The Three Musketeers

a new musical

Book & Lyrics by
Clint Jefferies
Music by
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Based on the novel by
Alexandre Dumas

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### Cast of Characters
*(in order of appearance)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Age/Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D'Artagnan</td>
<td>18. A Gascon -- a country boy -- smart, but rough around the edges. Young, headstrong, proud, quick to love, quick to take offense -- but endlessly loyal and courageous. He wants very much to make his mark on the world as a lover, a fighter, a noble man.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Athos</td>
<td>38. A Musketeer. An aristocrat whose troubled past leads him to fits of black depression. He is quiet, courageous, honorable to a fault, a brilliant man who never offers an unsolicited opinion. He drinks to excess and despises all women. A truly noble, but deeply troubled soul.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Porthos</td>
<td>Late 20’s. A Musketeer. Well meaning and a good comrade, with an unfortunate tendency toward vanity. He loves to put on airs -- especially toward the ladies. He knows he deserves all the finer things in life -- if only he could find the proper lady to provide them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cardinal’s Guard #1</td>
<td>A swordsman.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cardinal's Guard #2</td>
<td>A swordsman.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aramis</td>
<td>20’s. Cultured. A Musketeer. A good man somewhat torn between his belief that he has been called to the priesthood -- and his love of the company of beautiful women.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cardinal's Guard #3</td>
<td>A swordsman.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cardinal's Guard #4</td>
<td>A swordsman.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louis XIII</td>
<td>24. Vain, mistrustful of everyone. He would far rather be out hunting and leave the governing of France to The Cardinal -- whom he loves, hates, mistrusts and envies immeasurably.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monsieur de Treville</td>
<td>40’s. Captain of the King’s Musketeers. A diplomat caught between two powerful and often opposing forces: The King and the Cardinal. Still, he manages to remain honest and fiercely protective of his men.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planchet</td>
<td>20’s. Clever, bright, of the peasant class. He’s realistic about his prospects in life, and smart enough to attach himself to a good master. A gem in the rough.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monsieur Bonacieux</td>
<td>A pompous toady. He is so entirely self-absorbed he misses nearly everything going on around him.</td>
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</table>
Constance Bonacieux  Early 20’s. Beautiful in an earthy way. A common servant to the queen of France, not a lady in waiting. She has become a trusted confidant of the queen through her loyalty, her quick eye, and her raw intelligence -- nothing at court escapes her. In matters of the heart, she is an innocent.

Duke of Buckingham  George Villiers, 33. A soldier, statesman, and lover -- not necessarily in that order. His passions sometimes come before the good of England (of which he is de facto regent). A larger-than-life figure who lives life to the fullest.

Anne of Austria  Queen of France. 24. Trapped in a loveless marriage to an indifferent King, and persecuted by the Cardinal because of her loyalties to -- and intrigues with -- her native Spain. She has found passion in the arms of the English Duke of Buckingham. Her decisions are guided more by her heart than her head. Her ties with Spain and England are more personal and familial than political.

Cardinal Richelieu  Armand Jean du Plessis, 40. Born to a family of good name but no wealth or position. Through his unparalleled brilliance and exceptional loyalty to the royal family he rose swiftly from a minor bureaucrat to become the most powerful and feared man in France. Never religious, he was named Cardinal for political reasons. His loyalty to Louis XIII is absolute. Richelieu conducts wars, builds roads, writes plays, directs the economy, heads the church, and assures the power of France for the next hundred years. He destroys the enemies of Louis without qualm and directs a secret police second to none. He is respected, feared, worshipped and despised, but the single motivation in all he does is the good of the state.

Comte de Rochefort  40’s. A spy for His Eminence, obeys without question and without scruple, amoral but not evil. Also plays...

Milady de Winter  26. Beautiful, gracious, with a sweet, open face framed by soft blond curls. As angelic of appearance as she is demonic of soul. She is devoid of morals and faithful only to herself. So skillful is she at deception that her victims never see beyond her guile. She is the embodiment of evil.

