

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO  
"EPISODE ONE" 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."

AN ORCHESTRA SETTLING IN. THE CONDUCTOR'S BATON TAPS, THEN - SILENCE.

**PARIS, FRANCE, 1843**

1

INSTEAD OF A FORMAL OVERTURE, SOFT TOUCHES OF WEALTH CRESCENDO INTO THE SOUNDSCAPE - TEA POURING, CHINA CLINKING, STEPS ON PLUSH UPHOLSTERY. A WEALTHY BREAKFAST TABLE IS BEING SET.

A PAIR OF DOORS BURSTS OPEN.

**INT. MORCERF HOME - DINING ROOM**

2

CHÂTEAU-RENAUD, BEAUCHAMP, MAXIMILIAN MORREL, AND LUCIEN DEBRAY BOISTEROUSLY ENTER.

CHÂTEAU-RENAUD: Goodness.

LUCIEN DEBRAY: This is certainly a spread.

BEAUCHAMP: But where's the host?

CHÂTEAU-RENAUD: Lucien!

LUCIEN DEBRAY: (mouth full) What? (swallowing) We were invited over for breakfast.

BEAUCHAMP: For the last time, if you eat like that.

THEY SETTLE IN AT THE TABLE.

CHÂTEAU-RENAUD: Maximilian! Sit next to me.

MAXIMILIAN: Oh, thank you.

BEAUCHAMP: Hoping his virtuosity will rub off on you?

CHÂTEAU-RENAUD: Rubbing is Lucien's specialty. Or rather, getting rubbed.

LUCIEN CHOKES, BEAUCHAMP LAUGHS.

LUCIEN DEBRAY: Whatever happened to decorum?

BEAUCHAMP: Which noble lady is that?

CHÂTEAU-RENAUD: Maybe we should start eating. It will stop us from throwing barbs at each other.

MAXIMILIAN: At least until lunchtime.

ALBERT DE MORCERF ENTERS WITH A FLOURISH.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Gentlemen!

BEAUCHAMP: There he is.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Please, sit! Eat. Imbibe.

CHÂTEAU-RENAUD: Some of us do not need the urging.

BEAUCHAMP: Are we not waiting for the others?

MAXIMILIAN: You were very clear about a nine thirty arrival.

ALBERT: No. Well, yes. But our other friends have permission to arrive later.

LUCIEN DEBRAY: No need to lie, Albert. We know we are your closest friends. And also you invited Maximilian.

CHÂTEAU-RENAUD: Maximilian Morrel has more honor in his finger --

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Gentlemen, please! As much as I love our spars, I must ask that you cede the floor. Time is limited, and there is much to cover.

BEAUCHAMP: Are you referring to the secret reason you've invited us all to breakfast?

LUCIEN DEBRAY: What was the secret? The part where he said "I have something important to share with you"?

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Thank you, Lucien. An excellent segue.

ALBERT SITS.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: You are all. Here today. So I. Can tell you. About. A man.

BEAT.

LUCIEN DEBRAY: Okay.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: But not just any man! Oh, no. My friends. It is time that I tell you the truth about what happened when I traveled to Italy.

BEAT.

BEAUCHAMP: Would you like permission to start --

ALBERT DE MORCERF: As you know! I had plans to traverse across Europe this summer. And, as our dear friend Franz d'Epinay had similar intentions, we agreed to meet in Rome.

**EXT. ROME**

3

THE SOUNDS OF A LIVELY CITY INTERTWINE WITH ALBERT'S NARRATION.

ALBERT DE MORCERF (VO): Obviously, every Parisian must take the opportunity to travel whilst he can. Lest we be forced to lug a new wife along with us or devote too much of ourselves to our employer. So, knowing that I would be engaged and married upon return, Franz and I had a singular goal upon arriving in Rome. Carnevale.

ITALIAN AMBIANCE PICKS UP, LIVELIER NOW.

ALBERT DE MORCERF (VO): What better chance did I have for romance or adventure than Carnevale? Duels, bullfights, drinks, debauchery. If I was to have a final taste of life before returning to Paris, it was this.

LUCIEN DEBRAY (VO): You could also just frequent the correct clubs.

ALBERT DE MORCERF (VO): Ah, Lucien. If you do not believe in the romance of Carnevale, then I cannot help you. But I do. And did. And Franz did. So we agreed to meet there. Naturally, I arrived first.

**INT. HOTEL**

4

A RECEPTION DESK BELL DINGS ONCE. THEN TWICE, THEN, WITH A GRATING RAPIDITY --

HOTEL OWNER: (rushing in) *Buongiorno, signore.* How can I be of service?

