

The Count of Monte Cristo

by Alexandre Dumas

**An Adaptation via Thinking Processes Affording
Joy in Learning and Logical Analysis**

an autoSOCRATIC QUICK-START publication

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Alexandre Dumas

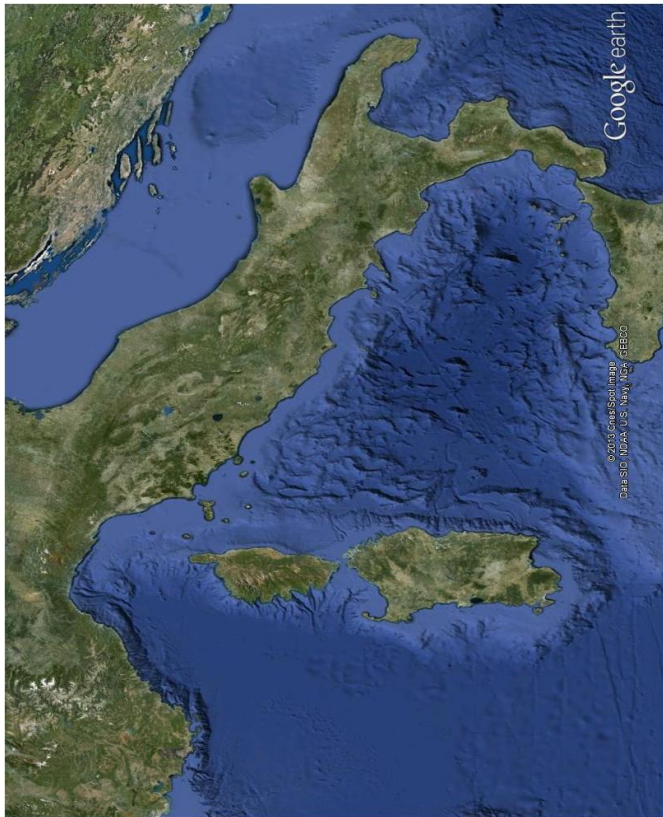
Alexandre Dumas was born in France in 1802.

Dumas' father was a general and a companion of Napoleon.

Dumas grew up in Paris surrounded by history, politics, etc.

Dumas like to write, with any genre (plays, novels, etc), so much he was called a "Fiction Factory".

"The Count of Monte Cristo", "The Three Musketeers", and "The Man in the Iron Mask" all reflect Dumas' background.



A Ship Without its Captain

As the ship Pharaon entered port in Marseilles, France, in 1815, the ship owner, Monsieur Morrel, was happy his ship was finally home.

Monsieur Morrel saw a young, tall sailor at the wheel where old Captain Leclere should have been.

Monsieur Morrel knew something bad happened to Captain Leclere.

The young man at the wheel, Edmond Dantes, told Morrel Captain Leclere had been buried at sea in Naples, Italy.

Morrel, though saddened, also saw Edmond Dantes was a qualified replacement as ship's captain.

One Unhappy Crewmate

First Mate Danglars, a 26-year-old sailor, also wanted to be captain of the Pharaon.

Danglars noted after Dantes took command of the ship, he immediately made an unexpected stop at Elba Island.

Though the charge could be construed as jealousy, the fact it was Elba Island was of concern to Morrel, the ship owner.

French leader Napoleon had recently been exiled to Elba Island.

Morrel worried he would get caught up in a political spat between pro and anti-Napoleon figures.

The Elba Explanation

Captain Leclere, before going mad because of the fever, ordered Dantes to stop at Elba Island and report to Napoleon.

Dantes was ordered by Leclere to obey any orders the ex-Emperor of France gave.

Dantes, following orders, stopped at Elba Island and met with Napoleon.

Morrel, the ship-owner, wanted to stay clear of politics.

The issue of the Elba stop was explained to Morrel's satisfaction, and the matter dropped.

A Planned Wedding

Edmond Dantes wanted to marry a young woman named Mercedes.

Mercedes' cousin, Fernand, was madly in love with Mercedes, and also wanted to marry Mercedes.

