

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
"EPISODE EIGHT" 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."

THE TICKING OF A CLOCK CRESCENDOS. THEN, STOPS, MID-TICK. SPINS BACKWARDS. AND AS THE WHOLE CLOCK WHIRLS BACK THROUGH TIME, SO DO WE. UNTIL WE SHARPLY LAND IN THE CALMNESS OF:

EXT. OCEAN

1

WAVES EBB AND FLOW, EBB AND FLOW. THE WORLD OF OUR STORY, BUT **28 YEARS EARLIER:**

MARSEILLE, FRANCE, 1815

2

A SHIP, **THE PHARAON**, CUTS THROUGH THE SEA. SAILORS CLAMOR TO STEADY THE VESSEL AS IT REACHES ITS FINAL DESTINATION:

EXT. MARSEILLE - DOCKS

3

THE PHARAON LATCHES ONTO THE DOCK FROM A DISTANCE. WE ARE WITH **PIERRE MORREL**, THE MERCHANT OWNER OF THE SHIP.

HE TAKES A DEEP BREATH OF SEA AIR, PLEASED TO SEE HIS SHIP RETURN.

PIERRE MORREL: Ahoy, sailors! Welcome home.

HE STARTS DOWN THE DOCK. THE ENTRANCE TO/FROM THE PHARAON IS SET. A **YOUNG MAN** EXCITEDLY PROPELS DOWN IT.

YOUNG MAN: Monsieur Morrel!

PIERRE MORREL: My boy! I am glad to see you.

YOUNG MAN: And I, you.

PIERRE MORREL: How fared the voyage?

YOUNG MAN: The ocean remained steady and we lost no cargo. However...

PIERRE MORREL: Yes?

YOUNG MAN: The captain. Monsieur Leclère. He passed during our return home.

PIERRE MORREL: He died? But, how?

YOUNG MAN: A fever that would not break. He was bedridden for three days before we lost him.

PIERRE MORREL: Dreadful. I shall write to his wife and son. Let them know what's mine is theirs, if they need.

YOUNG MAN: That is good of you, Monsieur Morrel.

THE TWO DO NOT NOTICE THE FOOTSTEPS OF
ANOTHER MAN APPROACHING THEM.

PIERRE MORREL: Did Leclère name a new captain, before he passed?

ANOTHER MAN: He did not. The boy assumed position without counsel nor approval from his crew.

YOUNG MAN: I would think their approval was evident based on their respect and deference to my decision-making. Anyone who took issue had the opportunity to say so.

PIERRE MORREL: Yes, really, Danglars, must you make such a fuss?

THE OTHER MAN IS YOUNG DANGLARS.

YOUNG DANGLARS: I only mean to provide an accurate account of events.

PIERRE MORREL: A crew must have a captain. And in one's absence it takes courage and initiative to rise to the occasion. I, for one, am grateful for your service.

YOUNG MAN: Thank you, Monsieur Morrel.

YOUNG DANGLARS: Then what of Elba? Did you tell Monsieur Morrel about that?

YOUNG MAN: I was just about to, Danglars.

PIERRE MORREL: Elba, you say?

YOUNG MAN: Before he died, Captain Leclère expressed his dying wish; for us to retrieve a letter from the isle of Elba. And that I deliver it upon returning. He was clear it was a personal request. Not linked to being in your service. He was insistent, Monsieur.

PIERRE MORREL: And you sought out this letter?

YOUNG MAN: Of course. I could not disregard the final wishes of my captain, let alone any man who has treated me so well.

PIERRE THINKS ON THIS.

PIERRE MORREL: You have indeed performed a great service.

YOUNG
DANGLARS: But Monsieur --

PIERRE MORREL: To me and to Captain Leclère.

YOUNG
DANGLARS: Monsieur Morrel. It was Elba. That stop risked all of us.

PIERRE MORREL: Why?

YOUNG
DANGLARS: I... Forgive me, I overstepped.

PIERRE MORREL: Doing the honorable thing is always worth risking. Something you could learn from your new captain.

YOUNG DANGLARS SCOFFS. THE YOUNG MAN
GASPS.

YOUNG MAN: You mean --

PIERRE MORREL: Yes, my boy. You have sailed the Pharaon for years now. I can think of no better successor to Captain Leclère than yourself.

YOUNG MAN: Oh, thank you, Monsieur Morrel! Thank you! I shall strive to live up to your expectations.

YOUNG
DANGLARS: Monsieur, other crew members have more experience. They will --

PIERRE MORREL: Respect their new captain or find a new employer.

YOUNG
DANGLARS: *Oui, monsieur.*

YOUNG MAN: My father will be thrilled, Monsieur. He will no doubt want to thank you also when I tell him.

PIERRE MORREL: And, you have a girl to tell as well, yes?

YOUNG MAN: I... yes, she is waiting for me.

PIERRE MORREL: Well, go and tell them! Share your good news. Cargo can be unloaded without you.

YOUNG MAN: Thank you, Monsieur Morrel. I promise, I will not let you down! And I shall return first thing tomorrow.

PIERRE MORREL: Yes, yes. But go! Share your joy, enjoy your youth!

THE YOUNG MAN HURRIES OFF. PIERRE SIGHS
WITH JOY.

PIERRE MORREL: (to himself) Such a gracious young man.

YOUNG
DANGLARS: An enterprising sort.

PIERRE MORREL: Smart, bright, kind. I could use more men like him. France could use more men like him. Mark my words, Danglars. Though he is young, great things will come from young Edmond Dantès.

THE THEME PLAYS.

INT. DANTÈS HOME

4

THE YOUNG MAN - WHO, YES, IS EDMOND
DANTÈS - ENTERS HIS (SMALL) HOUSE.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Father!