ALBERT DE MORCERF: I have a reservation for two under Albert de Morcerf.

HOTEL OWNER: Of course, Vicomte. Apologies on the delay. We have been rather busy.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Really? The hotel is so quiet. Especially for Carnevale.

HOTEL OWNER: *Si, si, si.* The majority of our rooms have been reserved by one guest, so we are at his service. And yours, of course.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: One guest booked the entire hotel? Fascinating. We will not require much. Just our keys. And a carriage, for use during the festival.

HOTEL OWNER: Apologies, *signore*. I cannot help with that request.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: For our keys?

HOTEL OWNER: For the carriage. All carriages have been booked in advance, as Carnevale is this week.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: I know it is Carnevale. That is why we require the carriage. So we can traverse throughout the city during Carnevale. The event we have journeyed across the continent to attend. Carnevale.

HOTEL OWNER: I am aware you have traveled for Carnevale, *Vicomte*. But unfortunately that does not change that all carriages have been booked. I am happy to inquire further --

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Yes, see that you do.

ALBERT TURNS, WALKS OFF. HEELS CLACKING.

ALBERT DE MORCERF (VO): Naturally, when Franz arrived later in the afternoon, I informed him of my distress.

**INT. HOTEL - ALBERT AND FRANZ'S ROOM**

5

ALBERT DE MORCERF: I'm very distressed!

ALBERT PACES THE FLOOR, WHILE FRANZ D'EPINAY LOUNGES NEARBY.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: Surely there are other proprietors that our host has not asked yet. Or locals who are desperate for a franc. Or pastries. Whatever they use here.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: But what if we do not have a carriage, Franz?

FRANZ D'EPINAY: We could visit Venice.

FRANZ AND ALBERT GROAN AT THE THOUGHT.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: What are we to do?

A KNOCK AT THE DOOR. ALBERT OPENS IT.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Ah ha! Our guardian angel.

THE HOTEL OWNER ENTERS.

HOTEL OWNER: I apologize, Messieurs. I do not bring good news.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: So no carriage then.

HOTEL OWNER: I have searched as far as I am able, but all carriages have been reserved. Perhaps if you wished to reserve one for after Carnevale.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: Obviously not.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: What would be the point of that?

FRANZ D'EPINAY: In Paris, when something "cannot be done," you pay double and immediately get what you wanted.

HOTEL OWNER: How very noble, Messieurs.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: You've been to Rome before, Franz. What do you propose we do?

FRANZ D'EPINAY: Well. We may as well do some sightseeing whilst we are able.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: I have always wanted to see the colosseum.

HOTEL OWNER: If I may; perhaps it would be wiser to wait until tomorrow to visit the Colosseum? At this time of day, bandits scout these roads.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Bandits!

FRANZ D'EPINAY: Bandits scout all of Europe. I hardly think we need to worry about them in Rome.

HOTEL OWNER: He may not be known in Paris, but Luigi Vampa and his bandits are taken quite seriously here in *Italia*.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: I could take a bandit.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: Oh could you?

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Let them come for me, I say! A rapier in one hand, a pistol in the other. Let them find us, hunt us down. I will be victorious in our dramatic confrontation!

BEAUCHAMP (VO): Ah, I understand now, Albert. This is a story about how you single-handedly fought this Luigi Vampa and his bandits that are so feared in Rome.

**INT. MORCERF HOME - DINING ROOM**

6

BACK TO THE PRESENT.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: We did distantly stroll by the colosseum, but Franz claimed to have spotted some shadowy figures and did not want to enter. So, we bought box tickets and attended the opera.

CHÂTEAU-RENAUD: French?

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Italian.

THE PEANUT GALLERY GROANS.

CHÂTEAU-RENAUD: This story is terrible. The romantic lead is a carriage and there isn't even any French art.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Patience, Beauchamp! That was just the first day we arrived. The second day was when we received the invitation.

**INT. HOTEL - ALBERT AND FRANZ'S ROOM**

7

A KNOCK ON THE DOOR. ALBERT, GRUMBLING, OPENS IT.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Good morning, Monsieur Hotelier.

HOTEL OWNER: Good morning! Vicomte, I bring excellent news. Your neighbor has most generously offered the use of one of his personal carriages to you and your companion for the duration of your stay.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Really?

FRANZ D'EPINAY: What's going on?

ALBERT DE MORCERF: A sign from the Gods! We've found ourselves a carriage.