Jealous of Dantes, Fernand threatened to kill Dantes.

Mercedes warned should any harm come to Dantes, she would hate forever her cousin Fernand.

Though he hated Dantes, Fernand could do nothing to stop the wedding.

A Coincidental Meeting

First-Mate Dangers, still angered at not being captain, was drinking wine at an outside café with a man named Caderousse.

While the two were drinking wine, they saw the angry Femand walking down the street and invited to join them.

Dangers and Femand, in telling their stories, realized Edmond Dantes was at the core of each of their problems!

Dangers said he had evidence Dantes was conspiring against King Louis XVIII.

Such incriminating evidence would not only help Dangers (become captain), but Femand (with Mercedes)!

Plotting Against Dantes

Danglers said Dantes stopped at Elba to see Napoleon, who gave Dantes a letter to give to people in Paris.

Edmond Dantes was conspiring to bring Napoleon back into power!

Femand immediately wanted to go to the King's Prosecutor with the evidence!

Danglers noted Dantes would eventually get out and kill Femand, plus Mercedes would have nothing to do with him.

They needed to devise a secret way of informing on Dantes.

A Failed Intervention

Danglers and Femand wrote a letter incriminating Dantes, and signed the letter "A Friend".

Caderousse, now drunk, was friends with Dantes, and disapproved of the letter.

Danglers crumbled the letter, tossed it in the bushes, and said they had no intention of actually sending the letter.

Danglers escorted the drunk Caderousse from the table, but gave a wink to Femand.

The letter was retrieved - and sent!

Arrested!

Mercedes and Edmond Dantes were planning to get married.

The damaging letter had reached the King's Prosecutor.

The King's soldiers came to the wedding to arrest Edmond Dantes!

Edmond Dantes had no idea why he was being arrested, but knew he had done nothing wrong.

Dantes was led off to answer to the charges of the King's Prosecutor, Monsieur Villefort.

An Explanation Gone Awry

Dantes explained the Elba visit, and the letter (which Dantes still held) from Napoleon, and addressed to a person in Paris.

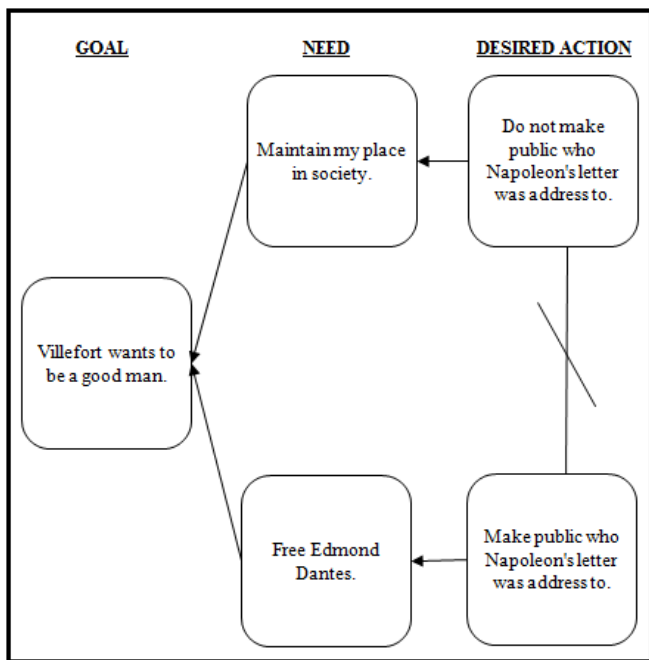
Prosecutor Villefort, as an officer of the law, demanded Dantes hand over the letter.

Dantes gave the letter, addressed to Monsieur Noirtier, to Villefort.

Monsieur Noirtier was actually Villefort's father, who had a traitorous background, and now was seeking to help Napoleon back to power.

Villefort was caught in a tough bind.

The Fate of Edmond Dantes



Imprisoned at Chateau d'If

Having run away from his father's traitorous past and changed his name, Villefort's past was catching up with him.

Releasing the evidence against Dantes would bring shame to Villefort himself.

Villefort destroyed the letter and had Dantes arrested.