Patrick  Body servant to Buckingham, would give his life for the Duke.

Mme. de Lanoy  A Lady in Waiting

Mme. de Guisse  A Lady in Waiting

Lady 1  A Lady in Waiting
Lady 2  
A Lady in Waiting

Kitty  
A simple serving girl who has lost her heart to a dashing soldier.

The Abbess  
A woman of God

Lord de Winter  
30’s. An English aristocrat and soldier. He mistrusts his sister in law, but stands by her for love of his late brother.

Felton  
Early 20’s. An English Puritan and soldier. He is upright, loyal, honest to a fault. He serves first God, and Lord de Winter a close second. He is without guile.

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Doubling:  
Cardinal’s Guards 1, 2, 3 & 4 are played by Rochfort, Patrick, de Winter & Felton respectively. Lady 1 & Lady 2 are played by Kitty & The Abbess.
Synopsis of Scenes and Songs

ACT I

Scene 1: Paris -- the first Monday of April, 1625 -- Outside the Place Royal
Adventure ...........................................................................................................D’Artagnan

Scene 2: Behind the Luxembourg
Adventure (reprise) ............................................................................................D’Artagnan

Scene 3: The chambers of Louis XIII

Scene 4: D’Artagnan’s rooms
Planchet’s Song ..................................................................................................Planchet
All for One .........................................................................................................Athos, Porthos, Aramis & D’Artagnan

Scene 5: Bonacieux's rooms/an anteroom to the queen’s chambers
Don't Speak of Love .................................................................D’Artagnan, Constance, Anne & Buckingham

Scene 6: The Cardinal’s chambers, around Paris, and M. Bonacieux rooms.
Do This For Me ....Richelieu, M. Bonacieux, Rochefort, Milady, Louis, Ann & Constance
For Love of Me ...............................................................................................Constance & D’Artagnan

Scene 7: Buckingham's chambers
To What End .....................................................................................................D’Artagnan & Planchet

Scene 8: Grand Ballroom at the Louvre/the queen’s anteroom
Expectation ....................................................................................................... Louis, Richelieu, Anne and Company

Scene 9: M. De Treville’s chambers, 3 inns
Summer .................................................................................................................Athos

Scene 10: Milady’s Apartments & various other places...
Breathless .........................................................................................................Milady & D’Artagnan
Kiss Me! .............................................................................................................Milady & D’Artagnan
What I Shall Do! ..............................................................................................The Company
ACT II

**Scene 1: Athos’ Apartments**

**Scene 2: The Cardinal’s Chambers**
Compromise.................................................................Richelieu

**Scene 3: A nearby inn**
It Was You ...........................................................................Athos

**Scene 4: The castle of Lord de Winter & on the road**
Psalm.....................................................................................Milady
This Woman............................................................................de Winter
This Man ................................................................................Milady
Psalm/This Woman...............................................................de Winter, Milady & Felton

**Scene 5: The chambers of the Duke of Buckingham**
I Loved Her ............................................................................Buckingham & Felton

**Scene 6: The convent at Bethune**
For Love of Me reprise ......................................................D’Artagnan & Constance

**Scene 7: A house in the woods/The riverbank**
Before God and Before Man......................Athos, Porthos, Aramis, D’Artagnan & de Winter

**Scene 8: The Cardinal’s chambers**

**Scene 9: Athos’ rooms.**
Remember .............................................................................D’Artagnan, Athos & Company
ACT I
Scene 1

(The curtain rises on the exterior of the Palais Royal, Paris, April, 1625. Sitting on a stump, polishing his sword, is D’Artagnan, a well built if rather rustic looking teenager wearing a faded wool doublet, a leather baldric and a cap with a slightly dispirited feather. He regards the sword, filled with all the apprehension, enthusiasm and bravado of a young man determined to make his mark on the world.)