FRANZ From where?  
D'EPINAY:

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Our most mysterious neighbor. The, ah, the --

HOTEL OWNER: Count of Monte Cristo, Messieurs.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: The Count of Monte Cristo.

FRANZ Monte Cristo doesn't have a count. The isle is  
D'EPINAY: practically a rock.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Technically, all islands are practically rocks.

FRANZ Still. If this "count" was any sort of noble, he  
D'EPINAY: would not have sent some messenger. He would have presented his offer in writing as proof of his word.

FOOTSTEPS COME FROM OUTSIDE THE ROOM,  
DOWN THE HALL, STOPPING BEHIND THE HOTEL  
OWNER. MEET BERTUCCIO.

BERTUCCIO: *Bonne journée*, messieurs. For you, on behalf of my employer.

BETRUCIO EXTENDS A LETTER TO ALBERT, HE  
TAKES IT.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Ha! A sort of noble indeed.

FRANZ Or at least, a boy who learned his letters.  
D'EPINAY:

ALBERT RIPS THE LETTER OPEN.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Look at that! We've been invited for lunch.

**INT. HOTEL - THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO'S ROOM 8**

BERTUCCIO OPENS THE DOOR INTO THE COUNT'S  
ROOM. ALBERT AND FRANZ FOLLOW HIM IN TO  
SEE A DAZZLING ARRAY OF FOODS.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Amazing.

FRANZ This is certainly a spread.  
D'EPINAY:

BERTUCCIO: My employer will join you in a few moments.



BERTUCCIO WALKS AWAY. ALBERT FLINGS HIMSELF INTO A CHAIR. FRANZ, MORE HESITANT.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: What luck, Franz! Carnevale has been saved thanks to our newest friend.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: Let us not use "friend" so loosely.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Do you not see the table in front of you?

FRANZ D'EPINAY: I see it. It is that hardly believe it.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Believe what, gentlemen?

A DOOR OPENS AS THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO STRIDES TOWARD THEM. ALBERT SHOOTS UP FROM HIS CHAIR.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Count! I mean, your Excellency. Your, majesty?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Count will suffice. You must be Albert de Morcerf.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: I am!

THEY SHAKE HANDS.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: Does his reputation precede him?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Only in that we are currently neighbors and that I can extend you both my assistance, Monsieur d'Epinay.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: And we are eternally grateful, Count.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: There is no need. I have three carriages at my disposal and can temporarily part with one. After all, every young Parisian must take the opportunity to travel whilst they can.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: That's what I said!

FRANZ D'EPINAY: Are you from Paris, Count?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I am not. I confess that I have not yet made it to Paris. I find I lack the proper introductions to establish myself in society.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Where else have you gone?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Oh, the usual unusualls. Arabia, Greece. Africa, further into Asia.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: How exotic.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: Yes, quite. And you say you've never been to France? Despite being count of a French isle?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: You mishear me. I have not been to Paris. I am quite familiar with my own lands.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: And have you been to Rome?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Many times.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: What brings you here this time?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Morbid curiosity. (beat) Prior to Carnevale, which I admit I have aged out of, there is always an interesting exacting of justice.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: How so?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Public execution. This afternoon, in fact. Surely you saw the set up constructed on the Piazza.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: That's what that was.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: It could have been anything.

THE COUNT RISES, LEADS ALBERT AND FRANZ TO THE WINDOW.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: It will begin shortly.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Is this why you booked the entire floor?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: It is not that I booked the entire floor. It is that I ensured myself the best perspective.

THE SOUND OF THE CROWD PRESSES IN FROM BELOW.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: For an execution.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: As I have stated. Monsieur de Morcerf, d'Epina y. Will you join me as I watch?

**ACT BREAK**

**EXT. HOTEL - THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO'S BALCONY**

THE THREE MEN ARE NOW SEATED ON THE BALCONY, THE SOUND OF THE PIAZZA MORE PROMINENT. BERTUCCIO WALKS OVER, GIVES THE COUNT A CUP OF COFFEE.

BERTUCCIO: Your Excellency.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Thank you, Bertuccio.

BERTUCCIO LEAVES.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Does your slave travel with you wherever you go?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: My attendant is always with me.

THE COUNT SIPS HIS COFFEE.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I keep few in close confidence.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Surely you could afford to train more to your predilections.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Ah. A story. When I first visited Arabia --

A DOOR OPENS.

**INT. MORCERF HOME - DINING ROOM**

10

IN PRESENT DAY, FRANZ HAS ARRIVED. THE GROUP GROANS.

