

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO  
"EPISODE FOURTEEN" TRANSCRIPT

Written by

Chloe Wilson

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

A Little Lucky Production

PREVIOUSLY, ON "THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO"... 1

IT IS THE FINAL EPISODE, AND WE SET IT UP ACCORDINGLY. WE FOCUS ON EDMOND DANTÈS AND HOW HE BECAME THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO TO AVENGE THOSE WHO WRONGED HIM. AND HOW HE SUCCEEDED.

BUT THEN WE ARE REMINDED OF THE TIMES HE FAILED. OF VALENTINE. OF EDUARD. OF MAXIMILIAN'S BROKEN SPIRIT. AND WE ARE LEFT WITH THE QUESTION THAT DANGLARS ASKED THE COUNT IN ROME:

WHO IS THIS MAN, REALLY?

INT. CARRIAGE

2

HAYDEÉ AND MAXIMILIAN SIT SILENTLY AS THEIR CARRIAGE ROLLS OUT OF FRANCE. MAXIMILIAN HEAVES A HEAVY SIGH.

HAYDEÉ: Do you have something to share, Maximilian?

MAXIMILIAN: I -- it is Paris where Valentine lies. To leave here is to leave her a second time.

HAYDEÉ: You would do well to notice the world has not stopped spinning.

MAXIMILIAN: What do you mean?

HAYDEÉ: You react to a circumstance out of your control. Not a consequence of your own making. It is better to wait and hope than to sit and mourn.

MAXIMILIAN: Those are the same thing.

HAYDEÉ: Incorrect. One is an active choice. The other is a passive fate.

MAXIMILIAN: So?

HAYDEÉ: If you do not move on in your life, your life will move on without you.

MAXIMILIAN: You have never been in love. You do not know what is like to lose it.

HAYDEÉ: You think I do not know what it is like to lose someone?

MAXIMILIAN: It's not just a person. It is your whole world. Not your past, but your present. Your future.  
(MORE)

It is to have committed to crossing a chasm only to collapse into its depths. To be surrounded by total darkness.

HAYDEÉ: Yes. That is when you climb.

MAXIMILIAN: You could not possibly understand.

HAYDEÉ: (venomous) Must I testify in front of you as well?

MAXIMILIAN SUDDENLY REMEMBERS HAYDEÉ'S TESTIMONY (EPISODE 6). HE IS ASHAMED.

MAXIMILIAN: I am sorry. Your... the hearing. I forgot.

HAYDEÉ: Obviously.

THEY RIDE IN UNCOMFORTABLE SILENCE, UNTIL:

HAYDEÉ: Consider, Maximilian. That we are not the only two who understand loss.

MAXIMILIAN: You mean The Count?

HAYDEÉ: I do.

MAXIMILIAN: Did you know? That he was Edmond Dantès?

HAYDEÉ: I did.

MAXIMILIAN: Does he have something planned? For me?

HAYDEÉ: I do not know. I thought I did, but he is different recently. He has not been himself.

MAXIMILIAN: Should we be worried?

HAYDEÉ: To use your words, he has fallen into the chasm before. But this time I do not know who he will be when he climbs out.

FOR THE FINAL TIME, THE THEME PLAYS.

### **EXT. MARSEILLE**

3

THE FINAL DESTINATION FOR HAYDEÉ AND MAXIMILIAN. BUT FIRST, WE ARE WITH THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO.

LIKE US, HE LISTENS TO THE WAVES. EBB AND FLOW, IN AND OUT. THEY CRASH LIGHTLY AGAINST EACH OTHER. ENOUGH TO MAKE ANYONE FORGET WHAT WE DID TO GET TO WHERE WE ARE.

HAYDEÉ AND MAXIMILIAN APPROACH.

HAYDEÉ: Count.

THE COUNT IS JOLTED BACK TO THE PRESENT.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Haydeé. Maximilian. You have arrived.

HAYDEÉ: Indeed.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I trust you traveled well?

MAXIMILIAN: As well as one could, I suppose.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Good.

AN AWKWARD SILENCE HITS THE THREE. THE ENVIRONMENT ALMOST TAKES OVER.

MAXIMILIAN: When do we leave for the isle?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: The day after tomorrow.

HAYDEÉ: And I will meet you both there.

MAXIMILIAN: You won't travel with us?

HAYDEÉ: I have tired of both of you. For two very different men, you are equally insufferable. Until then.

SHE LEAVES THEM BOTH.

MAXIMILIAN: Is she always like this?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: She tends to be correct. Though I am surprised she is aggrieved by us both.

MAXIMILIAN: I was... unkind to her on our journey here.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: We can be forgiven for being unkind provided that our intentions are true. Haydeé knows this. (beat) That does not assuage you.

MAXIMILIAN: It's not that. I am just anxious to depart.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: You remember our agreement?