D’Artagnan

This morning, for the last time, I left the house of my father. He sent with me three gifts: First, our good name, second, his sword, and third, this letter I bear with all my hopes: My introduction to Monsieur de Treville, the captain of the king’s musketeers...

(He springs to his feet, sword in hand, with all the charming hubris of youth.)

Adventure!
Standing far from home, on the road alone,
Adventure!
Everything at stake, fortune mine to make,
That’s adventure!

Fit for any quest, put me to the test, I’ll be brave and I’ll be strong.
Now that I’m a man, every way I can, doing right and righting wrong!

Yes, adventure!
With my swift right arm, keeping maids from harm,
Adventure,
And the stranger’s touch, or the lover’s clutch,
That’s adventure!

In the sweet desire of a lady’s fire, I can quench a lady’s need.
And whatever task, that that maid might ask, I’m prepared to do the deed.

Yes, adventure!
I’ll fight any fight, scale any height.
Adventure!
And a sword that’s drawn makes me no man’s pawn.
That’s adventure!

Never one step back, leading each attack, people soon will know this face.
Seizing every chance, in the halls of France, I shall carve myself a place!
Adventure!
And I swear above, by the life I love,
this sword to glorify.
Every foe to meet, never to retreat,
by this oath to live or to die!
Adventure!

(As D’Artagnan’s song ends, the booming chime of a clock tower is heard.)

D’Artagnan

Dear God! I shall be late for my appointment with Monsieur de Treville!

(D’Artagnan rushes toward the gate, running directly into Athos who is just entering.)

Athos

Ouuuuu!! What in hell...

D’Artagnan

Your pardon, sir. I am in a hurry...

Athos

Your pardon, sir? You find you’re in a hurry? You run into me like a bull and think “your pardon” is sufficient? Clumsy fool! It was wounded already...

D’Artagnan

My faith, it wasn’t intentional. Nevertheless, I have said “your pardon.” It appears to me that is quite enough. But I will say it again -- your pardon sir. Now please leave hold of me.

Athos

Obviously a country boy. No manners.

D’Artagnan

Wherever I am from, I warn you, You’re not the one to teach me to behave.

Athos

Perhaps I will.
D’Artagnan

Name the place and time.

Athos

Behind the Luxembourg, half past one.

D’Artagnan

I’ll be there.

(Off on a run, D’Artagnan is passing Porthos.)

Porthos

Twelve pistoles it cost me. The finest gold baldric in all of Paris!

(Porthos is spreading his cape, showing off a gold baldric to Cardinal’s guard #1.
D’Artagnan becomes tangled in the cape, which rips off. The baldric is half fake, no back.)

D’Artagnan

Excuse me, sir. Here, monsieur, your cloak...

Porthos

“Excuse me, sir?” You clumsy oaf! Are you blind?

D’Artagnan

I can see well enough to notice what others may not.

Porthos

I’d watch that mouth my boy -- unless you wish a thrashing.

D’Artagnan

A thrashing? Strong words from such a dandy!

Porthos

From a man who meets his enemies face to face.

D’Artagnan

I’m sure you won’t turn your back on them...
Porthos

I’ll meet you later, boy. Behind the Luxembourg. Two o’clock.

D’Artagnan

Make it half past. I have another engagement. (Porthos exits and again D’Artagnan looks toward the heavens.)

By God... In the unlikely event I should survive this afternoon -- I promise to practice nothing but absolute politeness and humility. (D’Artagnan would be off at a run again, but he sees Aramis enters with Cardinal’s Guard #2. Aramis drops a handkerchief and steps on it. D’Artagnan is torn for a moment, but forces himself to stop and play the gentleman.)

I can do this. Perfectly polite. Never another quarrel. I can do this. (He approaches Aramis and retrieves the handkerchief.)

Your pardon sir, your handkerchief I think? I saw it fall. I’m sure you’d hate to lose it.