MAXIMILIAN: Good morning, Franz.

LUCIEN DEBRAY: Atrocious timing.

BEAUCHAMP: Yes, the story was finally getting good.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: What story?

ALBERT DE MORCERF: I am recounting our tales of Rome.

FRANZ Oh.  
D'EPINAY:

ALBERT DE Of the Count of Monte Cristo.  
MORCERF:

FRANZ (immediate mood shift) Is that what this is for?  
D'EPINAY:

LUCIEN DEBRAY: Unless Albert is about to tell us he's engaged to a horse carriage.

BEAUCHAMP: Good lead, Lucien. I'm rubbing off on you after all.

FRANZ SCOFFS.

CHÂTEAU- You are unamused.  
RENAUD:

FRANZ How far is he into the story?  
D'EPINAY:

CHÂTEAU- You are about to watch the execution.  
RENAUD:

FRANZ FLOPS INTO A CHAIR.

FRANZ Well, don't stop on my account. Albert.  
D'EPINAY:

HE PUTS HIS FEET UP ON THE TABLE.

FRANZ Proceed.  
D'EPINAY:

OBVIOUS TENSION IN THE ROOM.

ALBERT DE Right.  
MORCERF:

**EXT. HOTEL - THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO'S BALCONY<sup>11</sup>**

THE CROWD IS ROWDIER NOW. THE EXECUTION CLOSE TO STARTING.

ALBERT DE I wonder, how many sentences will be issued today.  
MORCERF:

THE COUNT OF Currently, two.  
MONTE CRISTO:

FRANZ Currently?  
D'EPINAY:

THE COUNT OF Two men. Both are criminals. One is old and a known  
MONTE CRISTO: vagrant. The other, young and allegedly innocent.

ALBERT DE If he is an innocent, why must he be executed?  
MORCERF:

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Innocence in the eyes of the people differs greatly from innocence in the eyes of the law. The boy is rumored to be in Luigi Vampa's service.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: The bandit.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Yes. It would take an Act of God to save him now.

THE PIAZZA CROWD QUIETS. A SMALL GROUP CLIMBS ONTO THE PLATFORM, LED BY THE LEAD CARABINIERE.

LEAD CARABINIERE: Today we mark the first day of Carnevale, by order of the Court of La Rota. Judgment resulting in the sentence of death. The sentenced men are Cesare Rondolo, found guilty of murder. And the other, Peppino Priori, guilty of complicity with the abominable bandit Luigi Vampa and his followers.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: (overlapping) The older of the two looks angry.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Facing death reveals one's true self. It tears away the mask one has worn all their life. It is in the final moments when one's true face appears.

LEAD CARABINIERE: All charitable souls are entreated to pray for the repentance of these two miserable creatures.

CARABINIERE: Wait!

MURMURING SPREADS THROUGH THE CROWD AS CARABINIERE PUSHES THROUGH. THEY GIVE A PIECE OF PAPER TO THE LEAD CARABINIERE.

LEAD CARABINIERE: There is a pardon!

THE MURMURING GROWS. ALBERT GASPS.

LEAD CARABINIERE: A pardon for Peppino Priori.

CESARE RONDOLO: What?

LEAD CARABINIERE: Release him.

CESARE RONDOLO: A pardon for him? And not me? We were meant to die together! He was to die before me! I will not die alone! You can't make me!

CESARE TRIES TO ESCAPE. CARABINIERI  
WRESTLE HIM ONTO THE PLATFORM, IN FRONT  
OF THE GUILLOTINE. THE CROWD CHEERS AT  
THE COMMOTION.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: See, Monsieur de Morcerf. His true face. Furious that his fellow creature is not dying with him. If he were allowed to do so, he would tear young Peppino apart rather than letting him enjoy the life he has left.

CESARE RONDOLO: Let go! You do not have the right to kill me alone!

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: What consoled this man was that another man was also to die. To die before him, to experience pain and loss first. Yet his neighbor is saved, and his response? That neither of them are worthy of life.

FRANZ STANDS.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: This is barbaric.

CESARE IS FORCED INTO THE GUILLOTINE.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: You give humanity too much credit. This is human nature. Give a man a rope and he will not build a ladder. He will not pull his fellow man from the pits of despair. No, no, Monsieur. No man does good for the sake of doing good. You have just seen it. Give a man a rope, and he will simply hang himself.

CESARE CRIES OUT.

THE GUILLOTINE SLICES HIS NECK.

**INT. MORCERF HOME - DINING ROOM**

12

A CLOCK TICKS.