MAXIMILIAN: Yes. To wait thirty days.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: And two remain. Three, if you count the remnants of this one.

MAXIMILIAN: How could I not?

THEY BOTH WATCH THE WATER.

MAXIMILIAN: Monte Cristo.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Maximilian.

MAXIMILIAN: I am no sailor, but there are better points of departure than Marseille if we are to sail for the Isle of Monte Cristo.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Meaning?

MAXIMILIAN: We do not have to be here. So, why are we?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Do you recognize where we stand?

MAXIMILIAN: Marseille. The ports. I have been here...

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: You were young when your father's ship returned.

MAXIMILIAN: This is the same dock, isn't it? Father heard that the Pharaon had returned and ran out to meet it. I followed, but it was chaotic. Joyous, but chaotic. That was you, yes? You returned his ship?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: A replica.

MAXIMILIAN: How did you remember all of its details?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I had many years to think on what I had lost.

MAXIMILIAN: When it sailed into harbor, father cried all day. Julie too. I did not understand. They just kept crying. They were supposed to be happy.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Do you understand now?

MAXIMILIAN: I suppose. I was too young to know what salvation feels like.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I did not aim to bring salvation. I merely balanced the scales with the tools I was provided.

MAXIMILIAN: Tools?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Wealth. Knowledge. Time. All are tools in industrious hands. Do you have anything here you wish to do?

MAXIMILIAN: No.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Then we will move on.

THE COUNT WALKS OFF. MAXIMILIAN FOLLOWS.

**EXT. CEMETERY**

4

THE TWO WALK UP A DIRT PATHWAY TOWARDS THE ENTRANCE OF THE CEMETERY.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: You have been here before?

MAXIMILIAN: My father is buried here.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Mine too.

THE COUNT CONTINUES. MAXIMILIAN JOGS TO CATCH UP TO HIM, MATCH HIS PACE.

MAXIMILIAN: How is that possible?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: He died. Those who cared for him cared enough to give him a proper burial plot.

MAXIMILIAN: But you are a Count.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I wasn't always.

MAXIMILIAN: But. Your father?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Died of starvation. He had no money. And I was not there to provide.

MAXIMILIAN: I am sorry.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Are you?

MAXIMILIAN: That is a cruel question.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Is it? You have been preoccupied with your own misfortunes as of late. One could be forgiven for thinking you did not have room for more.

MAXIMILIAN CHEWS ON THIS.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: You mentioned Haydeé was unkind. Was it because she reminded you that she has suffered more than you have? That she has suffered almost as much as I? You are not the only one who has had joy and potential and then lost it. (beat) You have not asked me how I knew your father's grave was here --

MAXIMILIAN: (stopping a speech before it starts) You grew up here. Yes?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Close to here. Yes.

MAXIMILIAN: So far from the city center.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: We were poor. I was younger than you when I began to sail. The earnings were for both my father and I, but I found respite on the sea. I have your father to thank for that.

THEY HAVE REACHED THE GRAVE OF MSR. MORREL. THEY STOP.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I have visited him many times.

MAXIMILIAN: Why did you not tell him? That it was you who saved him?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I thought it would interfere with my plans. But. I wish I had.

MAXIMILIAN: I do not understand you. You wish for things to have been different, yet I know of no other who has such access as you. The Count of Monte Cristo. A man who has everything.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Not a man. A mask.

THEY MOURN SILENTLY.

MAXIMILIAN: To commemorate the day he -- you saved him, I always tried to do a good deed. Just something, anything. To say thank you.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Your father would be very proud of you.

MAXIMILIAN: Well, I shall see him soon enough.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I do not believe that that is what you really want.

MAXIMILIAN: You think my problem is that I am not resolute enough?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I mean that --

MAXIMILIAN: That you could not possibly understand what it is like to lose the only joy and hope you have in your whole life? Is that what you were going to say?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I lost *everything*. Not just my father, my entire life. My fiancé. My livelihood. My freedom. I was thrown into prison based on the greed of my peers and by the time I was free everything worth having was gone. (beat) Do not talk to me of loss, Maximilian. I know it better than you.

MAXIMILIAN: You were in prison?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: The Chateau d'if. A false conviction.

MAXIMILIAN: Why did they let you go?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: They didn't. There was a man. Another father to me. We had a plan to escape together. He died before we could try. But he insisted I go.

MAXIMILIAN: So you escaped. To where?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: To the Isle of Monte Cristo.

MAXIMILIAN: Hence the name.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Yes. And there I received a sign. An unequivocal answer to a question I long lingered on. How will God balance the scales for those who have done wrong? On the isle I realized: the answer was me.

THE COUNT LEAVES MORREL'S GRAVE, WALKS  
TOWARDS ANOTHER. MAXIMILIAN FOLLOWS,  
THINKING OUT LOUD:

MAXIMILIAN: When you met Albert and Franz in Rome. And you saved Albert from the bandits. That was no accident?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Correct.

