
GREAT ILLUSTRATED CLASSICS

**THE COUNT OF
MONTE CRISTO**

Alexandre Dumas

adapted by
Mitsu Yamamoto

Illustrations by
Pablo Marcos Studio



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The *Pharaon* Comes Home.

CHAPTER 1

The Ship Without a Captain

A little boy first sighted the masts of the ship *Pharaon*. She was coming home to Marseilles, France, with a cargo of cloth and dyes. As usual, a crowd gathered to watch the docking, an exciting event in 1815, for the handling of big sailing ships was an art. But the *Pharaon* proceeded toward port so slowly that the onlookers felt something must be wrong on board.

Monsieur Morrel, the owner, was overjoyed to hear that his ship was home. Now he saw that a tall sailor stood beside the wheel where

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old Captain Leclere should have been. Morrel ordered a rowboat. He wanted to know the bad news at once. As he neared the *Pharaon*, he saw she was under the command of Edmond Dantes.

Edmond ordered a rope dropped, and his employer climbed aboard. He looked anxiously into Edmond's dark, intelligent eyes that now were full of sympathy.

"Bad news, sir. Captain Leclere is dead and buried at sea. He came down with brain fever after we left Naples, Italy. He was raving toward the end, so I gave the crew orders from then on. Your cargo and ship are safe and sound."

Morrel heard this news with many changes of expression. Though his captain was dead, before him stood a fine replacement. Edmond Dantes was tall and strong and knew the sea. His handsome face was sunburned from many voyages, though he was only nineteen.



A Worried Owner Goes Aboard.