BEAUCHAMP: Dreadful.

LUCIEN DEBRAY: I think it exciting.

CHÂTEAU-RENAUD: Says a man who has never served.

LUCIEN DEBRAY: Not all of our hands are good with a gun, Château-renaud.

BEAUCHAMP: We know your hands are filled with flowers, Lucien Debray.

THE GROUP CHUCKLES AND GROANS, THE MOOD  
RISING AGAIN.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: I admit that my constitution was shaken by what I had witnessed. But it did not deter our travels nor our excitement for the events to come. Right, Franz?

FRANZ D'EPINAY: Sure.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: And even though The Count seemed more inclined to myself than Franz here. He insisted that we both use his carriage for as long as we need.

**INT. HOTEL - THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO'S ROOM 13**

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I have also acquired costumes for the festivities, should you wish to use those as well.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: We'll manage.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: But thank you, Count, for your generosity. Use of your carriage is more than enough. I someday hope to return the favor.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: Are you not attending Carnevale, Count?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: The costumes were in case I changed my mind. I shall watch from above, the same spot we were in earlier.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: We will wave at you from the center of the piazza.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I will not wave back. With hope that I do not recognize you.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Ah, very true. What is the point of Carnevale if not to lose yourself completely?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Should you choose to call again, leave word with the hotel owner. He will send word to Bertuccio.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: We most certainly will. *Bonsoir*, Count!

FRANZ D'EPINAY: Monsieur le Comte.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Messieurs.

THE DOOR CLOSSES.

**INT. HOTEL - HALLWAY**

ALBERT AND FRANZ WALK BACK TO THEIR ROOM.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: I say, I have never met a more fascinating individual in my entire life!

FRANZ D'EPINAY: You really must get out more.

THEY OPEN THEIR ROOM, STEP INSIDE.

**INT. HOTEL - ALBERT AND FRANZ'S ROOM**

15

THEY SHUT THE DOOR BEHIND THEM.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: I wonder where else he has traveled to.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: Does it matter? After we return his carriage, we need not see him again.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Why would we want to do that?

FRANZ D'EPINAY: I don't trust him.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: You don't know him.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: Precisely. And besides. He looks at you oddly.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Come again?

FRANZ D'EPINAY: He... his eyes, they just... Look, what does it matter?

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Quite right! We have a party to attend. Or, several parties within a larger party that will last multiple days. You have our costumes?

FRANZ D'EPINAY: In the wardrobe on the right.

ALBERT WALKS OVER TO THE WARDROBE, OPENS IT. INSPECTS THE COSTUMES. FRANZ POURS THEM BOTH WINE.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Well done, Franz. We will look like every other peasant reveling tonight.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: The surest way to get a lover with no strings attached.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: It's such a shame that I am to be married when I return to Paris.



FRANZ Or, yet another reason for us to focus on the  
D'EPINAY: celebration at hand. Here.

FRANZ HANDS ALBERT A GLASS.

FRANZ To us.  
D'EPINAY:

ALBERT DE To us. And, to freedom!  
MORCERF:

THEY CLINK GLASSES, DRINK.

THE SOUNDS OF CARNEVALE CRESCENDO,  
BRINGING US INTO...

**EXT. ROME**

16

FULL-ON REVELRY. LOUD MUSIC AND DRUNKEN  
PARTIERS. IT IS JOYFUL AND BOISTEROUS AND  
MAGIC.

ALBERT DE Finally. The first night of Carnevale. What started  
MORCERF (VO): with death had bloomed into music and color. Lights  
and shadows everywhere. A new friend on every corner.  
And speaking of, in my quest to find a lover before  
returning home, I realized the fastest way to success  
was to divide and conquer.

ALBERT DE I feel like we will succeed apart tonight. Meet back  
MORCERF: at the hotel?

FRANZ Did you still want to attend the ball?  
D'EPINAY:

ALBERT DE Yes! I almost forgot! We shall meet there. Godspeed,  
MORCERF: my friend.

FRANZ Enjoy yourself! But not too much!  
D'EPINAY:

ALBERT DISAPPEARS INTO THE CROWD. THE  
SOUNDCAPE BEGINS TO SWELL.

ALBERT DE And now, gentlemen. This is the end.  
MORCERF (VO):

AND SUDDENLY, IT CUTS OFF.

**INT. MORCERF HOME - DINING ROOM**

17

ALBERT DE Of my part. Of the story. The rest must be told by  
MORCERF: Monsieur d'Epinay.

