



Mrs. C. L. Anderson.



THE SON OF MONTE-CRISTO

THE WORKS OF
ALEXANDRE DUMAS

IN THIRTY VOLUMES



THE SON OF MONTE-
CRISTO

VOLUME TWO



ILLUSTRATED WITH DRAWINGS ON WOOD BY
EMINENT FRENCH AND AMERICAN ARTISTS



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THE SON OF MONTE-CRISTO

CHAPTER I

FANFARO'S ADVENTURES

S PERO, the son of Monte-Cristo, was peacefully sleeping in another room, while, gathered around the table in the dining-room of Fanfaro's house, were Monte-Cristo, Miss Clary, Madame Caraman, Coucou, and Albert de Morcerf, ready to listen to the story of Fanfaro's adventures, which, as narrated at the close of the preceding volume, he was about to begin.

The following is Fanfaro's narrative:

It was about the middle of December, 1813, that a solitary horseman was pursuing the road which leads through the Black Forest from Breisach to Freiburg. The rider was a man in the prime of life. He wore a long brown overcoat, reaching to his knees, and shoes fastened with steel buckles. His powdered hair was combed back and tied with a black band, while his head was covered with a cap that had a projecting peak. The evening came, and darkness spread over the valley: the Black Forest had not received its name in vain. A few miles from Freiburg there stands a lonely hill, named the Emperor's Chair. Dark masses of basalt form the steps of this natural throne; tall evergreens

stretch their branches protectingly over the hill. A fresh mountain air is cast about by the big trees, and the north wind is in eternal battle with this giant, which it bends but can never break.

Pierre Labarre, the solitary horseman, was the confidential servant of the Marquis de Fougereuse, and the darker the road became the more uncomfortable he felt. He continually spurred on his horse, but the tired animal at every stride struck against tree roots which lined the narrow path.

"Quick, Margotte," said Pierre to the animal, "you know how anxiously we are awaited, and besides we are the bearers of good news."

The animal appeared to understand the words, began to trot again at a smart pace, and for a time all went well.

Darker and darker grew the night, the storm raged fiercer and fiercer, and the roar of the distant river sounded like the tolling of church-bells.

Pierre had now reached a hill, upon which century-old lindens stretched their leafless branches toward heaven; the road parted at this point, and the rider suddenly reined in his horse. One of the paths led to Breisach, the other to Gundebfingen. Pierre rose in the stirrups and cautiously glanced about, but then he shook his head and muttered:

"Curious, I can discover nothing, and yet I thought I heard the clatter of a horse's hoofs."

He mechanically put his hand in his breast-pocket and nodded his head in a satisfied way.

"The portfolio is still in the right place," he whispered. "Forward, Margotte—we must get under shelter."

But just as the steed was about to start, the rider again heard the sound of a horse's hoofs on the frozen ground, and in a twinkling a horse bounded past Pierre like the wind. It was the second rider who had rushed past the servant at such a rapid gait.

Pierre was not superstitious, yet he felt his heart move quickly when the horseman galloped past him, and old legends about spectres rose up in his mind. Perhaps the rider was the wild huntsman of whom he had heard so much, or what was more likely, it was no spectre, but a robber. This last possibility frightened Pierre very much. He bent down and took a pistol out of the saddle-bag. He cocked the trigger and continued on his way, while he muttered to himself:

"Courage, old boy; if it should come to the worst you will kill your man."

Pierre rode on unembarrassed, and had reached a road which would bring him to Freiburg in less than half an hour. Suddenly a report was heard, and Pierre uttered a hollow groan. A bullet had struck his breast.

Bending with pain over his horse's neck he looked about. The bushes parted and a man enveloped in a long cloak sprung forth and rushed upon the servant. The moment he put his hand on the horse's rein, Pierre raised himself and in an angry voice exclaimed:

"Not so quickly, bandits!"

At the same moment he aimed his pistol and fired. The bandit uttered a moan and recoiled. But he did not sink to the ground as Pierre had expected. He disappeared in the darkness. A second shot fired after him struck in the nearest tree, and Pierre swore roundly.