Chateau d'If was originally a fort outside Marseille, but was now a prison like the USA's Alcatraz.

Edmond Dantes was a prisoner - for life!



Number 34 in Chateau d'If

Edmond Dantes, now Prisoner #34, was imprisoned at Chateau d'If on February 28, 1815.

In his 12th year of solitary confinement, he wondered what good life was.

Edmond Dantes decided if this was "life", life wasn't worth living, and went on a hunger strike.

As Dantes neared the end, he hear scraping behind the wall of his cell.

Another prisoner was trying to escape!

A Meeting in a Passageway

Hearing the scraping sound of an escaping prisoner energized Dantes, and he started digging as well.

Dantes fashioned ingenious digging and lifting "tools" to help him escape from his cell.

He was out and into a passageway behind the cell-block.

He was now working on the same stone as a prisoner from inside his cell.

Father Faria, i.e., the Mad Priest ... meet Edmond Dantes, #34!

The Mad Priest

Father Faria (The Mad Priest) was a political prisoner, and had been in Chateau d'If 16 years.

While in Chateau d'If, he had taught himself many things, hiding materials in a secret passageway.

Edmond Dantes now believed his own time as a prisoner had been wasted.

For nearly two years, Father Faria taught Dantes many things.

Edmond Dantes and The Mad Priest, now comrades, planned their escape!

The Treasure at Monte Cristo

Planning their escape, Father Faria became deathly ill.

Before dying, Father told Dantes of a vast fortune, from Father Spada, hidden on the island of Monte Cristo.

Dantes memorized the map, as Father Faria passed away.

Saddened, Dantes too thought of death as well, but also of why he was here.

Instead of death, Dantes thought about punishing those responsible for him being in the Chateau d'If!

Only the Dead Escape

As the dead Father Faria was wrapped in a shroud and readied for burial, Dantes realized only the dead escape Chateau d'If.

Sneaking through the hidden passageway, Dantes moved the dead Mad Priest to his cell, while he wrapped himself up in the shroud.

Once buried, Dantes could quickly escape the shroud and dig himself to freedom.

Chateau d'If was an island.

The soldiers heaved Edmond Dantes into the sea!

A Now or Never Choice

Dantes had escaped from the island only to be imprisoned in the water.

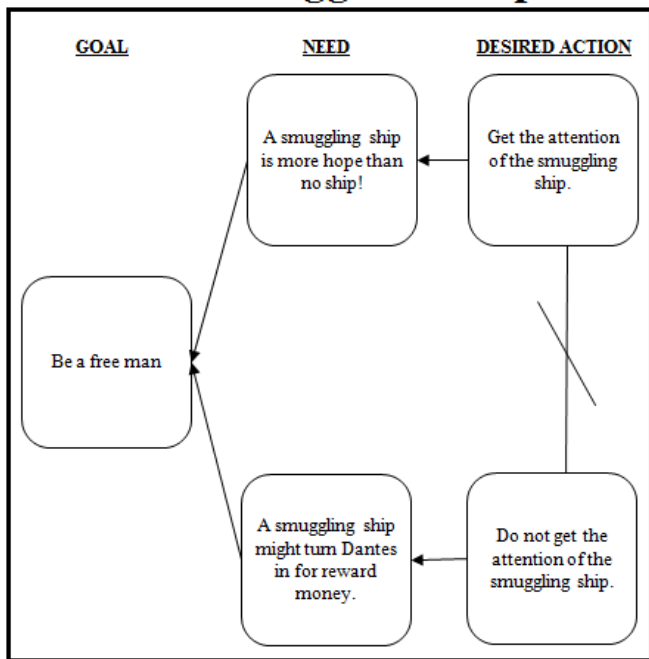
Freeing himself, he found refuge clinging to a rock on a small island next to Chateau d'If.

With little hope of survival, he saw the alarm go off, indicating Dantes had escaped.

At that time, a smuggling sailboat raced by him.

Dantes instantly faced a life or death, now or never, choice.

The Smuggler's Ship



Free at Last

Dantes leapt off the rocks, getting the attention of the smuggling ship.

