLEFORT: What is more necessary than music and dancing?

VILLEFORT CATCHES HIMSELF BEING TOO HONEST, STOPS HIMSELF. BEAT.

THE COUNT CHUCKLES.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Music, art, frivolity. Weightless when measured by the scale of justice. Tell me, Crown Prosecutor, what does the Crown consider justice to be these days?

VILLEFORT: The same as it always has. Justice does not change, no matter where one has traveled.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: But men change, do they not? And if men change, then so do their ideals. And what, then, is the primary constant?

VILLEFORT: It is the law.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: It is God, Crown Prosecutor. For is it not God who divines justice through his actions? Is it not God, who provides true judgements to those who deserve them? While it may not be God himself in the granular machinations of our daily lives, surely it is He who provides our hands with the tools they need to exact his designs?

VILLEFORT STARTS TO RESPOND, THE COUNT CUTS HIM OFF.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I do not mean to debate you, Monsieur de Villefort. These are the discussions I have with myself and other intelligent minds. It is refreshing to hear that the Crown Prosecutor is so resolute in his judgements.

VILLEFORT: Yes. Well. I am.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: (sudden mood shift) Indeed. Thank you, Monsieur, for stopping by. Please consider your duty quite fulfilled.

THE COUNT MOVES MORE CHESS PIECES.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Checkmate.

VILLEFORT: What?

THE COUNT OF
MONTE CRISTO:

The term refers to when I have won.

VILLEFORT:

Does one win if they are their own opponent?

THE COUNT OF
MONTE CRISTO:

Crown Prosecutor. My opponents are not on this board.
It would be much too easy if they were.

INT. OPERA HOUSE

15

ATTENDEES MILL AROUND THE THEATER -
SETTLING INTO THEIR SEATS, DRINKING, AND,
AS ALWAYS, GOSSIPING.

WOMAN 1:

He roped the horses and stopped the carriage himself!

WOMAN 2:

Imagine putting your child in danger like that.

WOMAN 1:

Dreadful.

MAN 1:

The Crown Prosecutor called on him to say thank you!

MAN 2:

The Crown Prosecutor showed deference to some
stranger? Who is this Count of Monte Cristo?

WOMAN 3:

I heard he is fabulously wealthy.

CHÂTEAU-
RENAUD:

Ah, you have heard about the emeralds.

WOMAN 3:

I heard about the rubies.

CHÂTEAU-
RENAUD:

What rubies?

ELSEWHERE...

CHÂTEAU-
RENAUD:

Do we think the Count will attend tonight?

BEAUCHAMP:

Lucien says he reserved a box. Have you heard?
Everyone is discussing our new friend.

CHÂTEAU-
RENAUD:

Yeah.

LUCIEN DEBRAY:

I must say, with everyone discussing the Count's most
recent exploits, I feel rather out of the loop. I
mean, we met him first.

MAXIMILIAN:

He did say he intended to be part of Paris within the
week. Does he not deserve credit for doing so?

THE PEANUT GALLERY SAYS NOTHING, THEN
MUMBLES/AD-LIBS AGREEMENT.

LUCIEN DEBRAY: Is that Countess G?

BEAUCHAMP: She's not actually a countess.

CHÂTEAU-RENAUD: But what is she wearing?

LUCIEN DEBRAY: Did she murder a bird?

CHÂTEAU-RENAUD: Looks like the whole flock.

BEAUCHAMP: Ah, there's Albert.

LUCIEN DEBRAY: Don't be an ape, Beauchamp.

BEAUCHAMP: I am *waving* at him.

CHÂTEAU-RENAUD: There's Madame de Villefort.

LUCIEN DEBRAY: And Mademoiselle de Villefort has been allowed out of her cage.

CHÂTEAU-RENAUD: You're drooling, Maximilian.

MAXIMILIAN: I am simply looking in that direction.

THE PEANUT GALLERY MOCKINGLY AD-LIBS
AGREEMENT.