MAXIMILIAN: And then you came to Paris. With his introduction. So you could take your revenge?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Yes.

MAXIMILIAN: You are responsible for the downfall of Fernand Mondego.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Yes.

MAXIMILIAN: And Albert and his mother leaving?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Necessary damages.



MAXIMILIAN: And, the Danglars. You introduced Andrea to the Baron. You knew that he would be tempted by the Prince's wealth.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I did.

MAXIMILIAN: But you knew the Prince was not who he said he was.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I did.

MAXIMILIAN: The man who broke into your home. The one that the Prince -- I don't know why I keep saying Prince -- killed. Was he a part of your plan?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Yes.

MAXIMILIAN: (choking up) And the Crown Prosecutor. The Villeforts. Was it you who killed them all?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I do not kill.

MAXIMILIAN: Answer me.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Gerard Villefort fell to his own ambition. He climbed so quickly he believed himself above the law. He was above nothing. It was his wife, Madame de Villefort, who poisoned her family to ensure her son, Eduard, was guaranteed the inheritance he deserved.

MAXIMILIAN: Who gave her this poison.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I did.

TO MAXIMILIAN, THIS IS THE GREATEST BETRAYAL OF ALL.

THE COUNT STOPS WALKING.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: This is my father's grave.

MAXIMILIAN SHOVES THE COUNT. HE STUMBLES, BUT DOES NOT FALL.

MAXIMILIAN: How can you stand there and admit to killing Valentine? Like she was nothing?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I did not kill her.

MAXIMILIAN: You supplied the poison to her killer. Knowing what she would do with it.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I gave Madame de Villefort a tool. She used it at her will.

MAXIMILIAN: Liar! You... *Liar.*

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I am guilty of many things. I assure you I carry them all.

WORDLESSLY, MAXIMILIAN PROCESSES. THE COUNT WAITS FOR HIM.

MAXIMILIAN: Who else knows? Does Bertuccio? Does Haydeé?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Bertuccio knows most. Haydeé knows all. My search for information on Fernand Mondego led me to her. I told her everything. And she asked to join me.

MAXIMILIAN: I don't understand. You save my father. And Haydeé. But kill Valentine and cause the downfall of so many. How can these opposites both exist within you?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: They can't. (open, emotional) The boy. Eduard. He was innocent. I did not intend for him to die.

MAXIMILIAN: But Valentine --

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Not everything is about Valentine! Everyone is responsible for their own actions and their own consequence! Nobody is given a life. It must be built. And the same tools you use to build it can destroy it. If tragedy befell Valentine it is because she could have chosen to forgo her family's mistakes and chose not to.

BEAT.

MAXIMILIAN: (frigid) I wish to return to my father's grave. Alone.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I will leave for Monte Cristo the morning after tomorrow. From the dock we were on today.

MAXIMILIAN: I will not join you tomorrow.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Good. My visits tomorrow do not involve you.

THEY EACH LEAVE THE OTHER TO MOURN.

**ACT BREAK**

**EXT. MARSEILLE - DOCK**

5

THE NEXT DAY. A FERRYMAN RINGS A BELL.

FERRYMAN: Last call! Last call for a day's sail.

THE COUNT APPROACHES.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Where are you going?

FERRYMAN: 'Round the isles. Will take you to the old Chateau d'If for an extra coin.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Here are ten.

HE PUTS A SMALL BAG INTO THE FERRYMAN'S PALM.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: And more if we are unaccompanied.

FERRYMAN: Sit anywhere you like.

THE COUNT BOARDS, SITS. THE FERRYMAN UNTIES THE BOAT. IT DRIFTS TO THE SEA.

THE FERRYMAN'S OARS SPLASH INTO THE WATER. AGAIN, THE WATER TAKES UP THE SOUNDSCAPE. WE ARE LOST IN IT, FORCED TO REFLECT BUT RELISHING DOING SO.

**EXT. CHATEAU D'IF - DOCK**

6

WE ARE CALMLY BROUGHT BACK TO THE PRESENT: THE FERRYMAN'S BOAT LATCHES ONTO THE DOCK.

FERRYMAN: Chateau d'If, monsieur.

THE COUNT STEPS ONTO THE DOCK.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: How much time do I have?

FERRYMAN: As much as you like. But if you're looking for stories, I can tell you what you'd want to know.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I am not here to learn. I am here to see.

THE COUNT HEADS TOWARDS THE PRISON. HIS STEPS SHIFTING FROM CLACKING ON THE WOODEN DOCK TO SQUELCHING ON SOFT SOIL.

THE STEPS CONTINUE UNTIL THE COUNT REACHES...

**EXT. CHATEAU D'IF - ENTRY**

7

THE COUNT STOPS SHARPLY IN FRONT OF THE PRISON, PROCESSING THE SIGHT. (THIS IS THE FIRST TIME HE HAS SEEN THE PRISON FROM THE OUTSIDE AS A FREE MAN.)