FRANZ No.  
D'EPINAY:

ALBERT DE MORCERF: What? Franz, you'll tell it better than I will.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: I'm sure I would. But I don't want to.

THE PEANUT GALLERY GROANS.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: If you don't want to participate, why did you show up at all?

FRANZ D'EPINAY: Honestly? Curiosity.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Fine, Franz. Ruin the fun for everybody.

LUCIEN DEBRAY: Thanks, Franz.

BEAUCHAMP: Well done.

MAXIMILIAN: I'm just here for breakfast.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: I will continue the story without you.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: Mmm. Great.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Though at this point, it should be noted that I was not actually present, so be warned that I may use a slight touch of creative license.

**INT. BALLROOM**

18

A POLITE, HIGH SOCIETY AFFAIR. EVERYONE  
HERE IS OBVIOUSLY IN THE ESCHELONS OF  
HIGH SOCIETY.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: Excuse me, Madame.

MADAME: Yes?

FRANZ D'EPINAY: Have you seen a man my age, in the same outfit with dark hair? Looks Spanish, acts French?

MADAME: At Carnevale? Of course I have.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: I see your point. Thank you regardless.

MADAME LEAVES. FRANZ SIPS HIS DRINK.

A MESSENGER APPROACHES.

MESSENGER: Monsieur d'Epinay?

FRANZ I am.  
D'EPINAY:

HE HANDS FRANZ A LETTER.

MESSENGER: Luigi Vampa gives his regards.

FRANZ His -- Vampa? Wait, hey!  
D'EPINAY:

THE MESSENGER RUNS OFF.

FRANZ Stop! Stop that man!  
D'EPINAY:

IT'S TOO LATE, HE IS GONE. FRANZ SCOFFS,  
OPENS THE LETTER. GASPS.

FRANZ Albert!  
D'EPINAY:

**ACT BREAK**

**INT. HOTEL - THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO'S ROOM 19**

BANGING ON THE COUNT'S DOOR. BERTUCCIO  
OPENS IT.

FRANZ Where is he? Where is the -- Count! Monsieur le  
D'EPINAY: Comte!

FRANZ RUSHES OVER TO THE COUNT, SHOWS HIM  
THE LETTER.

THE COUNT OF Monsieur d'Epinay.  
MONTE CRISTO:

FRANZ Look.  
D'EPINAY:

THE COUNT OF This is quite serious.  
MONTE CRISTO:

FRANZ Albert is in danger!  
D'EPINAY:

THE COUNT OF From Luigi Vampa, no less. Why do you bring me this  
MONTE CRISTO: letter, Monsieur d'Epinay?

FRANZ Albert de Morcerf is the most noble of men. He is my  
D'EPINAY: trusted confidant and life-long friend whom I would  
gladly give everything I had for --

FRANZ D'EPINAY No, no. No, no, no, no, NO.  
(VO):

**INT. MORCERF HOME - DINING ROOM**

20

FRANZ                   That is absolutely not what I said.  
D'EPINAY:

ALBERT DE               You elected to not tell the story.  
MORCERF:

FRANZ                   That does not mean you can just insert whatever  
D'EPINAY:               groveling you like.

ALBERT DE               Would you like to take over?  
MORCERF:

FRANZ                   No.  
D'EPINAY:

ALBERT DE               Then I shall presume to tell the story as I see fit.  
MORCERF:

BEAUCHAMP:             Why did you go to the Count, Franz?

FRANZ                   Because.  
D'EPINAY:

**INT. HOTEL - THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO'S ROOM    21**

FRANZ                   I imagine that a man of your resources would be able  
D'EPINAY:               to provide some assistance.

THE COUNT OF            You ask me to pay this ransom? The house de Morcerf  
MONTE CRISTO:           is not lacking in funds.

FRANZ                   I do not -- how do you know that?  
D'EPINAY:

THE COUNT OF            (ignoring) Yet the ransom is not what concerns me.  
MONTE CRISTO:           Albert's life is in grave danger. And Luigi Vampa  
                              shows no mercy to those who do not meet his demands.

FRANZ                   So what do we do?  
D'EPINAY:

THE COUNT OF            Bertuccio!  
MONTE CRISTO:

BERTUCCIO:             Excellency.

THE COUNT OF            Prepare the horses.  
MONTE CRISTO:

BERTUCCIO LEAVES. THE COUNT GATHERS  
HIMSELF.

THE COUNT OF            Involving the carabinieri provides unwanted attention  
MONTE CRISTO:           and will take much too time.