OUR PERSPECTIVE SHIFTS TO THE COUNT AS
ALBERT APPROACHES HIM AND HIS GUEST,
HAYDEÉ.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Monsieur le Comte!

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Vicomte de Morcerf.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: It has been too long.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Has it not been a week?

ALBERT DE MORCERF: A week between friends will always be long. You must call upon me again.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: May I present to you my companion, Haydeé.

HAYDEÉ: Bonjour, Vicomte de Morcerf.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: *Enchantée, mademoiselle.* Your French is excellent for a slave.

HAYDEÉ: I am not a slave.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Oh. I, uh, meant no offense.

HAYDEÉ: And yet.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Haydeé is from Yanina. Greece. She is still learning European customs.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: I would be happy to instruct mademoiselle in any topics of her choosing.

HAYDEÉ: Noted.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Join us, Vicomte. We are in box six on the left.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Thank you, Count. But I must decline. I always sit with my mother. She would be devastated if I left her alone. I believe she was just seeking refreshment -- ah, *maman!*

ALBERT RUSHES TOWARDS MERCÉDÈS, JOINS HER IN WALKING TOWARDS THE COUNT AND HAYDEÉ. (SHE DOES NOT YET SEE THEM.)

MERCÉDÈS: There you are.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Did I not tell you you would meet the Count of Monte Cristo soon?

MERCÉDÈS: You did. I am sorry to have missed him.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: No apology needed as, *voilà!* The Count of Monte Cristo!

MERCÉDÈS GASPS, DROPS HER GLASS. IT SHATTERS.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: *Maman!*

MERCÉDÈS: Forgive me.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: *Enchantée, Madame.*

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Count, and Mademoiselle Haydeé, I present to you my mother, Madame de Morcerf. The most learned and respected woman in Paris.

MERCÉDÈS: Count, please accept my thanks. For your services to my son.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: As I told your husband, I am happy to have assisted.

MERCÉDÈS: You have seen Fernand?

ALBERT DE MORCERF: They met after my breakfast, *maman*. I mentioned this to you.

MERCÉDÈS: So you did.

A SOFT CHIME INDICATES IT'S TIME TO SIT.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: We shall retreat to our box. Unless you would like to join us?

ALBERT DE MORCERF: *Maman?*

MERCÉDÈS: No. No, thank you, but our seats are reserved.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Very well. We will meet again soon.

THE COUNT AND HAYDEÉ LEAVE.

ALBERT TURNS TO HIS MOTHER.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Shall I get you another drink, *maman*?

MERCÉDÈS: That was the Count of Monte Cristo? The same man from Rome?

ALBERT DE MORCERF: The very same. Do you know him?

MERCÉDÈS: What? No, not at all. I met him just now. Here, with you. I should like very much for you to avoid seeing the Count again.

ALBERT LAUGHS.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Whatever for?

MERCÉDÈS: I do not trust him.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: He saved my life! What more reason to trust him than that? Besides. Even if I wanted to avoid him, I could not. He has been here one week and is the most wanted man in Paris. Socially, I mean. To avoid him would be to avoid society itself. (beat) Mother, are you sure you're alright?

MERCÉDÈS: Come, Albert. Let us find our seats.

IN THEIR BOX, THE COUNT AND HAYDEÉ SETTLE
IN. THEY ARE COMPLETELY ALONE.

HAYDEÉ: I am astounded by your patience. Inviting them to sit in our box --

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Have you lost faith in me, Haydeé?

HAYDEÉ: No --

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Then perhaps you should refrain from saying whatever you are planning to say.

HAYDEÉ: (not refraining) Patience is the same as hiding.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: If I cannot convince you otherwise, perhaps a dictionary will.

HAYDEÉ: How do you not seethe at the sight of them? Of him? Of her?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Because we have a higher power guiding us. You would do well to remember that.

HAYDEÉ: Still --

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Enough, Haydeé. We are in public. And besides.

THE ROOM QUIETS.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: The stage is set. The curtain rises. The show is about to start.

END OF EPISODE.