Aramis

I fear you are mistaken, sir. The handkerchief’s not mine.

D’Artagnan

Oh, no. I’m sure it’s yours, I saw it fall before you stepped on it.

Aramis

I say you didn’t. You see? I’ve my own right here.

Cardinal’s Guard #2

And scented too! What lady has left you this? Ah! Initials on the corner... R and L is it?

Aramis

Excuse us for a moment. (Aramis takes D’Artagnan aside.)

D’Artagnan

I’m sorry sir, I didn’t know.
Aramis

You think I tread on lace without a reason?

D’Artagnan

I’ve said “I’m sorry.” That will do.

Aramis

It was asinine for you to pick it up.

D’Artagnan

And asinine for you to have dropped it in the first place.

Aramis

We’ll settle this later. Name the place and time.

D’Artagnan

Behind the Luxembourg. Half past three.  

(Athos and the guard leave.)

I am such an ass. Ah well. At least I shall be killed by a musketeer... It only remains to discover which one.

(He trudges off, sword in hand, to meet Athos.)
Scene 2

Athos
Good then, you’re on time. You have no seconds?

D’Artagnan
I know no one in Paris. And yourself?

Athos
Here they are now.

(Porthos and Aramis are entering.)

Porthos
This is who you’re fighting?

Athos
The same. He hurt my arm.

Porthos
But he and I have our own business to attend to.

D’Artagnan
Ah, but not for another hour.

Athos
And what’s the cause of yours?

D’Artagnan
Call it a quarrel over fashion.

Aramis
But this is mad. We too are crossing swords as well.

D’Artagnan
But an hour later still. And since all three of you are here... Allow me to apologize.
Athos

Apologize?

D’Artagnan

You misapprehend me sirs. As Monsieur Athos has the prior claim, he has the honor of killing me first. I apologize only to the others to whom I may not be able to discharge my duty.

Athos

What gall. I like that. If one of us doesn’t kill you, I’ll see you to the best dinner in the city.

D’Artagnan

And should I survive, I happily accept. And so. En garde!

(But four Cardinal’s guards are upon them.)

Porthos

The Cardinal’s guards!

Aramis

Sheathe gentlemen! Sheathe!

Cardinal’s Guard #1

Stop there! What’s this? Dueling against the cardinal’s edicts?

Cardinal’s Guard #2

You are under arrest. Come with me if you please.

Porthos

I’ll not be arrested. Not while I’m a musketeer.

Cardinal’s Guard #3

Put down your swords or we charge.

Aramis

There are four of them.

Athos

And only three of us.
Aramis

None the less...

D’Artagnan

Pardon if I correct you sir. We are four.

Athos

This isn’t your fight.

Cardinal’s Guard #1

Withdraw boy. We’ll agree to that.

Porthos

What are you waiting for?

(D’Artagnan breaks away from the action.)

D’Artagnan

Adventure! There’s a choice to make, there are sides to take,
Adventure...

(D’Artagnan turns again.)

We are four. If you’ll have me.

Athos

What’s your name?

D’Artagnan

D’Artagnan, sir.

Athos

Then Athos, Porthos, Aramis and D’Artagnan - We charge!

(The sides rush together into combat...)
Scene 3

(The Chambers of Louis XIII. Treville enters.)

Louis

Come here Treville! Come here that I may growl at you. You are the captain of my musketeers! You – you are to see to their conduct! Do you know that his Eminence has been making fresh complaints against your men? Why they must be very devils!

Treville

On the contrary, sire, they are good as lambs, but what are they to do? The Guards of Monsieur the Cardinal are forever seeking quarrels... The poor fellows are obliged to defend themselves.

Louis

Defend themselves! They have dispatched four of the Cardinal’s guards! Four, do you hear? His eminence is fairly fuming. Now how did this happen?