Dantes proved his value as a sailor, and the ship's captain kept him on board.

After several successful smuggling trips, the next rendezvous with other smugglers was to be at the Island of Monte Cristo.

Monte Cristo, of course, supposedly held the treasure spoken of by the Mad Priest!

Dantes went ashore (to kill a goat for food) as everyone stayed away from the uninhabited island.

Rich

Dantes found the treasure, and snuck several valuable jewels with him back aboard the ship.

While making port in Leghorn, Italy, Dantes told the captain, Jacopo, this was his last trip.

Jacopo was sad, because it was obvious Dantes was a great sailor, and the two got along well.

Dantes needed help finding the three men (Danglers, Fernand, and Villefort) responsible for him being imprisoned

Dantes invited Jacopo to join him, which he did!

Well Munitioned and Ready!

Having cashed the jewels for a lot of money, Dantes bought beautiful clothes for both he and Jacopo.

Dantes first wanted to find out what happened to those he cared about.

Dantes sent Jacopo to Marsailles to find out what happened to his father, Mercedes, and his friend Caderousse.

Dantes needed to retrieve all the treasure from Monte Cristo Island.

Dantes purchased a yacht, had a secret compartment built, and retrieved the fortune!

The Fate of Three Friends

Jacopo reported back Dantes' father was dead, Mercedes could not be found, and Caderousse was still running an Inn in Marseilles.

Saddened at the passing of his father, Dantes was glad at least one of the three had been found.

Dantes set out for Marseilles to talk with Gaspard Caderousse.

Dantes didn't want Caderousse to know he was Edmond Dantes.

Dantes pretended to be a Hungarian priest who had attended the deathbed of Edmond Dantes.

The Fury Builds

Dantes is told his Father died of starvation, and of the plot between Danglars and Fernand to implicate Dantes.

Dantes learned the ship owner (Monsieur Morrel) and Mercedes had gone to see the prosecutor (Villefort) to find Dantes, but he would not see them.

The fury builds in Dantes, as starvation is a brutal death, and Dantes learns more of the conspiracy against him.

Danglars and Villefort now owned the largest bank in Paris.

Dantes headed to Paris to destroy those who had tried to destroy him!

An Ambitious Target

Dantes went to Paris under the pseudonym (false name) "The Count of Monte Cristo".

Dantes, now The Count, will use the men's notorious nature and greed against them, to make them poor.

Men lose money investing, but The Count needs to make sure they invest everything.

The Count will make small investments through the bank, knowing the two will also invest small amounts, but make big money.

The Count will then make a huge investment, knowing the two will also, but the Count will secretly cash in his investment before losing everything himself.

The Get-Back Plan

Living a rich lifestyle, The Count made several investments, all with sizeable returns.

Villefort and Danglars also made similar investments (secretly), and made small fortunes.

The Count's plan was working perfectly, as he knew the two men would start to over-extend themselves, angry they hadn't already invested more.

The Count made a personal visit to the bank, injecting this next investment would put the previous ones to shame.

The excited bankers went "all in".

From Riches to Rags

Reports began to come in about storms wrecking ships, cargoes being captured by smugglers, and trusted cash-carriers leaving with the money.

The diamond mine that promised riches turned out to be a fraud!

Danglars and Villefort, suddenly near ruin, rush to see The Count.

The Count, hearing of the mine's collapse, had sold his investment earlier.

The two men went from riches to rags, while The Count saved his fortune.

Danglars Now in Ruins

Danglars had left the bank with the remaining money, but had been located by smuggling friends of Jacopo, and was being held captive.

The smugglers made Danglars pay exhorbitant amounts of money for small amounts of food and water.

Danglars was down to his last bit of money, and was now starving.

The Count appeared, and glad Danglars was now suffering as Dantes' father had suffered.

Thinking of the two dead people, The Count forgave Danglars after Danglars repented for his sins.

In Search of Fernand

Mercedes and Fernand Morcerf had married, and had a son, Albert Morcerf, who was now taking fencing lessons.

The Count appeared and defeated the Fencing master at the school.

Albert came to admire "The Count", and the two formed a friendship.