EDMOND PLACES HIS PERSONAL ITEMS ON THE
TABLE.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Father? I am returned! With good news!

SLOWLY, LOUIS DANTÈS COMES DOWN THE
STAIRS.

LOUIS DANTÈS: Your return is always good news.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Father!

THEY EMBRACE. EDMOND HELPS LOUIS TO A
CHAIR.

EDMOND DANTÈS: You are so thin, have you been eating? I thought I left enough crowns...

LOUIS DANTÈS: Let us talk of your travels instead. How is the Pharaon?

EDMOND DANTÈS: It is well. As is its new captain.

EDMOND LETS LOUIS PUT IT TOGETHER. HE
DOES, CLAPS WITH JOY.

LOUIS DANTÈS: Oh, my boy. Well done! Well done indeed.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Thank you, Father. Monsieur Morrel has been most kind to me.

LOUIS DANTÈS: I must thank him myself. But first, a toast. We must celebrate!

LOUIS STANDS, GETS A BOTTLE OF WINE FROM THE CUPBOARD.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Father, your cupboards are empty.

LOUIS DANTÈS: I am going to the market tomorrow.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Did I not leave you with enough before I left?

LOUIS PUTS THE WINE AND TWO GLASSES ON THE TABLE.

LOUIS DANTÈS: You left me with plenty, Edmond. But, well. You know Caderousse.

EDMOND DANTÈS: He did not ask you for money.

LOUIS DANTÈS: He said you owed him 50 crowns. So I gave it to him.

EDMOND DANTÈS: I owe him nothing! He procured groceries from the market before I left as a kindness. I paid him for them with my advance from before I sailed.

LOUIS SHRUGS.

EDMOND DANTÈS: You mean to say you have spent three months living off of ten crowns?

LOUIS DANTÈS: I do not require much --

EDMOND DANTÈS: Here, take these.

EDMOND TAKES COINS FROM HIS POCKET, TOSSES THEM ONTO THE TABLE.

LOUIS DANTÈS: Edmond, I do not need this.

EDMOND DANTÈS: We can use it for dinner tonight --

A KNOCK AT THE DOOR. EDMOND AND LOUIS FALL SILENT IMMEDIATELY.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Enter.

THE DOOR CREAKS OPEN. YOUNG CADEROUSSE POPS IN.

YOUNG CADEROUSSE: Well, well. Young Master Dantès. Welcome home.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Thank you, Caderousse. Are you well?

YOUNG CADEROUSSE: Oh, never better. The inn keeps me busy. And *bonne journee*, Louis. You look as well as ever.

LOUIS DANTÈS: Thank you.

NEITHER DANTÈS SAYS MORE, IN HOPES THAT HE'LL LEAVE.

YOUNG
CADEROUSSE: Two glasses on the table next to some shiny new crowns. Something to celebrate?

EDMOND DANTÈS: Just my father's excellent health. And, to you. For checking in on my father whilst I was away.

YOUNG
CADEROUSSE: Of course. It was the neighborly thing to do.

AGAIN, SILENCE.

YOUNG
CADEROUSSE: Well, I'll leave you be. If you are here, no doubt Danglars is close behind you.

EDMOND DANTÈS: I am sure he is.

YOUNG
CADEROUSSE: Well then. To your health.

HE CLOSSES THE DOOR. EDMOND AND LOUIS IMMEDIATELY RELAX.

EDMOND DANTÈS: As captain, I will make three, five times more than I did for this voyage.

LOUIS DANTÈS: I am capable of keeping up appearances. The neighbors know nothing.

EDMOND DANTÈS: All I wish is to take care of you the way you have taken care of me. Can that be enough?

LOUIS DANTÈS: And then some. (beat) Let us leave the wine for now. I will go to town, get a chicken to roast. And you will take a walk and return with Mercédès?

EDMOND DANTÈS: Do... do you mind?

LOUIS DANTÈS: Mind my future daughter-in-law? Never.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Thank you, father.

EDMOND KISSES HIS CHEEK, RISES.

EDMOND DANTÈS: I will be back soon!

HE FLIES OUT THE DOOR. LOUIS CHUCKLES.

LOUIS DANTÈS: No doubt you will.

EXT. MARSEILLE - STREETS

5

YOUNG DANGLARS TRUDGES UP THE STREETS.

YOUNG (from afar) Danglars!
CADEROUSSE:

YOUNG Caderousse.
DANGLARS:

YOUNG CADEROUSSE TROTS UP TO YOUNG
DANGLARS, JOINS HIM IN STEP.

YOUNG I hear your voyage went well.
CADEROUSSE:

YOUNG For some.
DANGLARS:

YOUNG You can tell me about it over a drink. You still owe
CADEROUSSE: me five crowns.

YOUNG No, I don't.
DANGLARS:

YOUNG Then you can spot an old friend out of the goodness
CADEROUSSE: of your heart.

DANGLARS GRUMBLES.

YOUNG No toasts to your new captain then?
CADEROUSSE:

YOUNG How did you hear about that?
DANGLARS:

YOUNG S'all young Edmond has spoken of since returning
CADEROUSSE: home.

YOUNG Arrogant boy. Morrel made a mistake.
DANGLARS:

YOUNG He's already flinging his newfound riches around.
CADEROUSSE: Crowns, strewn about the table.

YOUNG Boys like him grow up to be the most dangerous of
DANGLARS: fools. To think we are the only ones who see it.

CADEROUSSE TUTS.

YOUNG What.
DANGLARS:

YOUNG Do you know his girl? The Catalan?
CADEROUSSE:

YOUNG He would not shut up about her.
DANGLARS:

YOUNG Then you'll be pleased to know that Edmond may find a
CADEROUSSE: challenge when he next visits her.