FRANZ                   Carabinieri?  
D'EPINAY:

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Italian police. It would also inadvertently besmirch the Morcerf name in a way I do not approve of. I shall speak with this Luigi Vampa myself. Negotiate Albert's release.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: But what if we are too late?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I assure you, Monsieur d'Epinay. I am never late.

**EXT. ROME**

22

HORSES WHINNY AND GALLOP.

MUSIC INTENSIFIES.

BOTH SOUNDS MELD INTO A DRAMATIC  
SOUNDSCAPE.

ALBERT DE MORCERF (VO): The Count of Monte Cristo and Franz ride at a rapid pace. From the center of Rome, skirting the revelers that remain on the streets of the city. Galloping away from the daybreak that chases us like hounds. I, obviously having been kidnapped, was blindfolded and taken to an undisclosed location. But I knew where I was being brought. The hideout of Luigi Vampa and his dastardly crew of bandits.

**EXT. ITALY - CAVE ENTRANCE**

23

THE COUNT AND FRANZ EXIT THE CARRIAGE.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Perhaps it is best you remain here, Monsieur d'Epinay.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: I will go where Albert is.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Very well. Are you armed?

FRANZ D'EPINAY: No. I did not think --

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: No matter. Remain behind me. And promise , if I say, you will retreat.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: (begrudgingly) Agreed.

THEY ENTER THE CAVE.

**INT. CAVE**

24

THEIR FOOTSTEPS, THOUGH SOFT, ECHO AROUND THEM.

FRANZ  
D'EPINAY: How should we announce ourselves -- Albert!

FRANZ RUSHES OVER TO ALBERT.

ALBERT DE  
MORCERF (VO): I had been bound and gagged, barely conscious after being manhandled by Vampa's cronies.

FRANZ  
D'EPINAY: Are you alright?

ALBERT MUMBLES.

FRANZ  
D'EPINAY: He looks unharmed.

PEPPINO: For now.

PEPPINO AND OTHER BANDITS EMERGE FROM THE EDGES OF THE CAVERN, WEAPONS POINTED AT THE COUNT, ALBERT, AND FRANZ.

FRANZ  
D'EPINAY: An ambush!

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO: Evidently.

PEPPINO: Believe we requested you bring a ransom in exchange for your friend.

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO: Where is your leader?

PEPPINO: Occupied.

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO: I demand an audience.

PEPPINO: Oh, you demand? Well, I'll just go get him, won't I?

THE BANDITS LAUGH.

PEPPINO: Who are you, to demand an audience with Luigi Vampa?

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO: The Count of Monte Cristo.

THE BANDITS SHUT UP, NO LONGER AMUSED.  
THE COUNT'S NAME CARRIES WEIGHT HERE.

LUIGI VAMPA: Stand aside, Peppino.

LUIGI VAMPA EMERGES, MOVES TO THE CENTER.

LUIGI VAMPA: The Count of Monte Cristo. In his flesh.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: You've heard of me.

LUIGI VAMPA: Who has not heard the rumors about the infamous Count of Monte Cristo? Yet, here he is to ask me a favor.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: On the contrary, I wish to offer you the chance to rectify your insult.

LUIGI VAMPA: I, insult you? You forget, Monsieur le Comte, you are in my territory.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I cede to no one. Territory or otherwise.

LUIGI VAMPA: Are you threatening me?

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Do you feel threatened?

BEAT.

LUIGI VAMPA: You came for the boy.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: My protection extends to my friends. To insult them is to insult me.

LUIGI VAMPA: In my territory, I am the one who decides what is or is not an insult. Your Excellency.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: If you have heard of me, you know what happens to those who try my patience. However. I am in no mood for that tonight. So perhaps we can come to an arrangement.

THE COUNT STEPS FORWARD, IT FEELS LIKE THEY MIGHT FIGHT.

LUIGI VAMPA: Perhaps we can come to an arrangement.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Perhaps you could release him.

LUIGI VAMPA SNAPS HIS FINGERS.

LUIGI VAMPA: Do it.

BANDITS HUSTLE TO ALBERT AND FRANZ, RELEASING THE BONDS. FRANZ HELPS ALBERT STAND.

LUIGI VAMPA: Regarding the ransom --

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: What ransom?

LUIGI VAMPA: My thoughts exactly.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: Franz, bring the Vicomte de Morcerf outside.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: Come on, Albert. Walk with me.

IT'S A STRUGGLE, BUT HE DOES. THEY LIMP OUT TOGETHER.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I trust there will be no more insults between us. During this visit and any that may follow.