A GUARD APPROACHES.

GUARD: *Bonne journee.* Can I help you?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: This prison is defunct, yes?

GUARD: 'Tis. We get some historians and visitors from time to time. Otherwise, just me. Making sure that the grounds are kept and nothing falls apart.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Am I permitted to go inside? Alone?

GUARD: By all means.

**INT. CHATEAU D'IF**

8

THE COUNT SLOWLY WALKS THE EMPTY, DERELICT HALLS. (THE SOUNDSCAPE SHOULD MATCH THE LAST TIME WE WERE IN THIS SPACE.)

THE COUNT'S STEPS ARE MEASURED, PRECISE. THIS IS A DARK BUT HALLOWED PLACE FOR HIM, AND HIS MOVEMENTS REFLECT THAT.

HE STOPS IN FRONT OF A CELL DOOR. GOES TO OPEN IT. HE SOFTLY PUSHES THE DOOR OPEN WITH A LOUD CREAK.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Hello, former home.

**INT. CHATEAU D'IF - CELL 27**

9

THE COUNT STEPS INSIDE HIS FORMER HOME. IT SOUNDS AND FEELS THE SAME, DESPITE HOW THE COUNT HAS GROWN.

HE LETS THE CELL'S AMBIANCE EMBRACE HIM, AND THEN, SOFTLY:

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Goodbye, Number 34.

HE SHUTS THE DOOR BEHIND HIM.

**INT. CHATEAU D'IF**

10

THE COUNT WALKS DOWN THE HALL, TOWARDS A DIFFERENT CELL.

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO:

Again. For a final time.

HE OPENS THE DOOR TO CELL 27...

**INT. CHATEAU D'IF - CELL 27**

11

...AND STEPS INSIDE. HE FEELS SAFER HERE, KNOWING THAT THIS WAS WHERE HE FOUND HIS MOST RECENT PATH.

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO:

Abbé... all your things are gone. I should not be surprised.

THE COUNT MOVES GINGERLY THROUGHOUT THE CELL.

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO:

Perhaps they did not find all of it.

THE COUNT FINDS A BRICK IN THE WALL, SHIMMIES IT OUT.

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO:

There you are.

HE REMOVES A FEW ITEMS, PLACES THEM ON THE FLOOR. MOVES TO SIT WITH THEM.

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO:

A compass we never used to sail. A map you did not live to use. The pen whose words were my salvation. (beat) Oh, Abbé.

You were right to warn me of filling my heart with vengeance. I was young. I did not know. I could not fathom a life outside these walls without reclaiming my name and myself. And I... I found there was no name to reclaim, and there was none of my self to recover. So I threw myself into this. And now it is over. And there were costs that I paid but wish I had not. And now I don't know what to do. I don't know who I am to become. There was nothing. I filled that nothing with anger and hate. And it has expired. There is nothing once again.

A BREEZE WAFTS THROUGH THE ROOM. IT IS THE CLOSEST WE GET TO "HEARING" THE ABBÉ SPEAK IN HIS CELL ONCE AGAIN.

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO:

How am I to reconcile the victim and the victor?

THE BREEZE WAFTS THROUGH AGAIN, PUSHING THE DOOR OPEN JUST SO.

THE COUNT POKETS THE COMPASS, MAP, AND PEN.

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO:

Goodbye, Abbé. Thank you. For everything.

THE COUNT LEAVES THE ROOM. AND FROM THE INSIDE, WE HEAR THE DOOR SHUT, FOREVER.

**EXT. CHATEAU D'IF - ENTRY**

12

THE COUNT MEETS THE GUARD AGAIN.

GUARD:

Welcome back, monsieur.

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO:

Are you a scalper?

GUARD:

I -- well, I would not say "scalper" --

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO:

Cell 27 could use some extra attention. A skilled set of eyes could find much of note, there.

GUARD:

Thank you, monsieur. You take care now.

THE COUNT WALKS OFF. REACHES...

**EXT. CHATEAU D'IF - DOCK**

13

THE FERRYMAN AND HIS BOAT.

FERRYMAN:

Did you see what you wanted?

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO:

I did.

THE COUNT BOARDS THE BOAT, THE FERRYMAN READIES THEIR DEPARTURE.

FERRYMAN:

Back to Marseille, then?

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO:

Yes. There is someone else I want to see.

**EXT. DANTÈS HOME**

14

A MUCH MORE PASTORAL SETTING. THE COUNT SLOWLY WALKS THE PATH TO HIS FORMER HOME. WAITS. HESITANTLY KNOCKS ON THE DOOR.

NO ONE RESPONDS. THE COUNT SIGHS, RELIEVED, STARTS TO WALK AWAY --

BUT MERCÉDÈS OPENS THE DOOR, AND HE STOPS.

MERCÉDÈS: Edmond?