YOUNG DANGLARS: Is that so?

YOUNG CADEROUSSE: You know how women are. When one man leaves, they always find another.

EXT. LES CATALANS HOME

6

A PERFECT (AUDITORY) PORTRAIT OF THE IDYLIC FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE. LUSH NATURE SOUNDS FILL THE AIR AS A **YOUNG MERCÉDÈS** HANGS LAUNDRY, HOUNDED BY A LESS OCCUPIED **YOUNG FERNAND**.

YOUNG MERCÉDÈS: (light, loving) I have already told you, Fernand. My answer is no.

YOUNG FERNAND: I will ask you again until you say yes.

YOUNG MERCÉDÈS: You are stubborn, like a bull.

YOUNG FERNAND: Strong as one, too.

YOUNG MERCÉDÈS: I am betrothed.

YOUNG FERNAND: Then where is your ring, Mercédès? If you were betrothed to me, you would have the finest ring in all of Marseille sitting on your finger.

YOUNG MERCÉDÈS: And you have such a ring?

YOUNG FERNAND: (he doesn't) Not on me.

YOUNG MERCÉDÈS: My love will bring me a ring when he can. But even without it I love him. That is all that matters.

YOUNG FERNAND: (sotto) I am the one who takes care of your every need. Not some sailor traipsing around.

YOUNG MERCÉDÈS: Did you say something?

EDMOND DANTÈS: (from afar) Mercédès!

YOUNG FERNAND: Oh no.

YOUNG MERCÉDÈS: Edmond!

THE TWO LOVERS RUN TO EACH OTHER, EMBRACE.

YOUNG
MERCÉDÈS: I missed you!

EDMOND DANTÈS: I missed you more! I talked only of you while at sea.

YOUNG
MERCÉDÈS: The sailors must be furious.

EDMOND DANTÈS: On the contrary, they are grateful! Tales of your beauty and grace now pervade the seven seas!

HE SPINS HER, SHE LAUGHS.

YOUNG FERNAND COUGHS. LOUDLY.

YOUNG
MERCÉDÈS: Oh! There is someone I want you to meet. My cousin, Fernand. The man I love most in the world. Other than you.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Fernand Mondego! I cannot wait to call you brother.

YOUNG FERNAND: You would have to be married for that.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Ah! You have reminded me of my good news. I return to you not as Edmond Dantès, the sailor. But as Edmond Dantès, captain of the Pharaon! Which means --

YOUNG MERCÉDÈS CLAPS, DELIGHTED.

YOUNG
MERCÉDÈS: -- we can get married!

EDMOND DANTÈS: Exactly! I will take you straight to the church. No engagement feast. Just you, me, a priest. Then I will loudly proclaim through the streets of Marseille: "Presenting Mercédès Herrera, the wife of Edmond Dantès!"

YOUNG
MERCÉDÈS: Oh. I would like a feast. And a dress.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Of course. I simply got carried away.

YOUNG
MERCÉDÈS: Will you come, Fernand?

THEY BOTH WAIT FOR HIM TO RESPOND.

YOUNG FERNAND: (feeling the pressure) Well. Um. I...

HE TURNS ON HIS HEEL, SPEED WALKS AWAY.

YOUNG
MERCÉDÈS: Where are you going?

EDMOND DANTÈS: Would you like join us for dinner? (beat) Why is he running like that?

YOUNG
MERCÉDÈS: He's just being foolish.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Well! He is most welcome regardless. Come, stroll with me.

YOUNG
MERCÉDÈS: But I have so many chores.

EDMOND DANTÈS: I will help you! The sooner you are done, the sooner I can start my proclamations.

YOUNG
MERCÉDÈS: If you insist.

EDMOND DANTÈS: I insist on you!

HE PICKS HER UP, SPINS HER AGAIN. WE FADE FROM THE LOVERS' LAUGHTER TO...

EXT. MARSEILLE - STREETS

7

FERNAND'S ANGRY SPEED WALKING, PAIRED WITH...

YOUNG FERNAND: (muttering) Thinks he can swoop in here and steal her away from me. Pompous, arrogant. Idiot sailor --

YOUNG
CADEROUSSE: (drunk) Fernand Mondego!

YOUNG FERNAND SKIDS TO A STOP, SEES:

YOUNG FERNAND: Caderousse.

YOUNG
CADEROUSSE: You look awful.

YOUNG FERNAND: I --

YOUNG
CADEROUSSE: Come, join us! You've met Danglars. He's buying.

YOUNG FERNAND SHIFTS ON HIS FEET. DECIDES TO JOIN.

INT./EXT. BAR

8

YOUNG FERNAND SITS DOWN. IMMEDIATELY POURS HIMSELF A GLASS.

YOUNG
DANGLARS: (sarcastic) Please, help yourself.

YOUNG FERNAND: (muttering) Edmond Dantès --

YOUNG Dantès?
DANGLARS:

YOUNG Oh. You've seen him too.
CADEROUSSE:

FERNAND GULPS HIS DRINK DOWN.

YOUNG FERNAND: He is engaged. To my woman.

YOUNG The -- (hiccup) -- The Catalan?
CADEROUSSE:

YOUNG FERNAND: Dantès does not deserve her.

YOUNG Dantès does not deserve many things.
DANGLARS:

YOUNG FERNAND: It is not fair! He has done nothing. Why should he
get everything.

YOUNG S'true. Doesn't seem right. Us begging for scraps.
CADEROUSSE:

YOUNG While he lords his victories over all of us.
DANGLARS:

FROM AFAR, THE TRIO HEARS THE LOVERS'
LAUGHTER.

YOUNG There they go.
CADEROUSSE:

YOUNG FERNAND: Don't wave at them.

