

NOTES ON THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO

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1. ARCS

The plot may be subdivided into the following arcs (Robin Buss translation):

- (1) Chapters 1-7: *Marseille*
- (2) Chapters 8-15: *Imprisonment at Chateau d'If*
- (3) Chapters 16-19: *Arc of Abbé Faria*
- (4) Chapters 20-24: *Prison escape and the treasure*
- (5) Chapters 25-30: *Arc of Abbé Busoni and Lord Wilmore*
- (6) Chapters 31-38: *Rome*
- (7) Chapters 39-48: *Paris*
- (8) Chapters 49-50: *Haydée and old acquaintances*
- (9) Chapters 51-64: *Dinnertime*
- (10) Chapters 65-71: *Ball-time*
- (11) Chapters 72-80: *Death in the house*
- (12) Chapters 81-83: *One!*
- (13) Chapters 84-92: *Fisherman*
- (14) Chapters 93-99: *Undoing*
- (15) Chapters 100-105: *Dantès*
- (16) Chapters 106-111: *Madness*
- (17) Chapters 112-113: *Remembrance*
- (18) Chapters 114-116: *Forgiveness*
- (19) Chapter 117: *October the fifth*

2. TIMELINE

2.1. **Paris.**

- (1) Count attends a meal; meets Albert, Debray, Beauchamp, Château-Renaud and Maximilien; impresses them.
- (2) Count invited to Albert's house; sees a portrait of Mercédès looking out to sea; meets Fernand and Mercédès; impresses them; Mercédès questions Albert about the Count's background.
- (3) Count buys a house (previously owned by Villefort's father-in-law); manipulates Bertuccio (his steward and former smuggler) into telling his story: attempted murder of Villefort, seeking shelter at Caderousse who killed his wife, his adoptive son murdering his sister-in-law.
- (4) Count buys Danglars's horses; meets Danglars, talks about the unlimited credit deal; meets Mme Danglars (who already knows about Count from Debray and who's angry at Danglars for selling her horses) and impresses her, later returning her horses; saves Edouard and Mme Villefort when their carriage goes out of control; impresses Mme Villefort; meets Villefort, flexes and coldly talks about him ideology.

2.2. Haydée and old acquaintances. Count meets Haydée encouraging her to meet more people as she is free; Count pays a visit to the Morrels and sees some relics of the past.

2.3. **Dinnertime.**

- (1) Maximilien meets Valentine who tells him about her family's connection to Morrel; Count visits Villefort's, meets Mme Villefort and kindles her interest in elixirs and poisons.

- (2) At the opera: Heydée tells Count that Fernand sold her father and made his fortune; Counts meets Albert and Debray, Albert supposed to marry Eugène Danglars and Franz to marry Valentine (neither is enthusiastic about it), Count says he's inviting the Danglars and the Villeforts.
- (3) Major Cavalcanti (informed and paid by Abbé Busoni) and Andrea (informed and paid by Sinbad the Sailor) meet at Count's house as father and his long-lost son (as Count observes their meeting through a peephole); they read each other's letters, don't understand the goal but agreed to play their part for the money; they are invited to Count's dinner party.
- (4) Maximilien meets Valentine, talks about his admiration of Count, Valentine talks about Count's influence in her family; Villefort and wife informs old Noirtier of Valentine's planned marriage with Franz angering him (Noirtier and Franz's father are bitter political enemies); Valentine assures Noirtier that she doesn't love Franz either, Noirtier asks for a notary; Noirtier writes his will (all his fortune goes to Valentine if she doesn't marry Franz, else all goes to the poor), around the same time Count visits the Villeforts to remind them of the dinner (at Count's countryhouse, where Villefort's first wife's parents once lived).
- (5) Count visits telegraph office which is also the home of the operator (who is also a gardener); Count bribes him, sends a coded message intended for the ministry of the interior; Debray notifies Mme Danglars of political trouble in Spain (telegraph message), Danglars sells Spanish govt funds, consequently loses a million francs.
- (6) Count's house at Auteuil has been transformed under Bertuccio's direction, only one garden and one bedroom remain unchanged, invitees arrived, Bertuccio is shocked to see Villefort alive and startled to see Mme Danglars (identifies her as the pregnant woman he saw long ago), he recognizes Andrea as Benedetto (boy he rescued from the garden and adopted); after eating, Count takes everyone to the non-refurbished room and tells them of his imagination to which Mme Danglars nearly faints; all went to the garden and Count showed a crime scene where a live infant was buried; everyone leaves, a beggar (Caderousse who has escaped from prison) asks Andrea for a ride and threatens to expose his past as Benedetto unless he gives him 200 francs a month.

