

Edmond dantes the mythological hero of our time



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Mythological heroes are not always seen in modern times, but Edmond Dantes can be considered one.

Dantes was first shown to the reader as a naive, slender, young man, whose whole manner gave evidence to his calmness and his liability. As he is freed from prison he returns as a new man, who acquires a new identity as the Count of Monte Cristo. Despite his cruel vengeance plan he is a character to admire because through the novel he demonstrates to be an intelligent, grateful and conscience man who can be recognized as a model for a perfect man. The Count's character is special because it acquires characteristics proper of a gentle man whose personality is special and unique. Edmond Dantes is described to the reader as a character with a natural high intellect, which makes him an admirable man. As Dantes is arrested and sent into prison he meets with Abbe Faria, another political prisoner.

Faria proves to be a brilliant and resourceful man, who shows Dantes the paper, ink, the pen, the knife, and the lamp he had created. Over the course of two years, the learned man guides and assists Edmond with his education. The priest teaches everything he knows about mathematics, physics and history. Dantes who has a wonderful memory and an astonishing mind is able to grasp concepts very easily.

" Dantes had a prodigious memory and a quick, keen intelligence. His mathematical turn of mind gave him a facility for all kinds of calculations, while the poetic strain which is in every sailor breathed life into demonstrations reduced to numbers and lines" (49). As Edmond Dantes learns the basic human knowledge, Abbe Faria continues sharing with him

his knowledge about languages. He already knew Italian and a little of Modern Greek, which he had picked up on his voyages to the east.

With the aid of those two languages, he soon understood the structure of all the others, within six months he was beginning to speak Spanish, English and German” (49). The young mans friendship with the old priest resulted to be very significant because despite his natural intelligence, he acquired knowledge that was very important later on in his life; when he had to fulfill his vengeance plans and survive with his new identity as the Count of Monte Cristo. As Edmond Dantes escapes from the Chateau d’If he acquires a new character. With his new identity he takes a few years to plan his vengeance against all his conspirators who led him to rot in prison. The count studies each character in detail in order to understand each persons behavior, finding out their strengths and their weaknesses. ” I’ve made a psychological study of every human species, on the assumption that it would then be easier to go from the whole to the part, rather than beginning with the part and going to the whole” (176).

An example of Monte Cristo’s careful studies of the characters was the punishment he inflicted against Monsieur Villefort. The Count finds out, thanks to his servant Bertuccio, what occurred in the house in Auteuil in relation with Villefort’s experience. As he studies Monsieur Villefort’s weaknesses he finds that by visiting again the house and specially the room that Monte Cristo has left untouched Villefort could feel uncomfortable and insecure. Consequently, the count plans an Oriental dinner at Auteuil and invites specific people specially Monsieur Villefort and Madame Danglars. At the dinner he organizes a tour within his house showing to the special guests

the abandoned room and the courtyard, telling his guests about the story of the baby that had been found in the house.

Monte Cristo succeeds in his plans and proves right that his careful studies helped him proceed with meticulous revenge conspiracy. The Count of Monte Cristo's intelligence and preparation is evident when he shows the reader his ability to manipulate people and make them follow his opinions. As he assumes his new identity as the Count, he is rich and powerful, his only purpose in life is to seek revenge and manipulating people makes his work easier. Madame Villefort's behavior is an example of Monte Cristo's ability to manipulate others in the novel. As Monte Cristo is seeking for vengeance he visits Madame Villefort's house where he installs in her the idea that poison is a fast and simple murder weapon.

Furthermore, not only do the Orientals use poison to make themselves a suit of armor, but they also use it as a dagger, And they use it so skillfully that human justice is left without a clue" (187). As they are having a conversation about the chemistry of poison she is very interested in the subject and is eager to know about poisonous formulas. The Count obtains her trust and confidence which later on resulted in the death of all Villefort's family causing inside him a feeling of pain and sorrow, exactly what Monte Cristo was expecting. The second thing which makes Edmond Dantes a perfect man is that he was a character that worked for the things he desired in life, but he was extremely grateful with those who helped him achieve his goals.

As he works for Monsieur Morrel's firm, Morrel's and Sons, Dantes is grateful with the ship owner because he had named him the Pharaon captain after

Lecler's death. Dantes was a good worker and expressed his gratitude by working hard and persevering. However, the jealousy of two of his friends enabled him to occupy his new role in the ship. Instead he is incarcerated as a dangerous political prisoner. After being held in prison for 14 years, the Count of Monte Cristo not only returns with a feeling of vengeance against his conspirators, but he also is gratified towards all the people who helped him when he was Edmond Dantes, the Pharaon's captain and to all those who remained faithful to his memory. The Count of Monte Cristo goes to Monsieur Morrel as the representative of an imaginary firm, Thomson and French and lends him money arguing Morrel's necessity to save his company from bankruptcy.

Later on, Monte Cristo organizes his finances in order for Monsieur Morrel never to pay back the money he had borrowed. As the Count saves Morrel's firm from bankruptcy he also saves him from committing suicide because Morrel wanted to die before assuming the dishonor of having no money and closing the firm. The Count of Monte Cristo was not only loyal and grateful to Monsieur Morrel, but to his whole family especially to his son Maximillien. The count's gratitude towards the young man was seen when he saves Valentine, his lover, from death. As Madame Villefort was fulfilling her murder plan against Villefort's family, Monte Cristo gives Valentine a medicine which brings her back to life. This gratitude act was very important for the family because he did not only save Valentine from death, but also Maximillien because he was preparing to commit suicide in the name of love.

As the Count sees this scene he guarantees Maximillien two reasons to keep living, the first one is telling him that he was the man who had saved his

father from dishonor and suicide, and the other was to promise him a better life, and later on introduce him back again to his eternal love, Valentine. The last quality which makes the Count of Monte Cristo a perfect man was his ability to revert to his true nature, accepting the suffering he had created to many families in France. As his revenge plans come to an end a feeling of regret and compassion invades his soul. This feeling is very evident after little Edouard's death, who is poisoned by Madame Villefort, his mother. As he sees the tragic deathly scene of the little boy fatality he feels guilty and responsible and seeks for God's forgiveness. " Since the death of little Edouard a great change has taken place in Monte Cristo.

Having arrived at the summit of his vengeance after his slow and torturous climb, he had looked down into the abyss of doubt" (413). The Count went back to his life as Edmond Dantes as he visits the Chateau d'If; there he remembers vividly his life as a political prisoner, his misfortunes and his friend Abbe Faria. As he is visiting the jail the guide tells to him about his own escape from prison and remembered his feelings of loneliness and anguish and at the same time a feeling of affection and gratitude grew inside his heart. As the Count leaves Paris he realizes that for a period of time he had almost seen himself acting in the place of God, but then he was humble and learned that God alone possesses the power to punish and forgive. Monte Cristo realizes that although he was leaving the city without hatred or pride, he felt a deep feeling of regret.

He had accustomed to death, to smile at suffering, and had achieved the greatest expressions of cruelty. Then he realized that he wanted to revert back into Edmond Dantes, the calm, honest, and loving man which he was

born to be. This is Edmond Dantes, a man to learn from. A modern hero which seduced millions of readers around the world.

He was a character that performed both sides of the story; the loving young man, intelligent but with not great expectations; and then turned into the Count of Monte Cristo an ambitious, rich and powerful gentleman who despite his urge for vengeance reflected to be a grateful and conceit man. As a conclusion one can deduce that Monte Cristo is and would be a mythological hero capable of provoking jealousy for his astonishing traits, not only physical but emotional.