THE COUNT TURNS AROUND. HE DID NOT FULLY EXPECT MERCÉDÈS TO ANSWER. HE WILL BE FRAIL FOR THE ENTIRETY OF THIS CONVERSATION.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Mercédès. (long beat) I only came to see if the house had fallen into disrepair.

MERCÉDÈS: It has. But it is livable. When I left Paris and Albert left me, this was the only place I was able to afford to live in. A twist of fate, is it not?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Indeed.

MERCÉDÈS: Would you like to come inside?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I... no. But. Thank you. How are you?

MERCÉDÈS: As expected. I deserved to lose everything and I did. Now I spend my days praying and eating what crusts of bread I can afford.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: The soil is fertile. You could grow a garden.

MERCÉDÈS: I would kill whatever I tried to grow. (beat) But. Albert is doing so well. He writes when he can. He is on a campaign in Africa. I know not the specifics, but he is doing what he set out to do. My only light in this darkness. Are you sure you would not like to come inside?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I am only here to visit.

MERCÉDÈS: You are not staying in Marseille? You are not here to atone?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: No.

MERCÉDÈS: Oh. I suppose you do not think you need to. You were deserved, in what you did to us. To Fernand. Albert pieced it together. He is the smart one, of us both.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: You cannot have changed so much in the time I have not seen you.

MERCÉDÈS LAUGHS SELF-LOATHINGLY.

MERCÉDÈS: One does not change by stripping away false fineries. No. I am simply in my natural, wretched state.  
(MORE)

Back to where I started, back to where I belong. A dirt-infested hovel, no companions save for my mistakes.

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO:

Why do you say this?

MERCÉDÈS:

Because it is true.

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO:

It does not have to be.

MERCÉDÈS:

We cannot escape our past, Edmond. We can only atone for it.

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO:

Mercédès. You must know that... after everything. I did not blame you. I was, I am angry. But you lost a future too.

MERCÉDÈS:

But did I not profit from your misfortune? Did I not bury my heart in my head and move forward regardless? No. I deserve to be here. I deserve to be unhappy --

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO:

(soft) I don't think you do.

THE PASTORAL SOUNDSCAPE TAKES OVER.

MERCÉDÈS:

Albert will not be back for many months. Years, probably. If you are not returning to Paris, you could stay here. With me. (off the Count's silence) We could atone together. And I could atone to you.

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO:

I do not want that.

MERCÉDÈS:

You do not want us?

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO:

No, I don't -- I can -- we don't have to live that life. We do not have to wallow in our mistakes day after day after day. You don't have to stay here if you don't want to.

MERCÉDÈS:

This is all I know.

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO:

You are responding to your misfortunes in the way you know how. But you can learn another way.

MERCÉDÈS:

There is no other way. We are not good people, Edmond. There is no hope for us.

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO:

There is *always* hope.

MERCÉDÈS:

You have always thought too highly of me. Even now, you refuse to see how wretched I was, how wretched I have become. How wretched I have made you.



THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: (coming back to himself) I am the result of my own actions. I will not let somebody else define me.

THIS IS IT. THE UNCROSSABLE CHASM BETWEEN THEM. IF THEY KEEP GOING, THEY WILL SPEAK IN CIRCLES TO ETERNITY.

MERCÉDÈS: Then you must leave me here to rot.

SHE SHUTS THE DOOR FORCEFULLY.

THE COUNT BREATHES HEAVILY, LETTING HIMSELF DISPLAY A SMALL AMOUNT OF EMOTION, BUT NOT MUCH.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: (sotto) Goodbye, Mercédès. You cannot say that I did not come back for you.

HE BEGINS TO WALK AWAY.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: That I did not ask you to walk with me.

#### **ACT BREAK**

#### **EXT. MARSEILLE - DOCK**

15

THE FINAL DAY.

IT IS EARLY MORNING. MAXIMILIAN WALKS TOWARDS WHERE THE BOAT SHOULD BE. SLOWS, WHEN HE REALIZES HE DOES NOT SEE THE COUNT.

MAXIMILIAN STOPS, LOOKS AROUND. DID HE MAKE A MISTAKE?

MAXIMILIAN: Where is he...?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: (distant) Maximilian!

MAXIMILIAN TURNS TOWARDS THE SOUND - IT COMES FROM THE WATER.

YESTERDAY HAS CHANGED THE COUNT. HE IS STILL THE MAN WE KNOW, BUT YET AGAIN HE HAS BEGUN TO MORPH INTO SOMEONE NEW.

MAXIMILIAN: Monte Cristo?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Essentially. Come aboard!

MAXIMILIAN: Are you able to sail by yourself?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Yes. Your father taught me.

MAXIMILIAN: (cautious) Okay.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: You can wait for another boat, but this is the only one that will dock at the Isle of Monte Cristo.

MAXIMILIAN: I'm coming! I'm coming. I just -- (sotto) think this is a bad idea.