YOUNG They already see us! The Captain and Madame Dantès,
CADEROUSSE: strolling along the sea.

YOUNG Bad luck. To give one titles before they are
DANGLARS: official.

YOUNG FERNAND: Good.

YOUNG (thinking) None of this is fair, is it?
DANGLARS:

YOUNG CADEROUSSE HICCUPS. YOUNG FERNAND
POURS OUT THE REST OF THE WINE.

YOUNG (to inside the bar) Another bottle!
CADEROUSSE:

YOUNG FERNAND: My life is ruined.

YOUNG Now, now. It's not completely ruined. There's wine,
CADEROUSSE: and brotherhood, and...

YOUNG FERNAND: And the wedding of my woman to another man!

YOUNG (slurring more now) So just stop the wedding.
CADEROUSSE:

YOUNG FERNAND: I cannot stop a wedding.

YOUNG No. But I could.
DANGLARS:

ACT BREAK

INT./EXT. BAR

9

RIGHT WHERE WE LEFT OFF. CADEROUSSE'S
DRUNKENNESS IS MORE OBVIOUS NOW.

YOUNG How would you stop a wedding?
CADEROUSSE:

YOUNG FERNAND: I've already asked her to marry me instead but --

YOUNG She said no? You would have to do more than that.
DANGLARS: Hmm. I think we all agree Edmond Dantès is growing
too pompous too quickly.

YOUNG FERNAND AND YOUNG CADEROUSSE MURMUR
AGREEMENT.

YOUNG And is the best lesson for a young man not life
DANGLARS: experience?

YOUNG FERNAND: What life experience would fix our problems?

YOUNG Prison would do.
DANGLARS:

YOUNG CADEROUSSE BURSTS OUT IN LAUGHTER.

YOUNG It's easy to stop a wedding, he says. Just throw the
CADEROUSSE: boy into prison!

YOUNG Keep your voice down!
DANGLARS:

YOUNG S'pre post -- pre pose -- pre -- preposition --
CADEROUSSE:

YOUNG FERNAND: Preposterous.

YOUNG Yes, that!
CADEROUSSE:

YOUNG Not quite.
DANGLARS:

YOUNG How's that?
CADEROUSSE:

YOUNG
DANGLARS: Because Young Edmond recently picked up a letter from the isle of Elba.

THAT CATCHES THE TABLE'S ATTENTION.

YOUNG
CADEROUSSE: He went to Elba for a letter?

YOUNG
DANGLARS: Which he still has and plans to deliver now that he is back in France.

YOUNG FERNAND: Does he know what he's doing?

YOUNG
DANGLARS: Of course not. And neither does Monsieur Morrel. Both are ignorant of politics.

YOUNG FERNAND: But it is Elba. Full of Napoleon's allies. He must know the king will see anyone arrived from Elba as treasonous. Especially with correspondence.

YOUNG
DANGLARS: ("poor baby") Oh well.

YOUNG
CADEROUSSE: But he's a boy. He's a fool. But. He doesn't know.

YOUNG
DANGLARS: Then some life experience would be beneficial. Here, I have a pen. Do either of you have paper?

A BEAT. ARE THEY COMMITTING TO THIS?

FERNAND TAKES A CRINKLED PIECE OF PAPER FROM HIS POCKET, PUTS IT ON THE TABLE.

YOUNG FERNAND: Here.

YOUNG
DANGLARS: Thank you.

DANGLARS TAKES IT, BEGINS TO WRITE.

YOUNG
DANGLARS: "Let it be known that a sailor from the recently returned merchant ship The Pharaon commandeered the vessel to the Isle of Elba." You've gone quiet, Caderousse.

YOUNG
CADEROUSSE: Nothing more sobering than a pen put to paper.

YOUNG DANGLARS SNORTS, CONTINUES.

YOUNG
DANGLARS: "The sailor, named Edmond Dantès, is a Bonapartist agent. He carries a letter regarding the former Emperor's plans to take over France once again." There. It's probably true anyway.

YOUNG DANGLARS FOLDS THE LETTER.

YOUNG DANGLARS: When this letter is opened, Edmond will be questioned.

YOUNG CADEROUSSE: He'll be thrown into prison.

YOUNG DANGLARS: Hardly. You said yourself: he's a boy. Even if he were, he'd be released in a day and humbled on return.

YOUNG FERNAND: Mercédès would not want to marry him.

YOUNG DANGLARS: And he would be more respectful of his betters.

YOUNG CADEROUSSE: Is there any truth to this?

YOUNG DANGLARS: I do not know what is in the letter that Dantès was given. I have simply written in good faith to the crown. Unless, you do not want me to send it?

SILENCE. YOUNG CADEROUSSE IS STILL DRUNK, BUT CHOOSES HIS WORDS CAREFULLY.

YOUNG CADEROUSSE: You said. If he knows nothing of politics then he has no ill will towards the King. But the King won't see it that way. We're putting him in a situation that he won't know how to navigate.

YOUNG DANGLARS: Drink your wine, Caderousse.

YOUNG CADEROUSSE: I will. But I -- we -- this does not feel wise.

YOUNG DANGLARS: Then, here.

HE SLIDES THE LETTER TO YOUNG CADEROUSSE.

YOUNG DANGLARS: Tear it up.

YOUNG CADEROUSSE DOESN'T TOUCH IT.

YOUNG CADEROUSSE: Well, I'm not suggesting *that*.

YOUNG CADEROUSSE MOVES TO HIS WINE, SPILLS IT ON HIMSELF.

YOUNG CADEROUSSE: Not again.

YOUNG DANGLARS: (overly dramatic) Very well. If you won't tear the letter I will not send it. Here, Fernand. Hold onto this for me.