Treville

Why, as I heard it sire, in the most innocent manner possible. Three of your best musketeers were on their way to make a picnic behind the Luxembourg with a young friend they had met only that afternoon. But just as they were laying out their meal, who should come along?

Louis

Who?

Treville

Four of the Cardinal’s guard. Four of them! Now what could this number of men be about in such a deserted place?

Louis

They were there to duel? Contrary to all my edicts against dueling?

Treville

I’m sure I couldn’t say. I leave it for you to judge. You are not called Louis the Just for nothing.

Louis

And these four were defeated by our three and a mere boy?
Treville
As you say, sire.

Louis
Why, this is a victory! A complete victory! The Cardinal will be positively apoplectic! Where are the three of them?

Treville
Just outside.

Louis
Well why are you standing there, bring them in. Ah! But tell them to use the back stairs on the way out. There’s really no need for the Cardinal to know they were here.

(The Three Musketeers and D’Artagnan enter.)

Louis
Gentlemen, gentlemen, come in and face my displeasure. Four of the Cardinal’s guards cut down in one afternoon? This is too much! One now and then I say little about, but four, I repeat is too much! And you young man, the Cardinal has told me you dispatched two of them yourself?

D’Artagnan
It is true, sire. I beg you…

Louis
Fine lad! Splendid boy, Treville. And you wish to be a musketeer? That’s what you told me, Treville? Why don’t we start him off in the Royal Guard? What do you say to that young man? Then, If I you’re good, in a year or two, we can speak about the musketeers perhaps…

D’Artagnan
Your majesty! It is more than…

Louis
(Handing D’Artagnan a bag of gold coins.)
Keep up the good work, young man, and here, a little reward, a trifle. Four dead, Treville, just wait ‘till I see the Cardinal! Come along, Treville. And remember men -- the back stairs.

(The King and M. de Treville exit.)
D’Artagnan

Sweet Jesus how much is here? Twenty... Forty... Here we’ll each take a quarter.

Aramis

It was given to you...

D’Artagnan

Come now, it’s only fair -- I only killed two of them!

Athos

It seems I owe you a dinner, my friend.

D’Artagnan

My friend... Sweet Jesus, I’m in Paris. I have made three of the best friends a man could have. And I have met with the King. My fortune is made! What do I do with all of this?

Porthos

A true gentleman requires only one thing.

D’Artagnan

And that would be...

Porthos

Why a good lackey of course -- to show off to one’s enemies. Leave it to me, my friend! Leave it to me…
Scene 4

(D’Artagnan’s room. Planchet is sitting on a stool, polishing D’Artagnan’s boots.)

Planchet

I come up from Orleans to Paris, I did, a peasant boy hungry and cold...
But fortune was with me, I met a fine soldier with a bag full of gold! To be out of the cold, I’ll smilingly serve howsoever I’m told...

Now, a thriving young lackey to a rich lad was I, thankful that fortune had smiled.
But his money ran out and my fortune as well.
He’s fine-looking, true, but my pay is overdue. And what good’s a master fine who hasn’t a sou?

I told him I’d not eat the scraps from his plate, and no longer sleep on the floor.
I yelled it was rotten to fool a poor lad, that I’d serve as his lackey no more.

He’s not only fine looking, but strong and quite quick,
I found as my face hit the door.
He beat me quite fully then instructed me well,
Battered and sore, could I ask for more? He made sure to show me what a servant was for...

Since his prospects look good and my prospects are nil,
I’ll look to the future and stay with him still.
If just for the thrill.

(There is a pounding at the door.)

D’Artagnan

(off)
Get the door, Planchet! For what do I keep you?

Planchet

For about a quarter of what I am worth.

(Planchet admits Bonacieux and leaves.
D’Artagnan enters from another room.)

Bonacieux

Good afternoon.
D’Artagnan

To what do I owe the honor, sir?

Bonacieux

How to begin? May I sit down? Such a state of affairs... How to begin... I have heard Monsieur D’Artagnan spoken of as a brave young man.