2.4. Ball-time.

- (1) Debray inquires Mme Danglars about her behavior at the dinner; Danglars returns to find them together, asks Debray to leave as he has matters to discuss with wife; Danglars blames her of his recent financial loss and reveals he knows her secret (her first husband committed suicide when he returned from war to find her pregnant with Villefort's baby); Danglars visits Count, talks about his daughter's marriage prospects (that he might favor Andrea over Albert) and Fernand's background, Count encourages Danglars to find out more about Fernand (how he became rich after that Greece incident); Mme Danglars meets Villefort who tells her his investigations about their secret and guesses their child is alive and that Count knows their secret, and then he vows to find out what the Count is up to.
- (2) Albert visits Count, inquires him on the dinner, discusses with him on his planned marriage, invites him to a ball (Count accepts when he learns

Mercédès asks for it); Villefort learns about Abbé Bussoni and Lord Wilmore, visits Busoni who says Wilmore is Count's enemy, then visits Wilmore, feels assured afterwards.

- (3) Count goes to the ball, Mercédès observes him closely; the two have a moment together in the garden.

2.5. Death in the house.

- (1) The death of de Saint-Méran (Valentine's maternal grandfather) forces Valentine's marriage to happen much quicker; Maximilien and Valentine come up with an escape plan.
- (2) Maximilien goes to see Valentine (who doesn't come to their meeting place), curious, he enters her house, overhears news of Mme de Saint-Méran's death possibly due to poisoning (when the doctor suggests autopsy, Villefort declines in concern for his reputation); Maximilien and Valentine discuss their plans with Noirtier who asks them to wait as he has a plan.
- (3) After Mme de Saint-Méran's funeral, Franz and Villefort go together and this worries Maximilien; the contract of marriage to be signed soon much to Mme Villefort's and Valentine's dismay; minutes before the contract is signed, Noirtier asks to see Franz (who, together with Valentine and Villefort sees him); Noirtier reveals who killed Franz's father.
- (4) Count visits Danglars, finds out from Mme Danglars that Danglars has lost even more money, Danglars prefers Andrea to Albert, Danglars tells Count that he has found some shocking secret about Fernand in connection to Greece.
- (5) Albert meets Haydée who tells him her story; Valentine's engagement with Franz is broken off; Fernand visits Danglars who calls off his daughter's engagement, angering Fernand; furious Albert asks Count to be his second in a duel with Beauchamp for disgracing his father (which Count declines, and gives advice which Albert declines); Albert challenges Beauchamp to a duel.
- (6) Noirtier plans to move out of the house, discusses his plans with Maximilien; Barrois (servant) dies after drinking lemonade, doctor deduces it is poisoned and reasons that Valentine is the logical suspect, all servants leave the house.

2.6. **One!** Andrea (Benedetto) confides in Caderousse that he thinks Count is his real father having seen his will; Caderousse breaks into Count's house (Count has been warned by Andrea anonymously); Count (as Busoni) handles Caderousse, gives him a chance (if he returns safe, God has forgiven him) but on the way Benedetto strikes him; Caderousse dies beside Busoni.

2.7. Fisherman.

- (1) Beauchamp visits Albert, tells him the report is correct (verified it by traveling to Janina); Albert breaks down but Beauchamp promises not to tell anyone, then they decide to go for a walk and visit Count; later, Albert travels with Count to Normandy, however, the stay was cut short as Albert has to leave for Paris immediately (Count finds out why when he reads the newspaper).

- (2) Beauchamp recounts this to Albert— Fernand Morcerf defends himself in the court, Haydée opposes as eye-witness; Albert vows to deal with his enemy (whoever is behind it); they visit Danglars (after Beauchamp's suggestion that Danglars might be behind it); Danglars tells them Count encouraged him to write to Janina; after some reflection Albert deduces Count knew everything all along.
- (3) Albert finds out Count will be in an opera; meets his mother who asks him not to go against Count; Albert finds Count at the opera, they set up a duel the next day.
- (4) Mercédès implores Edmond to save Albert; Edmond changes his heart on vengeance; Albert calls off the duel; Albert decides to leave Paris for a new life, finds her mother in the same motive, they decide to leave together, receives a letter from Count, she accepts the offer; Fernand commits suicide; Count tells Maximilien that he will always be there for him; Maximilien leaves for Valentine.

2.8. Undoing.

- (1) Max meets Valentine and Noirtier, learns of Mme Villefort's visit to announce upcoming marriage; Valentine faints due to poisoning, Max rushes to Count; Valentine is alive and well (due to Noirtier's having prepared for the poisoning); Busoni moves in next house.
- (2) Eugénie tells her father Danglars she doesn't want to marry, for Danglars it is an economic proposition, Eugénie eventually agrees (she has a plan but doesn't tell); Andrea asks Count to act as his father for the signing of marriage contract which Count declines; Count tells Danglars that Villefort cannot come since he has found new evidence (Caderousse's letter to Danglars) which alarms Andrea who leaves; Eugénie and her friend also leave for Brussels (Count has helped them with passport and introductory letters)
- (3) Andrea who unknowingly rushes to Eugénie's hiding room is caught; Mme Danglars visits Villefort for help, asks him to let go of Andrea to save her family's embarrassment, Villefort declines and says it's too late since Andrea has been captured.