YOUNG DANGLARS MOVES THE LETTER ACROSS
THE TABLE.

YOUNG DANGLARS: We will not send the letter and everything will happen as anticipated. Edmond Dantès will marry Mercédès. He will become captain of the Pharaon. And his wealth will grow and grow until we all live in his shadow. (beat) Take the letter, Fernand.

YOUNG FERNAND SLOWLY SLIDES THE LETTER TO
HIMSELF.

YOUNG CADEROUSSE: Danglars. You said, you mentioned, another round?

YOUNG DANGLARS: You are already soaked with wine inside and out. If we do not get you home now, I fear that you may never make it. Come, I will take you.

HE STANDS, YOUNG CADEROUSSE DRUNKENLY
FOLLOWS.

YOUNG DANGLARS: Be well, Fernand. We shall see you tomorrow.

YOUNG FERNAND: (grumbling, mocking) "I shall see you tomorrow."

THEY LEAVE. YOUNG FERNAND GRUMBLES
SOMETHING ILLEGIBLE, FINISHES HIS DRINK.

EXT. BAR

10

A FEW MOMENTS HAVE PASSED. WE ARE BACK ON
THE STREETS OF MARSEILLE.

YOUNG CADEROUSSE: Danglars. I thought you were going to take me home.

YOUNG DANGLARS: I am. I will.

YOUNG CADEROUSSE: If you wanted to watch Fernand sulk, we could have done it at the table. With another bottle.

YOUNG DANGLARS: Patience. We are waiting.

YOUNG CADEROUSSE: For what?

FROM AFAR, WE HEAR YOUNG FERNAND RISE
SUDDENLY, BUMPING INTO HIS TABLE.

YOUNG FERNAND: Pardon.

HE BRISKLY LEAVES THE BAR, HEADS DOWN THE STREET.

YOUNG DANGLARS: Alright. Time to go, Caderousse.

THEY START WALKING.

YOUNG CADEROUSSE: The dunk -- drunk -- drunken fool. Fernand's house is the other way.

YOUNG DANGLARS: It is. But the postal service is not.

THEY WALK INTO THE NIGHT.

THE EERIE SILENCE MORPHS INTO...

INT. MORREL HOME

11

A LIVELY REVELRY - SIMPLE, BUT TRULY JOYFUL. GUESTS DANCE AND CHEER AND LAUGH AND PIERRE MORREL GREETES GUESTS.

PIERRE MORREL: (greeting guests) Welcome, welcome! Drink what you like. Food will be served later. Julie, mind your dress. Ah! There he is. Our new captain.

EDMOND APPROACHES WITH LOUIS.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Monsieur Morrel. This is a wonderful gesture.

PIERRE MORREL: Think nothing of it! We all have much to celebrate today. You must be Louis! A pleasure to finally meet.

LOUIS DANTÈS: The pleasure is mine.

PIERRE MORREL: Ours. We are practically family, no? Years at sea and in business will do that to men. Now, where is your wonderful fiancé?

EDMOND DANTÈS: I believe she was with Julie --

PIERRE MORREL: Then we will let them be. Here.

THEY CLINK GLASSES.

PIERRE MORREL: To a well-earned celebration.

ELSEWHERE IN THE ROOM, AN ALREADY TIPSY YOUNG CADEROUSSE SIDLES UP TO YOUNG DANGLARS.

YOUNG CADEROUSSE: Danglars! Long time, no see.

YOUNG DANGLARS: That depends on how much wine one consumed yesterday.

YOUNG CADEROUSSE: Hmm. Doesn't ring a bell.

HE SLURPS HIS GLASS. DANGLARS IS DISGUSTED.

FERNAND APPROACHES THEM, STILL SULKING.

YOUNG DANGLARS: Fernand. You look less despondent than yesterday.

YOUNG FERNAND: Mercédès would not forgive me if I ruin this for her.

YOUNG CADEROUSSE: That's why you ruined it for you.

YOUNG DANGLARS: Please. Fernand is clearly trying to better himself. Let us build him up instead of break him down.

FERNAND WHIMPERS. PIERRE CLINKS A GLASS FROM THE FRONT OF THE ROOM.

PIERRE MORREL: Thank you everyone for coming. Now, there are few truly blissful moments in one's life. But I think I speak for all when I say this is one of them.

THE CROWD CHEERS (THAT INCLUDES DRUNKEN YOUNG CADEROUSSE, SMARMY YOUNG DANGLARS, AND HALF-HEARTED FERNAND).

PIERRE MORREL: But you did not come to this feast for me. So I shall cede the floor to our honored guests.

A SLIGHT SHUFFLING AS EDMOND AND MERCÉDÈS TAKE CENTER STAGE.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Thank you, Monsieur Morrel. Mercédès and I are so grateful for your generosity. And to you all, as well. Happiness is nothing without those to share it with. Mercédès, I cannot wait to build a life with you. And, my father. I would not be who I am without you. May our joy be all of yours.

MERCÉDÈS: I am so grateful to be married (to the the whole room) and to have such a wonderful family!

EDMOND DANTÈS: Thanks to Monsieur Morrel's generosity, this is not only our engagement feast. But also a celebration of the signing of our marriage contract. Which will be this evening!

THE CROWD CHEERS. EDMOND AND MERCÉDÈS KISS.

FERNAND WHIMPERS. CADEROUSSE NEARLY GAGS.

YOUNG DANGLARS: Hold it in.

YOUNG CADEROUSSE: I'm fine.

THE DOORS TO THE FEAST BURST OPEN. THE MUSIC CUTS OUT AS **SOLDIERS** STORM THE ROOM. THE CROWD IS SHOCKED.

LEAD COMMISSAIRE: In the name of His Majesty, remain where you are!