MAXIMILIAN CLUMSILY BOARDS.

**EXT. BOAT**

16

FOCUSING ON HIS BALANCE, MAXIMILIAN MAKES HIS WAY TO A SEAT.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Not there. To the left.

MAXIMILIAN: Okay.

HE MOVES, SETTLES IN.

MAXIMILIAN: And Haydeé will meet us there?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Yes.

THE COUNT BEGINS TO UNMOOR THE BOAT.

MAXIMILIAN: Can I help at all?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: No. Not yet. Actually, you can push us off.

MAXIMILIAN: Here?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Yes.

HE READIES THE FINAL PART OF THE BOAT.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Now.

MAXIMILIAN SHOVES THE DOCK, PUSHING THE BOAT ONTO THE WATER.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: We are off. Well done.

THE COUNT READIES THE BOAT TO FULLY SAIL.

MAXIMILIAN: I don't think I've ever seen you smile before.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Patience, Morrel. It has been some time since I have commanded a ship. I may still sink it yet.

MAXIMILIAN SNORTS A LAUGH.

THE CREAKING OF THE BOAT AND SOUNDS OF  
THE SEA OVERTAKE THE SOUNDSCAPE.

MAXIMILIAN: Monte Cristo.

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO: Mmm.

MAXIMILIAN: I am sorry for my treatment of you. In the cemetery.  
I should not have shoved you.

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO: You're forgiven. And fortunate, as I have recently  
decided I should work to not hold grudges.

MAXIMILIAN: I was angry. At you, but also at everything. And just  
because I have suffered does not mean that you also  
have not suffered. And that was the point, right?  
What you were trying to show me? That it is better to  
suffer together than alone?

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO: I greatly regret how much you have suffered with the  
loss of Valentine.

MAXIMILIAN: It was not your fault.

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO: Still. I wish to rectify that.

MAXIMILIAN: You will. Today is the final day.

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO: You still wish to die.

MAXIMILIAN: I wish to be with Valentine.

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO: Those are not the same thing.

MAXIMILIAN: Aren't they?

THE COUNT IS SILENT, THEY LISTEN TO THE  
SOUNDS OF THE SEA.

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO: We can discuss later. For now, I suggest you enjoy  
the sea. If you are to die tonight, this will be the  
final time you experience such an unbridled freedom.

AND, SILENTLY, THEY DO. WE STAY WITH  
MAXIMILIAN AS WE HEAR AND FEEL THE BREEZE  
AGAINST HIS FACE, THE WAVES WITHIN HIS  
EAR.

**EXT. ISLE OF MONTE CRISTO - DOCK**

17

THE COUNT STEERS THE BOAT TOWARDS THE DOCK. WHEN CLOSE ENOUGH, HE MOVES TO MOOR THE BOAT AND SECURE IT TO THE ISLE.

MAXIMILIAN: This is it?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Indeed. Welcome to the Isle of Monte Cristo.

MAXIMILIAN: It is wilder than I expected.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Few men have been here. Those that have are sworn to spread stories of the desolate rock they had the misfortune to come upon.

MAXIMILIAN: Who lives here?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I do.

THE COUNT FINISHES SECURING THE BOAT.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: You will find no servants here. The Isle is mine alone and I live on it as I choose. As do my guests. Come.

THE COUNT HOPS OFF THE BOAT, A NEW ENERGY IN HIS MOVEMENT.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: You will see.

MAXIMILIAN LEAVES THE BOAT WITH LESS GRACE, FOLLOWS AFTER THE COUNT.

THEIR FOOTSTEPS SHIFT FROM THE WOODEN DOCK, TO SAND, TO...

**EXT. ISLE OF MONTE CRISTO - JUNGLE**

18

A SURPRISINGLY LUSH SOUNDSCAPE. UNLIKE ANYTHING WE HAVE HEARD SO FAR.

WE STAY WITH MAXIMILIAN AS HE GINGERLY TRAVERSES IT, FOLLOWING THE COUNT FROM A DISTANCE.

MAXIMILIAN: This is not what I expected.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: No?

MAXIMILIAN: No. I imagined something more manicured. An estate better fitting your title.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Your first mistake. There are no titles here.

THE COUNT MOVES MORE BRANCHES ASIDE,  
CONTINUES ON.

**EXT. ISLE OF MONTE CRISTO - HOUSE**

19

THE COUNT BREAKS THROUGH THE BRUSH, STEPS  
INTO A CLEARING. STRETCHES AUDIBLY.

MAXIMILIAN STUMBLES AFTER HIM. IS AWED BY  
THE SIGHT OF THE HOUSE.

MAXIMILIAN: Oh. This is...

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Thank you. I did what I could myself, but eventually I did require better minds and stronger hands.

MAXIMILIAN: I'm surprised they were willing to travel out here. Funding aside, sailing the supplies here would be substantial.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Yes. Which is why their ships were heavier upon their departure.