D’Artagnan

I will not contradict you.

Bonacieux

Then hear me -- in strictest confidence monsieur. I have a wife. She is seamstress to the queen, and lacking neither charm nor virtue. I married her three years ago even though her dowry was rather small. Because, you see, she has a place at court.

D’Artagnan

And so?

Bonacieux

Well, monsieur, yesterday morning... You see... Terrible thing... My wife has been abducted!

D’Artagnan

By whom?

Bonacieux

I must suspect... A man who pursues her, not for love, but intrigue! Can I trust you?

D’Artagnan

You can trust me.

Bonacieux

I fear intrigue.

D’Artagnan

I fear nothing. Now tell me.
Bonacieux

I believe that it is not on account of any intrigues of her own that my wife has been carried off -- but because of those of a lady much greater than herself...

D’Artagnan

You mean her Maj...

Bonacieux

Speak nothing! I have said nothing! But understand that a certain English duke may soon arrive, drawn by letters forged to trap both of them. You understand? My wife, monsieur, is deep in all of this. The queen turns to her, abandoned by the king, watched by the Cardinal, betrayed by everyone. She was to conduct this duke in secret to the Louvre. I know this is why she has been carried off. If you can only find her, I swear by the name of Bonacieux...

D’Artagnan

But a moment sir, your name... Bonacieux? It somehow seems familiar...

Bonacieux

Yes, it may. I’m your landlord.

D’Artagnan

My landlord! Ah! That would explain it then. I have not seen you in some time...

Bonacieux

Four months to be exact, though I assure you, I’m not counting.

D’Artagnan

An excellent reason to assist you.

Bonacieux

And if you, and those three fine musketeers who are always with you were to foil the Cardinal’s plans...

D’Artagnan

An even better reason.
Aramis

(off)
D’Artagnan! Are you home?

D’Artagnan

(Letting in Athos, Porthos and Aramis)

Bonacieux
Your servant, gentlemen. I must be going. It is agreed then?

D’Artagnan
My word.

(Bonacieux exits.)
There now! I have taken on a task for us, my friends -- an adventure -- if you will join me.

Aramis
An adventure? Of what sort?

Athos
What does it matter as long as it’s D’Artagnan who asks?

Porthos
If I’m to put myself in danger, I should like to know to what purpose.

Athos

Porthos
Very well -- but if this “adventure” ruins another uniform...

Aramis
There’s the spirit.

Athos
Come now! Say it! Together gentlemen: All for one, one for all.
Athos, Porthos, Aramis & D’Artagnan

All for one, one for all.

Porthos

Put it to the test then:
   If I were in a duel, and my sword should break in twain,
   Would you throw to me your own without delay?

Athos

Of course I would.

Porthos

   And if I had lost at gambling would you lend me all you had
   Even if there were no chance I could repay?

Athos

   In a moment.

Porthos

   And if in dark despair one day I came to ask you for some wine
   And that bottle was your last, what would you say?

Athos

   I’d say good sir, please take my clothing, take my money, take my land.
   But don’t touch my rosé unless you wish to lose a hand.

Athos, Porthos, Aramis & D’Artagnan

All for one! One for all!

Athos

   But lay a hand upon my spirits and you’re asking for a brawl.
   And what about you sir?

Porthos

   What about me?
Athos

Say if one day in battle, my horse should break and run,
would you give me yours to ride into the fray?

Porthos

You know I would.

Athos

And if my house were burning would you run into the fire,
Just to save my favorite stock of chardonnay?

Porthos

You have to ask?

Athos

And with my wardrobe ashes, and naked in the street,
Could I wear your finest doublet for a day?

Porthos

My doublet? You are joking! But I’d see you clothed of course.
I’m sure that you’d look fetching in the blanket off my horse.

Athos, Porthos, Aramis & D’Artagnan

All for one! One for all!