PIERRE MORREL: What is the meaning of this?

LEAD COMMISSAIRE: Are you the host of this feast?

PIERRE MORREL: I am Monsieur Pierre Morrel and I will not have my house invaded.

LEAD COMMISSAIRE: We are only here for one man. Where is Edmond Dantès?

YOUNG FERNAND, YOUNG CADEROUSSE, AND YOUNG DANGLARS SEIZE.

EDMOND DANTÈS: (naïve) I am Edmond Dantès.

LEAD COMMISSAIRE: In the name of His Majesty, you are under arrest for serving as a Bonapartist spy! --

THE ROOM CRIES OUT. THE **LEAD COMMISSAIRE** MOVES TO ARREST EDMOND.

EDMOND DANTÈS: What?

MERCÉDÈS: What did they say?

PIERRE MORREL: This is a mistake.

LOUIS DANTÈS: We are loyal to the Crown.

LEAD COMMISSAIRE: Then it will be proven in court.

EDMOND DANTÈS: I will go.

MERCÉDÈS: Edmond!

EDMOND DANTÈS: I have nothing to hide. It is a misunderstanding. I will be back to marry you in the morning.

PIERRE MORREL: We will sort this out.

THE LEAD COMMISSAIRE GUIDES EDMOND OUT,
BUT MERCÉDÈS LUNGES IN FOR A FINAL KISS.

MERCÉDÈS: Come back to me, Edmond.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Always.

THE LEAD COMMISSAIRE ESCORTS EDMOND OUT,
THE SOLDIERS FOLLOW.

BACK TO OUR TRIO:

YOUNG
CADEROUSSE: Interesting turn of events.

YOUNG
DANGLARS: I don't know what you mean.

YOUNG
CADEROUSSE: Where is Fernand?

YOUNG
DANGLARS: Perhaps he goes to console Mercédès.

YOUNG
CADEROUSSE: Do not take me for a fool, Danglars. A bottle of wine does not hide your tricks from me.

YOUNG
DANGLARS: Speak clearly, Caderousse.

YOUNG
CADEROUSSE: If this is because of that letter, we are all in danger. Forever.

PIERRE APPROACHES THEM, SHAKING HIS HEAD.

PIERRE MORREL: What a terrible tragedy.

YOUNG
DANGLARS: A mistake, Monsieur Morrel. I am sure. But, if you require assistance while you sort this matter out...

PIERRE MORREL: Yes, yes. Come by tomorrow. If this has not quieted, we can discuss how to ready the Pharaon for its next voyage.

YOUNG
DANGLARS: As its temporary captain?

PIERRE MORREL: I suppose.

PIERRE LEAVES TO SPEAK WITH ANOTHER
GUEST.

YOUNG
CADEROUSSE: You play a dangerous game.

YOUNG No, Caderousse. I win them.
DANGLARS:

ACT BREAK

INT. SAINT-MÉRAN HOME

12

ANOTHER ENGAGEMENT PARTY, BUT WITH A MUCH WEALTHIER CROWD. THE SOUNDSCAPE IS MORE POSH, LESS ACTIVELY JOYFUL.

MAN 1: I don't know who's done better. The Mademoiselle Saint-Méran or Monsieur de Villefort.

MAN 3: No doubt that crazy father of his tried to intervene.

THE MARQUIS DE SAINT-MÉRAN CLINKS HIS GLASS POLITELY. THE ROOM QUIETS.

MARQUIS DE SAINT-MÉRAN: A toast! To my daughter Renee and her new husband, Gérard de Villefort. May God bring happiness to you both.

THE CROWD POLITELY CLAPS. YOUNG VILLEFORT CHASTELY KISSES HIS FIANCE, RENEE DE SAINT-MÉRAN.

THE PARTY RETURNS TO ITS MURMURING.

YOUNG VILLEFORT: Thank you, Marquis, for your kind words.

RENEE DE SAINT-MÉRAN: Gérard, he is to be your father! The time for titles has passed.

MARQUIS DE SAINT-MÉRAN: Nonsense. If we did not care about titles, we would not be royalists! And Gérard here would not be as loyal to His Majesty as he is.

YOUNG VILLEFORT: It is the honor of my life. Well, second-most honor.

MARQUIS DE SAINT-MÉRAN: Indeed. We have much to be grateful for. We are no longer threatened by Bonapartist scum. The Republic of France remains intact! (leaning in) It was good of you, to prevent your father, Noirtier, from attending.

YOUNG VILLEFORT: My father is aware that I do not support his political proclivities.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROOM, LEAD COMMISSAIRE ENTERS, BEELINES FOR YOUNG VILLEFORT.

LEAD
COMMISSAIRE: I am looking for Gérard de Villefort. Deputy to the Crown Prosecutor.

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: That is I.

THE LEAD COMMISSAIRE HANDS HIM A LETTER.

LEAD
COMMISSAIRE: Your presence is requested for a most urgent investigation.

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: Understood.

RENEE DE
SAINT-MÉRAN: But it's our engagement feast!

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: This is the Crown's royal seal. I shall be back soon, and we can continue celebrating.

RENEE DE
SAINT-MÉRAN: Promise me?

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: I am a man of my word.

HE KISSES HER HAND.

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: (to Lead Commissaire) Where is the carriage?

A SHARP TRANSITION (WITH CARRIAGE SFX AND MUSIC AS NEEDED) BRINGS US INTO...

INT. SOLDIER HEADQUARTERS

13

YOUNG VILLEFORT AND LEAD COMMISSAIRE WALK BRISKLY DOWN THE HALLWAY.

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: And you have confirmed he is a Bonapartist spy?