MAXIMILIAN: How's that?

THE COUNT HEADS TOWARDS THE HOUSE.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I'll show you.

MAXIMILIAN, STILL TIRED, SIGHS. FOLLOWS.

**INT. HOUSE**

20

WE ARE INSIDE A LARGE, SPACIOUS HOUSE.  
(EVEN THOUGH IT'S FULL OF TREASURES THAT  
WE CAN'T SEE, THE SPACE SOUNDS CAVERNOUS  
- A REJECTION OF THE POSTURING THAT WAS  
SO PREVALENT IN PARIS.)

THE COUNT OPENS THE DOOR FROM THE  
OUTSIDE, ENTERS.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Oh, it's already lit. (calling back to Maximilian)  
There are no servants here. So. Help yourself.

MAXIMILIAN FOLLOWS, IS STUNNED.

MAXIMILIAN: This is where all of your treasures come from? This Isle?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Yes. They were hidden here long ago, for protection.  
Another story for another time.  
(MORE)

(beat) I assume that your lack of affects means you have no final items to settle?

THE QUESTION BRINGS MAXIMILIAN BACK TO REALITY. HE HAD FORGOTTEN WHY HE WAS HERE.

MAXIMILIAN: What items would I bring to the afterlife?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Very well. We will sup early.

**INT. HOUSE - DINING ROOM**

21

THE COUNT LEADS MAXIMILIAN INTO THE DINING ROOM.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Please, sit.

MAXIMILIAN DOES.

MAXIMILIAN: A meal fit for one's last.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: That was the idea.

THE COUNT SLIDES A BOX IN FRONT OF MAXIMILIAN --

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: For you.

-- BEFORE HE FLOPS INTO HIS CHAIR.

THEN, SILENCE. WE BECOME AWARE OF A TICKING CLOCK IN THE CORNER OF THE ROOM.

MAXIMILIAN: What is it?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: A pistol. Not your father's, but functional nonetheless.

MAXIMILIAN: Ah. Thank you. (beat) Do I need to --

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: -- use it now? No. I am hoping you do not use it at all.

MAXIMILIAN: Then why cater to me? Why measure my time and bring me here? To convince me of...

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: What do you think I am convincing you of?

MAXIMILIAN: That life is worth living, even in hardship. (realizing) I am not saying you have convinced me. Only that I am aware you are trying to do so.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: It is of no consequence to me.

MAXIMILIAN: It's not?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I was born Edmond Dantès who died in the Chateau d'If. I became the Count of this Isle and he died with conquest. Neither life nor death frightens me.

THE COUNT SIPS HIS DRINK. HIS NEWFOUND CAVALIERNESSE THROWS MAXIMILIAN.

MAXIMILIAN: Is death painful?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: No more painful than living. Worse than either, though. Is dying itself. You have felt this, I think. To know that each day, one part of you is slipping away. And you do not know which part it will be or how large or what order these parts will leave you. Only that they are leaving. And to stay as you are, to do nothing, is to continue to feel them leave you.

The in between of life and death, where you are still, is much worse than either. In choosing, you have closure. You know whether there is a future or not. You know whether things will improve or not because you give yourself the space and time for that to happen. It does not matter, now, whether you choose life or death. Because in choosing neither, you are already dying. And the hope you embody is already dying with you.

MAXIMILIAN: Do you wish for me to live?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Of course I do. But you are your own person with your own agency. At best, I can heighten that. But your action or inaction is up to you.

I only wish that you see the potential you still have. Regardless of which you choose, you are not doomed to misery the same way you are not promised success. Choosing to experience life is how we discover its promise. And as someone who has been where you are I am telling you there is much worth discovering. If you are able to hope for that then you are able to live.

THE COUNT'S WORDS HANG HEAVY. THE CLOCK HITS THE HOUR.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I am a man of my word. It has been one month. What you do now is your choice.

THE CHIMING ENDS, REVERBERATES THROUGH THE ROOM.

MAXIMILIAN: I am not where you are. But I would like to be. You can keep your pistol.

HE PUSHES THE BOX AWAY, IT SLIDES TOWARDS THE COUNT.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Are you certain?

MAXIMILIAN: (as certain as he'll get) Yes.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I believe you.

THE COUNT RINGS A BELL.

MAXIMILIAN: I thought you said there were no servants here?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: This is for the guests.

THE DOORS TO THE DINING ROOM OPEN. HAYDEÉ ENTERS.

HAYDEÉ: You are lucky we were close. This house is too large for that bell.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Yet, you both have made it.

MAXIMILIAN: Both?

HE TURNS, CUTS HIMSELF OFF WITH A GASP.

MAXIMILIAN: What is this.

NOT WHAT, BUT WHO. NEXT TO HAYDEÉ IS VALENTINE.

VALENTINE: Maximilian.