2.9. Chapters 100-105.

- (1) Count visits sick Valentine, convinces her that someone is trying to kill her; Count asks her to find out by playing asleep when the poisoner comes to her room; Counts assures Valentine that he would watch over her and has a plan (which she must follow and should never be afraid no matter what); Valentine doesn't wake up and is declared dead by the doctor; noticing the liquid in the glass which she emptied, Mme Villefort rushes away and collapses in her room; Max is dismayed, brings Noirtier to Valentine's room, breaks down and asks for justice; Noirtier tells in private Villefort about the murderer; Villefort promises justice but asks Max and the doctor to be silent for the honor of his family; Busoni (priest) and Noirtier sit with Valentine's body.
- (2) Villefort resorts to his work (regarding Benedetto) as a distraction for his family's misfortunes and burying live child's possible scandal; Count takes five million from Danglars.

- (3) Count follows Max from the cemetery to his room; Max reproaches Count for fake promises; Max on the verge of killing himself in front of Count; seeing no other way, Count reveals his true identity; Count promises to cure Max in a month and until then, he should live no matter the grief; Max to live with Count until they leave Paris.

2.10. Chapters 106-111.

- (1) Danglars flees Paris, Mme Danglars ends up wealthy but devastated and lonely; Albert decides to enlist in the army, puts Mercédès on a coach (Count watches them from the shadows and wonders how he can make them happy) on way to Marseille to retrieve the money Dantès buried in his father's yard, Benedetto, jailed, hopes Count will save him, is visited by Bertuccio who tells him he will come back the next day to reveal his [Benedetto's] real father.
- (2) Villefort avoids Noirtier, locks himself in his study, preparing for Benedetto's trial, confronts Mme Villefort about the poison and murders, blames her and promises he will arrest her if justice hasn't been done when he returns from court; at court, calm and composed Benedetto narrates his story and brings Villefort's story to light (which Villefort confesses); on the way home, Villefort regrets pressuring his wife to take poison, finds his wife and his son poisoned; Count removes his disguise to Villefort and says he is avenged; Villefort takes him to see dead bodies of his family, asks him if he is fully avenged; Count is shocked, realizing his vengeance has gone too far, unsuccessfully tries to revive Edouard; Villefort goes mad, digs his garden looking for his son; Count vows to save the last one, tells Max they are leaving Paris the next day.

2.11. Chapters 112-113.

- (1) Count arrives at Morrels to take Maximilien, bids Julie and Emmanuel farewell; they reach Marseille, Max sees Albert on board a ship and waving to a veiled woman, Max leaves for his father's grave to pay respects, Count leaves for his old house, Count has a moment with Mercédès; she says the only thing she wants is for her son to be happy, she says she no longer has free will and will accept fate; when they part, she says she still hopes.
- (2) Count revisits his memories, Count revisits Chateau d'If and his cell, asks the guard if anyone ever told stories about that place, Count obtains Faria's manuscript on Italian monarchy, he finds his answer in the epigraph; Count meets Max, tells his story (in disguise) to show there are unluckier man than him [Max], tells him to come to the isle of Monte Cristo on 5th Oct, then leaves for Italy.

2.12. **Forgiveness.** Danglars in Rome to draw 5 million from Thompson and French, is followed and caught by bandits led by Vampa, he's not worried; Danglars offers Vampa the last of his gold if he is allowed to just survive in his cell; Count appears, reveals his identity, forgives Danglars because he, himself, needs forgiveness; Count orders a meal for Danglars, frees him allowing him to keep his remaining 5000 fracs.

2.13. October the fifth. Max meets Count in the isle of Monte Cristo; Max says he has 3 hours left to live; Count takes him in, tries to persuade him not to die; Max takes a green substance which he believes will kill him but it only puts him in delirium, wakes to find Valentine; next morning they read a letter, Count has left his fortune and houses as wedding presents; Count has left with Haydée.

3. QUOTES

— ‘Tis strange that it should be amongst such men that we find proofs of friendship and devotion.’ (Dantes, talking about smugglers he met)

— ‘I think he is capable of anything’ (Albert talking about Count)

— ‘Everything is always for sale when you know the price to put on it.’ (Count to Bertuccio)

— ‘I think that this man will be involved in everything good that happens to me in the future: sometimes his deep gaze seems to have foreknowledge of that and his powerful hand to control it.’ (Maximilien to Valentine, about Count)

— ‘Now, there’s what I call true friendship: giving another person as wife the woman one only wants for oneself as a mistress.’ (Count to Albert)

— Truly generous men are always ready to feel compassion when their enemy’s misfortune exceeds the bounds of their hatred.

— ‘The friends whom we have lost do not rest in the earth, they are buried in our hearts, and that is how God wanted it, so that we should always be in their company.’ (Count to Max)

4. OBSERVATIONS

— Count never eats with his enemies under the same roof whether at his own dinner or the ball.