LEAD
COMMISSAIRE: He insists he is not, but he does not know that we know he stopped on the Isle of Elba --

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: And potentially spoke with Napoleon himself.

THEY STOP IN FRONT OF A DOOR.

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: The prisoner is inside?

LEAD
COMMISSAIRE: Yes.

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: I will take it from here --

A SCUFFLE FROM THE END OF THE HALLWAY.
PIERRE IS ATTEMPTING TO REACH YOUNG
VILLEFORT, BUT TWO SOLDIERS BLOCK HIS
PATH.

PIERRE MORREL: Let me pass! I demand to speak to an investigator.

YOUNG VILLEFORT SIGHS. WALKS OVER.

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: Stand down. I will speak to him.

THE SOLDIERS OBEY.

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: I am the investigator. What is your intention?

PIERRE MORREL: I am here to advocate for a young man. Edmond Dantès.
He is accused of being a Bonapartist --

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: A serious crime.

PIERRE MORREL: He is innocent! Edmond Dantès has been in my employ
for years. He is a good man. His father is ill and he
provides. His beloved waits for him. He is to captain
my next voyage.

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: And pending the results of my investigation, he still
may. But until then, I suggest you find yourself a
new captain.

PIERRE MORREL: He is innocent!

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: Do you have supporting evidence?

PIERRE MORREL: I can speak to his character.

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: Justice is not decided by character.

YOUNG VILLEFORT WALKS AWAY.

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: The law, monsieur, remains always the law.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

14

YOUNG VILLEFORT ENTERS THE ROOM. IT IS
QUIET, SAVE FOR A FIREPLACE - WHICH
FLICKERS, QUIETLY. EDMOND WAITS, BOUND IN
A CHAIR.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Oh, Monsieur Inspector! Thank you for coming so soon.

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: You do not need to thank me. It is my responsibility
as deputy to the Crown Prosecutor.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Forgive me. I do not know how these proceedings work. I will let you speak and will answer anything that you need.

YOUNG VILLEFORT IS DISARMED BY EDMOND'S
GENUINE GOOD WILL.

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: Yes, well. State your name, age, and occupation.

EDMOND DANTÈS: My name is Edmond Dantès. I am nineteen. I am, or will be, the captain of the merchant ship Pharaon for Morrel and Son.

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: And are you a Bonapartist?

EDMOND DANTÈS: I don't really know what that means.

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: Are you a spy for Napoleon Bonaparte?

EDMOND DANTÈS: Not at all! I have no ill will towards any of my fellow men. All I want is to provide for my father, make my employer proud, and build a life with my fiancé.

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: You are engaged?

EDMOND DANTÈS: Her name is Mercédès. She is perfect. (beat) I was taken from our engagement feast.

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: I too was called from my engagement feast to be here.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Perhaps our future wives are to become friends. I can think of no others who have had their celebrations cut short.

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: I admit our celebration was a rather formal affair.

EDMOND DANTÈS: But the food?

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: Oh, excellent.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Food always tastes better with friends.

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: As does wine. So I hear.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Oh, I don't drink.

YOUNG No?
VILLEFORT:

EDMOND DANTÈS: When I am at sea, I prefer to focus on sailing. I work best when I keep my mind clear.

YOUNG (smiling) Precisely. (realizing he's slipped) But,
VILLEFORT: the matter at hand.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Yes, of course.

YOUNG How do you think you came to be here?
VILLEFORT:

EDMOND DANTÈS: I... what are the charges, exactly? Other than spying. Did I do something wrong?

YOUNG We received notice that on your most recent voyage,
VILLEFORT: you instructed your crew to stop at the Isle of Elba.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Yes.

YOUNG You did?
VILLEFORT:

EDMOND DANTÈS: It was our Captain's dying wish, that we dock at Elba before returning to Marseille.

YOUNG Did he say why?
VILLEFORT:

EDMOND DANTÈS: Yes. It was to retrieve a letter.

YOUNG What was in this letter?
VILLEFORT:

EDMOND DANTÈS: I do not know. I was told it was a private matter, and all that was needed from me was to mail it. (beat) I feel it is in my best interest to say that I know very little of politics? I know the sea, my family, and my duty to my fellow man. That is all.

YOUNG Did you mail the letter?
VILLEFORT:

EDMOND DANTÈS: No. I had not yet had the chance. If it would be helpful --

YOUNG It would.
VILLEFORT:

EDMOND DANTÈS: -- it is in my pocket.

YOUNG VILLEFORT GOES TO EDMOND.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Forgive me, I am bound.

YOUNG Here?
VILLEFORT:

EDMOND DANTÈS: Yes.

YOUNG VILLEFORT TAKES THE LETTER, SHARPLY
INHALES. SWITCHES TO A HARsher Demeanor.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Are you alright, Monsieur Inspector?

YOUNG Who else knows about this letter?
VILLEFORT:

EDMOND DANTÈS: No one. I told not a soul and I have not opened it. All I know is on the exterior of the envelope, whom the letter is addressed to. A Monsieur Noirtier Villefort. (genuine) Perhaps he is your spy?

VILLEFORT IS QUIET. HE OPENS THE LETTER.

YOUNG (reading to himself) "In four weeks time, our
VILLEFORT: regiment will land in Marseille, where upon they will make their way to the *palais...*" (to Edmond) You say you never opened this letter?

EDMOND DANTÈS: I did not.

YOUNG And you do not know what it contains.
VILLEFORT:

EDMOND DANTÈS: I could not.

YOUNG But you do know to whom the letter is addressed.
VILLEFORT:

EDMOND DANTÈS: I do.

YOUNG Hmm. I will be candid, Monsieur Dantès. I am gravely
VILLEFORT: worried for you.

EDMOND DANTÈS: For me?