"Confound the Black Forest," he growled as he rode

along; "if I had not fortunately had my leather portfolio in my breast-pocket, I would be a dead man now! The scoundrel must have eyes like an owl: he aimed as well as if he had been on a rifle range. Hurry along, Margotte, or else a second highwayman may come and conclude what the other began."

The horse trotted along, and Pierre heard anew the gallop of a second animal. The bandit evidently desired to keep his identity unknown.

"Curious," muttered Pierre, "I did not see his face, but his voice seemed familiar."

CHAPTER II

THE GOLDEN SUN

M R. SCHWAN, the host of the Golden Sun at Sainte-Ame, a market town in the Vosges, was very busy. Although the month of February was not an inviting one, three travellers had arrived that morning at the Golden Sun, and six more were expected.

Schwan had that morning made an onslaught on his chicken coop, and, while his servants were robbing the murdered hens of their feathers, the host walked to the door of the inn and looked at the sky.

A loud laugh, which shook the windows of the inn, made Schwan turn round hurriedly: at the same moment two muscular arms were placed upon his shoulders, and a resounding kiss was pressed upon his brown cheek.

"What is the meaning of this?" stammered the host, trying in vain to shake off the arms which held him. "The devil take me, but these arms must belong to my old friend Firejaws," exclaimed Schwan, now laughing; and hardly had he spoken the words than the possessor of the arms, a giant seven feet tall, cheerfully said:

"Well guessed, Father Schwan. Firejaws in *propria persona*."

While the host was cordially welcoming the new arrival, several servants hurried from the kitchen, and soon a bottle of wine and two glasses stood upon the cleanly scoured inn table.

"Make yourself at home, my boy," said Schwan, gayly, as he filled the glasses.

The giant, whose figure was draped in a fantastical costume, grinned broadly, and did justice to the host's invitation. The sharply curved nose and the large mouth with dazzling teeth, the full blond hair, and the broad, muscular shoulders, were on a colossal scale. The tight-fitting coat of the athlete was dark red, the trousers were of black velvet, and richly embroidered shirt-sleeves made up the wonderful appearance of the man.

"Father Schwan, I must embrace you once more," said the giant after a pause, as he stretched out his arms.

"Go ahead, but do not crush me," laughed the host.

"Are you glad to see me again?"

"I should say so. How are you getting along?"

"Splendidly, as usual; my breast is as firm still as if it were made of iron," replied the giant, striking a powerful blow upon his breast.

"Has business been good?"

"Oh, I am satisfied."

"Where are your people?"

"On their way here. The coach was too slow for me, so I left them behind and went on in advance."

"Well, and—your wife?" asked the host, hesitatingly.

The giant closed his eyes and was silent; Schwan looked down at his feet, and after a pause continued:

"Things don't go as they should, I suppose?"

"Let me tell you something," replied the giant, firmly;

"if it is just the same to you, I would rather not talk on that subject."

"Ah, really? Poor fellow! Yes, these women!"

"Not so quickly, cousin—my deceased wife was a model of a woman."

"True; when she died I knew you would never find another one to equal her."

"My little Caillette is just like her."

"Undoubtedly. When I saw the little one last, about six years ago, she was as pretty as a picture."

"She is seventeen now, and still very handsome."

"What are the relations between your wife and you?"

"They couldn't be better; Rolla cannot bear the little one."

The host nodded.

"Girdel," he said, softly, "when you told me that day that you were going to marry the 'Cannon Queen,' I was frightened. The woman's look displeased me. Does she treat Caillette badly?"

"She dare not touch a hair of the child's head," hissed the giant, "or—"

"Do not get angry; but tell me rather whether Bobichel is still with you?"

"Of course."

"And Robeckal?"

"His time is about up."

"That would be no harm; and the little one?"

"The little one?" laughed Girdel. "Well, he is about six feet."

"You do not say so! Is he still so useful?"

"Cousin," said the giant, slowly, "Fanfaro is a treas-

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