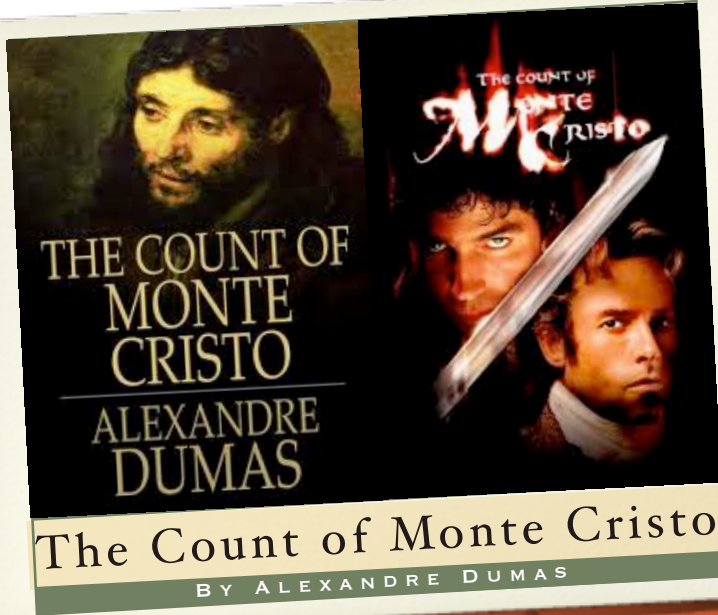


REVIEWS

January 5th, 2013



The tale of a man falsely accused and jailed, and his quest to destroy the people that ruined his life.

BY ANDREW ROBERTS, ORANGE STREAM

The Count of Monte Cristo (translated from *Le Comte de Monte Cristo*) was written in 1844 by French author Alexandre Dumas. It is one of his most famous books, along with *The Three Musketeers* which was also published in 1844. The book is around 1200 pages long and has a very high reading level. It is considered a literary classic. It has been made into twelve different movies, the first in 1908 and the latest in 2002, seven TV shows, and two musicals.

This book is the fictional story of Edmond Dantés, a ship's first mate on the *Pharoan*, who

unknowingly carries a letter while on a voyage to an exiled Napoleon Bonaparte. When two of his enemies (Danglars, who envies his position on the *Pharoan*, and Fernand, who loves Dantés fiancée, Mercedes) find out, they betray him and have him arrested. The vice crown prosecutor (Villefort), who knows Dantés is innocent, covicts him because the letter was addressed to his father, whom he loves and wishes to protect. Dantés is sent to the Chateau d' If, where he meets Abbé Faria, who tells him of an

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The Hobbit

Stretching it Out

While the book this movie was based on is undoubtedly a classic, the movie doesn't come to the same level. There is not enough information in the one book to make three movies. Find out more on page 5.

The Mark of Athena

Don't Let it Fool You

This book is very thick, but its reading level does not match its length. More on page 8.

Lincoln

A Story of America

The story of the arguably most famous president in history and his fight for freedom. Page 7

To Kill a Mockingbird

The Courtroom Conflict

An all-time classic and a story beloved by millions. The tale of a racial conflict in a place where racism ran free. Page 4.

Thirteen Reasons Why

The Tapes are Her Story

This is the story of a girl who commits suicide and makes tapes about the people who make her take her own life. Don't expect a feel-good story, though, this made me feel hollow and depressed. More on page 9.

The Count of Monte Cristo

By Alexandre Dumas

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Edmond Dantés, as portrayed in the 2002 movie by James Caviezel

immense treasure on the Isle of Monte Cristo, and then dies of a seizure. Edmond escapes in the Abbé's body bag and collects the treasure on Monte Cristo. Before focusing on revenge, however, Dantés helps some of the few people that were kind to him before his imprisonment. He gives a diamond to Caderousse, a former friend, now almost bankrupt, in exchange for information about Fernand, Danglars, and Villefort, whom are all rich and in Paris. Fernand is now the Count of Morcerf and married to Mercedes, Danglars now a Baron and millionaire, and Villefort now the Crown Prosecutor. The diamond becomes Caderousse's ruin, though, when his wife kills the merchant who had just bought

the diamond, and forces Caderousse to become a fugitive. Edmond also learns that his former employer, the Morrel family, is in financial ruin, so he repays a debt that they have, saving them from bankruptcy, and giving them hope. The story skips to Rome, where Albert de Morcerf, Fernand's son, is enjoying Carnival with a friend. Through a succession of events, including saving Albert from kidnapping, the Count of Monte Cristo (as Dantés was now known) befriends him, and enters into Parisian society. He quickly becomes a sensation in Paris, and gains the friendship of everyone, even his enemies, who do not recognize him. Through a long series of events which would not fit in this review, Monte Cristo exposes Fernand as a betrayer (he had betrayed a Greek king to the Turks), which destroys his status. Fernand later commits suicide when he learns that Monte Cristo is Dantés. To ruin Danglars, who is obsessed and dependent upon his money, he influences the stock market so that Danglars loses all of his 20 million Francs (in comparison, though, Monte Cristo has around 80 million). Dantés convinces Villefort's wife (who wants the fortune that would go to Valentine, Villefort's daughter by first marriage, to go to her son) to poison Valentine

and the people she would inherit from. When Villefort finds out, he tells his wife that if she does not exact justice upon herself, he will convict her. She then poisons herself along with her son, leaving Villefort with almost no family.

The main characters are Edmond Dantés (also known as the Count of Monte Cristo, Sinbad the Sailor, Lord Wilmore, and Abbé Busoni), Fernand (later The Count de Morcerf) Villefort and Baron Danglars. Much of the story is a description of how Monte Cristo first befriends his enemies and then corrupts them. My favorite character is Dantés, because he is out to right a wrong, and also because he does not become proud or conceited when he gains his huge fortune, but is humble.

I could relate to some things in the story, but not



A map of the Tuscan Archipelago, including the Isles of Elba, where Napoleon was exiled and to where Dantés delivered a letter to, and Monte Cristo, where the immense treasure Dantés acquired was stored. He also named himself after it, the Count of Monte Cristo.

The Count of Monte Cristo

By Alexandre Dumas

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many. I can relate to Caderousse, who was there when Danglars and Fernand betrayed Dantés, but did not do anything because he was drunk. I have stood by, like Caderousse, in situations I should have done something about (though I was not drunk). I can also relate to Dantés when he is Monte Cristo. He is often extremely generous. He ordered his servant to get him the best horses in Paris, and told him to pay double the price offered. I am also generous, especially when I am happy. I cannot relate to the theme of revenge, particularly because I cannot hold a grudge. Whenever I try to hold one, I forget and forgive them (which is a good thing).

I enjoyed this book immensely. It presented a challenge to me that I savored (it is by far the longest book I have read). The plot was complex and mystifying. This book kept me reading. I felt that it did not have many weaknesses, but it is a very challenging read. It took me forever to read, and if it had maybe been a bit shorter I would have enjoyed it more. It also has a very high reading level, and contained many words I was unfamiliar with. That is the only thing I would change - make it easier to read.

I would definitely recommend this book to another person. However, it is not for the average reader. This book is best for those who love reading and are avid readers. Also, it is good to have a long attention span, because there are some slow spots in the plot. If and when I do recommend it, I would recommend the abridged version, which is still 600 pages, just to make it easier for them to read it.