Through this friendship, The Count came to meet Mercedes and Fernand.

Though Fernand suspected nothing, Mercedes instantly knew everything!

Fernand Called Out

The Count learned Fernand, while in the military, had the dethroned ruler of Constantinople killed and the daughter sold into slavery.

The Count wanted to destroy Fernand.

The Count had these charges printed in several newspapers.

The son, Albert, furious of the treatment against his father, challenged The Count to a duel!

The Count's action plan had led to an unexpected - and unwanted - confrontation.

The Truth

Mercedes came to The Count and told him how they had searched for Edmond Dantes in vain.

Mercedes knew nothing of Femand's background, got married, and had two kids, including Albert.

Mercedes did not want to see her son killed in a dual with the man Mercedes once loved.

The Count did not want to kill Albert, of course.

The Count was going to intentionally miss in the dual, and let Albert kill him!

Vengeance Fulfilled

Mercedes' son is safe, but her lost love, Edmond Dantes, is about to be lost forever.

Mercedes tells Albert everything.

Albert cancels the duel, apologizing to Edmond Dantes.

Mercedes and Albert, now knowing the evil truth about Fernand, leave him.

Fernand, now humiliated and destroyed, kills himself.

Great Quotes

“His mind was filled with a single thought: that of his happiness destroyed for no apparent reason.”

“An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.”

“Because, my friend, I judge it by the past.”

“Possibly nothing at all; the overflow of my brain would probably, in a state of freedom, have evaporated in a thousand follies; misfortune is needed to bring to light the treasures of the human intellect. Compression is needed to explode gunpowder. Captivity has brought my mental faculties to a focus; and you are well aware that from the collision of clouds electricity is produced — from electricity, lightning, from lightning, illumination.”

“That’s exactly what worries me,” replied Dantes. “I don’t think man was meant to attain happiness so easily. Happiness is like those palaces in fairy tales whose gates are guarded by dragons: we must fight in order to conquer it.”

“Yes; and remember that two legged tigers and crocodiles are more dangerous than the others.”

“(…) the tree forsakes not the flower: the flower falls from the tree.”

“...for there are two distinct sorts of ideas, those that proceed from the head and those that emanate from the heart.”

“...remember that what has once been done may be done again.”

“...The friends we have lost do not repose under the ground...they are buried deep in our hearts. It has been thus ordained that they may always accompany us...”

“...until the day God deigns to reveal the future to man, the sum of all human wisdom will be contained in these two words: wait and hope.”

“A man is always in a hurry to be happy.”

“A weakened mind always sees everything through a black veil. The soul makes its own horizons; your soul is dark, which is why you see such a cloudy sky.”

“Abbe Faria: Here is your final lesson - do not commit the crime for which you now serve the sentence. God said, Vengeance is mine. “Edmond Dantes: I don’t believe in God.

“Ah, lips that say one thing, while the heart thinks another,”

“Ah,” said the jailer, “do not always brood over what is impossible, or you will be mad in a fortnight.”

“And now...farewell to kindness, humanity and gratitude. I have substituted myself for Providence in rewarding the good; may the God of vengeance now yield me His place to punish the wicked.”

“But my real treasure is not that, my dear friend, which awaits me beneath the sombre rocks of Monte Cristo, it is your presence...it is the rays of intelligence you have elicited from my brain, the languages you have implanted in my memory, and which have taken root there with all their philological ramifications. These different sciences that you

have made so easy to me by the depth of the knowledge you possess of them, and the clearness of the principles to which you have reduced them- this is my treasure, my beloved friend, and with this you have made me rich and happy.”

“but there is no need to know danger in order to fear it: indeed, it may be observed, that it is usually unknown perils that inspire the greatest terror.”

“But Valentine, why despair, why always paint the future in such sombre hues?” Maximilien asked.

“Fool that I am,” said he, “that I did not tear out my heart the day I resolved to revenge myself”.”

“For all evils there are two remedies - time and silence.”

“For the happy man prayer is only a jumble of words, until the day when sorrow comes to explain to him the sublime language by means of which he speaks to God.”

“God is always the last resource.”

