

Deanna Jacobson

Professor Dr. Ron Carpenter

English 2010-70

10 October 2012

The Count of Monte Cristo

Betrayal, revenge, jealousy, escape, romance, and buried treasure are just some of the distinct features found in the 2002 film, *The Count of Monte Cristo*. Set in early 19th century France, during the exile of the infamous Napoleon Bonaparte, this classic tale by Alexander Dumas is brought to life once again by its director, Kevin Reynolds.

The Count of Monte Cristo is the ultimate adventure story about a young man named Edmond Dantes, played by actor Jim Caviezel. In the beginning Edmond's future looks bright as he becomes a ship captain and waits to marry the beautiful Mercedes (Dogmara Dominczyk). However, Edmond's future is immediately shattered when his so-called best friend, Fernand Mondego (Guy Pearce), sets out to satisfy his lustful and jealous desires by involving Edmond in a treasonous plot. With the help of the chief prosecutor Villefort, Mondego is able to banish Dantes to the Chateau D' if prison – a living nightmare. It is there that Edmond plots his revenge and learns of a treasure from another long-time prisoner. Following a successful escape attempt, Dantes begins the path to ultimate revenge against his enemies and determines to gain back the life that was cruelly taken from him.

This film does an excellent job combining the excitement of an action film with the strong emotions of a drama. The audience experiences a little bit of everything. The movie starts off with Fernand and Edmond fighting for their lives as they run from open gun fire, providing the feel of an action movie. Viewers then experience scenes of drama as Edmond struggles in prison. One minute there is a sword fight to get your heart racing and the next a reunion among characters that will make you laugh and cry.

The interactions among the actors are absolutely incredible. Jim Caviezel does a fantastic job portraying the unfortunate Edmond Dantes, while Pearce makes a devilishly handsome villain. Both actors are admirable in their performance as enemies; leaving the audience to hate the one and love the other. Let us not forget the role of the Priest and Dantes' cellmate played by actor Richard Harris. His gentle nature and subtle humor allow viewers to develop a love for his character.

Parts of this film are more believable than others. In paying close attention to details I found it hard to believe that Dantes could look the way he did after spending 14 years in a dark and gloomy prison cell. I am sure after eating meals containing little or no nutritional value one's appearance would greatly differ from the time of arrival to the time of escape. While Jim Caviezel is handsome and built, realistically he would have returned with missing teeth and lacked muscle mass.

The Count of Monte Cristo earned my "two thumbs up" for its overall film quality. Although there are minor incorrect details, this film makes up for those inaccuracies through its strong, action-packed, drama-filled scenes and incredible acting. You will not regret watching, *The Count of Monte Cristo*. It's definitely worthy of "movie night" and a bowl of buttery popcorn!

Sources

Scott, A.O. "The Count of Monte Cristo (2002) FILM REVIEW; And Swashes Buckled All Around." Rev. of *The Count of Monte Cristo*, by Alexander Dumas, dir. Kevin Reynolds. *New York Times Company*. 25 Jan 2002. Web.

Tyler, Joshua. "The Count of Monte Cristo." Rev. of *The Count of Monte Cristo*, by Alexander Dumas, dir. Kevin Reynolds. CinemaBlend.com. Web.