YOUNG The charges against you are very serious.
VILLEFORT:

EDMOND DANTÈS: But I am innocent!

YOUNG I know that. And you know that. But in these times,
VILLEFORT: anyone adjacent to the Bonapartists is considered a stain on society. And you would not want to tarnish your father or your employer or your fiancé --

EDMOND DANTÈS: No.

YOUNG Exactly. But. I can help you.
VILLEFORT:

EDMOND DANTÈS: That would be most generous of you, Monsieur Inspector. What would I need to do?

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: Nothing. You would need to do...

YOUNG VILLEFORT WALKS TO THE FIREPLACE,
THROWS THE LETTER IN.

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: Nothing.

THE LETTER BURNS AS VILLEFORT THINKS. HE
TURNS BACK TO EDMOND, HIS PLAN REALIZED.

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: I have eliminated the evidence against you. I will write a report declaring your innocence and it will be reviewed by the Minister of Police. You will wait in a cell until then, but no harm will come to you. You will be released and this matter will weigh on you no further.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Oh, thank you! Thank you, Monsieur Inspector. I am so relieved.

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: Remember, Monsieur Dantès. You will not be released right away.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Of course, of course. I will cooperate completely as necessary. You are the most noble of men, Monsieur Inspector. But, I do not know your actual name?

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: Deputy Crown Prosecutor will do.

YOUNG VILLEFORT HEADS FOR THE DOOR.

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: You may wait here. Somebody will retrieve you shortly.

YOUNG VILLEFORT HASTILY LEAVES THE
ROOM...

INT. SOLDIER HEADQUARTERS

15

...SHUTTING THE DOOR BEHIND HIM.

LEAD
COMMISSAIRE: Well, Monsieur Villefort? Is it as bad as we thought?

BEAT.

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: It is worse. Not only is he a Bonapartist spy, but he revealed plans for an attack on His Majesty himself within the month.

THE LEAD COMMISSAIRE GASPS IN HORROR.

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: Let it be clear that Edmond Dantès is the most dangerous of criminals. Do not trust any word that comes out of his mouth. Do not let him speak if you can manage it. You are to imprison him accordingly, I will deal with the papers upon my return.

LEAD
COMMISSAIRE: Your return?

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: I must ride to Paris and speak with the Minister of Police. His Majesty must be prepared.

LEAD
COMMISSAIRE: I will call you a carriage.

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: No, a horse. The fastest one you have.

LEAD
COMMISSAIRE: And will you visit your betrothed before departing?

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: She will understand. It is imperative that I reach Paris in time.

HE BEGINS TO WALK TOWARDS THE EXIT.

YOUNG
VILLEFORT: If I do, my career is made.

EXT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS 16

GUARD 1 AND GUARD 2 ROUGHLY PUSH EDMOND FORWARD.

GUARD 1: Let's go, let's go.

GUARD 2: No need to dawdle.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Apologies. I just have not eaten.

GUARD 1: Gonna have to get used to that.

EXT. DOCKS 17

THE GUARDS THROW EDMOND INTO A BOAT. HE LANDS ON THE EDGE, HARD.

EDMOND WINCES. THE GUARDS LAUGH.

GUARD 2: Monsieur spy can't handle a bruising.

EDMOND DANTÈS: I am not a spy. I am innocent.

GUARD 1: Sure you are.

GUARD 2: S'what they all say.

THE GUARDS BEGIN TO ROW THE BOAT.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Where are we going?

GUARD 2: Haven't figured it out yet?

GUARD 1: Guess he's slow.

EDMOND DANTÈS: I'm supposed to wait in a cell.

THE GUARDS CHUCKLE.

GUARD 2: Doesn't seem that slow.

GUARD 1: He'll figure it out soon enough.

THEY ROW, SILENTLY. EDMOND SITS, EVENTUALLY COMES TO REALIZE...

EDMOND DANTÈS: This... Are we going to the Chateau d'if?

THE GUARDS CHUCKLE.

EDMOND DANTÈS: But, no. That is wrong. I am innocent. I am innocent! Turn back. Monsieur Inspector will explain.

EDMOND RISES, A GUARD SHOVES HIM DOWN.

GUARD 1: Sit down.

EDMOND DANTÈS: This is a mistake! We must go back. I am innocent --

EDMOND LEANS TOWARDS THE GUARD, WHO PUNCHES HIM.

GUARD 1: I said, sit down.

EDMOND DANTÈS: (desperate) I beg you. Monsieur. Do not bring me to the Chateau d'if. I do not belong there. I am innocent. Monsieur Inspector can explain. I am to see my father. My fiancé. My friends. Do not make me go. Do not make me go...

A CLOCK (OR RATHER, THE CLOCK, FROM THE TOP OF THE EPISODE) BEGINS TO TICK.

GUARD 1: (to Guard 2) It's always the crazy ones.

EDMOND DANTÈS: Do not make me go, do not make me go, do not make me go...

BERTUCCIO (OS): Monsieur le Comte? Your Excellency?

THE TICKING RISES, THE CLOCK SPINS
FORWARD.

INT. THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO'S HOME - PARLOR 18

BERTUCCIO JOLTS THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
OUT OF HIS REVERIE.

THE COUNT OF
MONTE CRISTO: Yes, Bertuccio.

BERTUCCIO: There is news. Another death in the Villefort household.

THE COUNT OF
MONTE CRISTO: Who?

BERTUCCIO: The Marquis de Saint-Méran.

BEAT.

THE COUNT OF
MONTE CRISTO: Thank you, Bertuccio.

BERTUCCIO: Do you require anything else, Monsieur?

THE COUNT OF
MONTE CRISTO: Thank you, but no. There is nothing to do but wait.

END OF EPISODE.