“God is merciful to all, as he has been to you; he is first a father, then a judge.”

“God may seem sometimes to forget for a while, whilst his justice reposes, but there always comes a moment when he remembers.”

“Haste is a poor counselor”

“Hatred is blind, anger is foolhardy, and he who pours out vengeance risks having to drink a bitter draft”

“Hatred is blind; rage carries you away; and he who pours out vengeance runs the risk of tasting a bitter draught.”

“He who has a partner has a master.”

“His eyebrows arched under a single, pensive line and his eyes themselves were imprinted with deep sadness, behind which from time to time could be seen dark flashes of misanthropy and hatred.”

“How did I escape? With difficulty. How did I plan this moment? With pleasure. “

“How strange,” continued the king, with some asperity; “the police think that they have disposed of the whole matter when they say, ‘A murder has been committed,’ and especially so when they can add, ‘And we are on the track of the guilty persons.’”

“I hate this life of the fashionable world, always ordered, measured, ruled, like our music-paper. What I have always wished for, desired, and coveted, is the life of an artist, free and independent, relying only on my own resources, and accountable only to myself.”

“I have always had more dread of a pen, a bottle of ink, and a sheet of paper than of a sword or pistol.”

“I have been taken by Satan into the highest mountain in the earth, and when there he said he to me, ‘Child of earth, what wouldst thou have to make thee adore me?’ I replied, ‘Listen, I wish to be Providence myself, for I feel that the most beautiful, noblest, most sublime thing in the world, is to recompense and punish.’”

“I have no will, unless it be the will never to decide. I have been so overwhelmed by the many storms that have broken over my head, that I am become passive in the hands of the Almighty, like a sparrow in the talons of an eagle. I live, because it is not ordained for me to die.”

“If you wish to discover the guilty person, first find out to whom the crime might be useful.”

“In politics, my dear fellow, you know, as well as I do, there are no men, but ideas — no feelings, but interests; in politics we do not kill a man, we only remove an obstacle, that is all.”

“It is a bad habit to shout it from the rooftops when one challenges a person. Not everyone benefits from attracting attention.”

“It was a strange thing: one never appeared to take a step forward in the heart or mind of this man. Those who wished, so to speak, to force their way into intimacy with him found the path blocked.”

“Joy to hearts which have suffered long is like the dew on the ground after a long drought; both the heart and the ground

absorb that beneficent moisture falling on them, and nothing is outwardly apparant.”

“Moral wounds have this peculiarity - they may be hidden, but they never close; always painful, always ready to bleed when touched, they remain fresh and open in the heart.”

“My son, philosophy as I understand it, is reducible to no rules by which it can be learned; it is the amalgamation of all the sciences, the golden cloud which bears the soul to heaven.”

“Now I’d like someone to tell me there is no drama in real life!”

“On what slender threads do life and fortune hang.”

“Order is the key to all problems.”

“Pain, thou art not an evil”

“Shall we make a positive appointment for a particular day and hour?” inquired the count; “only let me warn you that I

am proverbial for my punctilious exactitude in keeping my engagements.”

“The difference between treason and patriotism is only a matter of dates.”

“The worthy officer had just given birth to this high-sounding adverb...”

“There is neither happiness nor unhappiness in this world; there is only the comparison of one state with another. Only a man who has felt ultimate despair is capable of feeling ultimate bliss. It is necessary to have wished for death in order to know how good it is to live.....the sum of all human wisdom will be contained in these two words: Wait and Hope.”

“To learn is not to know; there are the learners and the learned. Memory makes the one, philosophy the others.”

“Yet man will never be perfect until he learns to create and destroy; he does know how to destroy, and that is half the battle.”

“You instinctively display the greatest virtue, or rather the chief defect, of us eccentric Parisians- that is, you assume the vices you have not, and conceal the virtues you possess.”

“You were able to wait,’ said Dantes, sighing. ‘Your long labor gave you a constant occupation, and when you didn’t have your work to distract you, you had your hopes to console you.’”

“Your life story is a novel; and people, though they love novels wound between two yellow paper covers, are oddly suspicious of those which come to them in living vellum.”