LUIGI VAMPA: Of course not, your Excellency. Your reputation precedes you.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I am most certain that it does. Do not forget me, Vampa.

THE COUNT BEGINS TO FOLLOW FRANZ AND ALBERT.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO: I will not forget you.

**INT. MORCERF HOME - DINING ROOM**

25

AGAIN, THE TICKING CLOCK.

MAXIMILIAN: Franz, is that -- did all that really -- ?

FRANZ D'EPINAY: Yes.

THE PEANUT GALLERY MURMURS APPROVAL.

CHÂTEAU-RENAUD: He didn't even draw.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: He didn't need to. As he said his name, everyone in the cave shivered in fear.

LUCIEN DEBRAY: I thought you were blindfolded?

ALBERT DE MORCERF: (ignoring him) Under the Count's protection, nobody would have touched me. I was practically a god.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: You were bound and gagged and very tired.

ALBERT DE MORCERF: Franz, what does it matter? I was in danger, the Count saved my life. I am forever indebted to him. If not by duty, by desire.

FRANZ D'EPINAY: He isn't a god, Albert. He is a man. You think he is wealth incarnate and carries clout we do not know so he should be revered. Do not fool yourself.



BEAUCHAMP: Franz. Are you keeping something from us?

FRANZ  
D'EPINAY: (sighing) Albert told you that we toured the Colosseum?

BEAUCHAMP: That you tried to.

FRANZ  
D'EPINAY: Right, well.

ALBERT DE  
MORCERF: Franz saw ghosts.

FRANZ  
D'EPINAY: They weren't ghosts! They were two men. Men who I think were Luigi Vampa and the Count of Monte Cristo.

LUCIEN DEBRAY: That seems farfetched.

FRANZ  
D'EPINAY: Is it? Aside from the fact that they looked the same, isn't it strange that when we needed a carriage, the Count provided? Is it not odd that the man freed from execution truly was in Luigi Vampa's service?

CHÂTEAU-  
RENAUD: I didn't think of that.

FRANZ  
D'EPINAY: And is it not convenient that the Count knew exactly where to go to retrieve Albert, and once there, Luigi Vampa conceded almost immediately?

BEAUCHAMP: All of those things can be easily explained.

LUCIEN DEBRAY: And let's remember, you went to him for help.

FRANZ  
D'EPINAY: Because I had no choice!

BEAUCHAMP: Let's say for a moment that Franz is right. Everything that happened in Rome was the result of a stranger's machinations. The question isn't whether they were real or not, the question is why? What is the purpose of any of it? Albert, did the Count ask you for anything? Demand any sort of boon for services rendered?

ALBERT DE  
MORCERF: On the contrary. He kept offering more.

BEAUCHAMP: There you go.

FRANZ  
D'EPINAY: How do you not see that as suspicious?

BEAUCHAMP: Franz, look around you. If it's wealth you suspect, you are in the wrong company.

FRANZ  
D'EPINAY: You are missing the point. Just -- leave me to my breakfast.

CHÂTEAU-  
RENAUD: After you were freed, Albert. Were there any more adventures in Rome?

ALBERT DE  
MORCERF: I had had enough adventures by then.

MAXIMILIAN: And did you see the Count again? After the rescue?

ALBERT DE  
MORCERF: Only to offer my gratitude. And to extend my services when he comes to Paris.

FRANZ CHOKES ON HIS BREAKFAST.

LUCIEN DEBRAY: Come again?

ALBERT DE  
MORCERF: No, you heard me correctly. For when the Count comes to Paris. Prior to my departure, the Count said he was planning to visit Paris in three months time. And as he had said earlier that he lacked the proper introductions into Parisian society, I happily offered my services.

BEAUCHAMP: Albert.

ALBERT DE  
MORCERF: Beauchamp.

BEAUCHAMP: How many months has it been since you had this conversation?

ALBERT DE  
MORCERF: (giddy) What an excellent question.

THE CLOCK STRIKES.

ALBERT DE  
MORCERF: I told the Count he should meet me here, at this address, in three months time at ten o'clock in the morning. And I asked you all to be here at half past nine so I could recount my tale prior to then. So that way, when the Count arrives, you would know exactly who he is and what he is capable of doing. And time was of the essence for everything I had arranged this morning. Because, as you now know. The Count is never late.

THE DOORS OPEN, FOOTSTEPS CLACK THROUGH.  
THE THEME MUSIC PLAYS.

THE COUNT OF  
MONTE CRISTO: *Bonne journée, gentlemen.*

**END OF EPISODE.**