MAXIMILIAN STANDS, SHOCKED. STUMBLES.

MAXIMILIAN: Valentine. What is this? Are -- are you real?

THE LOVERS MOVE TOWARDS EACH OTHER.

VALENTINE: Here. My hand. Ungloved.

MAXIMILIAN: But I don't understand. How are you here? What happened? The Count saved you?

VALENTINE: The Count did not save me. I saved me.

MAXIMILIAN: I don't understand.

VALENTINE: The Count came to me. After you asked him for help. He provided me a serum.  
(MORE)



A tool that would allow me control of my fate. And I chose to use it, knowing the consequences.

MAXIMILIAN: I could have helped --

VALENTINE: It was my decision to make. I love you, Maximilian. More than anything. But we could not be together in Paris because there I did not have control of my own life. Do you not see? If I could not live for myself, alone. If we could not, then what hope would there be for us?

MAXIMILIAN: You could have told me.

VALENTINE: Grandfather was the only other who knew. And --

HAYDEÉ: (cutting in) We did try to tell you. Your very public reaction to Valentine's death prevented us.

MAXIMILIAN: I am not sorry.

HAYDEÉ: I am not interested.

VALENTINE: I am excited for us all to remain friends. (to Maximilian) As we once were, and then some.

MAXIMILIAN: And then some.

VALENTINE: I have missed you.

MAXIMILIAN: And I you.

VALENTINE GIGGLES, HAYDEÉ GROANS.

HAYDEÉ: I will sit. No doubt this will go on forever.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Let them. They have waited for some time.

HAYDEÉ BEGINS TO EAT. MAXIMILIAN AND VALENTINE CONTINUE TO CANOODLE WHILE SEATED.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: And now, they have all of it.

THE CLOCK CONTINUES TO TICK, TICK, UNTIL...

**INT. HOUSE - BEDROOM**

22

MAXIMILIAN WAKES WITH A GASP. HE LOOKS AROUND WILDLY, UNSURE OF WHERE HE IS.

MAXIMILIAN: What? Where? Valen -- Valentine?

**INT. HOUSE - LATER**

23

MAXIMILIAN SPRINTS BETWEEN ROOMS.

MAXIMILIAN: Valentine? Valentine? Valen --

**INT. HOUSE - DINING ROOM**

24

HE STOPS SHORT AT THE SIGHT OF VALENTINE AND HAYDEÉ HAVING BREAKFAST.

VALENTINE: Maximilian? What is wrong?

MAXIMILIAN: I... I thought it was a dream.

THEY RUSH TO EMBRACE EACH OTHER.

MAXIMILIAN: Awake or asleep, you appear an angel.

HAYDEÉ: Good morning, Maximilian.

MAXIMILIAN: ("oh yeah, there are other people around") Hello, Haydeé.

THEY SETTLE AROUND THE TABLE.

MAXIMILIAN: Where is the Count?

VALENTINE: I have not seen him.

HAYDEÉ: This was here this morning.

SHE TAPS A LETTER ON THE TABLE.  
MAXIMILIAN TAKES IT.

MAXIMILIAN: What does it say?

HAYDEÉ: The letter is sealed.

MAXIMILIAN: Right, sorry. I just assume you know everything.

HAYDEÉ: Almost.

MAXIMILIAN CLEARS HIS THROAT.

MAXIMILIAN: "Good morning. By the time you read this, I will be gone."

MAXIMILIAN AND THE COUNT'S VOICES BEGIN TO OVERLAP,

MAXIMILIAN/  
THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO: Bertuccio will return in my place. He is to Paris to escort Monsieur Noirtier de Villefort to the Isle.

## VO - THE COUNT'S LETTER

25

THE ISLE OF MONTE CRISTO FADES AWAY. THE OCEAN ONCE AGAIN FILLS THE SOUNDSCAPE. AS THE COUNT SPEAKS, MUSIC SWELLS ALONGSIDE HIM AND THE TIDE.

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO:

Noirtier has already agreed to bless the obvious and impending union between Maximilian and Valentine, but Maximilian - I warn you of his arrival so you can request his blessing properly.

I have taken the ship we arrived in and charted course with no destination. Alongside this letter you will find the necessary paperwork that splits the Isle, its riches, and the remainder of my estate equally between you three and Bertuccio. Use this to further your freedoms and pursue your greater joys, wherever they may be.

If I am to return, I will meet you as a different man. I am not so foolish to think I will shed who I have been. But with space and time, the best of who I have been will shape me anew. Perhaps, into someone better. But regardless someone who will always care for you very, very much.

Do not believe me to be truly gone. Look no further than the horizon to find me, and know that I pursue the same edicts I have imparted on to you. Know that I look forward. Ready to hope as we live anew, and delight in our decision to do so.

Best regards with all of my affection, Edmond Dantès.  
The Count of Monte Cristo.

FIN.