Porthos

That doublet cost a fortune. And besides you’re far too tall.

Aramis

At least I have a more generous nature than the two of them.

Porthos

Oh have you now?

Porthos

If a bandit with a cudgel, tried to bludgeon in my head,
Would you throw yourself between to take the blow?
Aramis

On my honor.

Athos

And if all of us were starving, and you found a crust of bread
And you are famished -- would you share it even so?

Aramis

Don’t insult me.

Porthos

And if your mistress tired of you and she should simply catch my eye,
would you retire so that your friend could have a go?

Aramis

My mistress has more taste, but should I catch you in the act,
You would not leave the bedroom with your manhood still intact.

Athos, Porthos, Aramis & D’Artagnan

All for one! One for all!

Aramis

And be sure my aim is good even if the target’s small.

Athos, Porthos & D’Artagnan

Ooooooo....

Athos, Porthos, Aramis & D’Artagnan

Yes, all for one! One for all!
I will be right there beside you, whatever might befall.
All for one! One for all!
All for one, until we’ve won, when the adventure is begun
We’re standing tall to heed the call of all for one...
one for all!

(Blackout.)
Scene 5

(Bonacieux’ rooms. Bonacieux is being taken away by Cardinal’s Guard #4, #1 and #3.)

Cardinal’s Guard #1

Get him out of here.

Bonacieux

Stop! Help! Where are you taking me?

Cardinal’s Guard #3

Shut the fool up. Get him to the Bastille.

Bonacieux

The Bastille! No, God no!

Cardinal’s Guard #4

Quiet, or I’ll take your head off right here.

Bonacieux

(As Guard #4 drags him off)

No! I beg you! Mercy! Mercy!

Cardinal’s Guard #1

They said she’d come here. How did she escape?

Cardinal’s Guard #3

How should I know? Don’t get too rough with her this time. We don’t want her dead.

Cardinal’s Guard #1

Another escape, it’ll be you in the Bastille.

Cardinal’s Guard #3

Quiet! There now, there’s someone coming...

Cardinal’s Guard #1

Just get my hands on the wench, I’ll make her talk...
(Constance enters and is jumped by the men.)

Constance

Let me go! For God's sake, turn me loose!

Cardinal's Guard #1

Keep hold of her!

Cardinal's Guard #3

She bit me!

Constance

Let go of me! I can't breathe!

Cardinal's Guard #1

She's fainting...

Cardinal's Guard #3

Hold her tight now...

(But D'Artagnan has leapt through the window.)

D'Artagnan

Unhand the lady!

Cardinal's Guard #3

Get him!

(The fight is brief. D'Artagnan kills Guard #1 and disarms guard #2 who flees. He goes to assist Constance who is just coming to.)

Constance

Let me go, I say! Who are you? Let go of me...

(Constance begins beating D'Artagnan.)

D'Artagnan

Ouch! It's all right! Ouch! I won't hurt you. Ouch! I'm here to help you. They've gone.
Constance
Gone? Have they gone? Who are you?

D'Artagnan
My name is D’Artagnan. It was I who just rescued you.

Constance
Rescued... But how did you know...

D’Artagnan
I live just upstairs. I can hear everything through the floorboards.

Constance
They’ll be back. I’ve got to...
(She tries to rise but falls back into D’Artagnan’s arms.)

D'Artagnan
Be easy. We’re safe here. Rest another moment.

Constance
I must thank you then, Monsieur. You have surely saved my life.

D'Artagnan
No thanks is necessary. Any gentleman would have done as much.

Constance
But it wasn’t any gentleman who did so. It was you. Monsieur! Are you blushing?

D'Artagnan
Perhaps. I have never rescued a beautiful lady before.

Constance
Then we are equal. For I have never before been rescued.

D'Artagnan
God! You are beautiful.
Constance

Monsieur. Remember yourself. I am married.

D'Artagnan

That will never do. I could fall in love just looking at you like this.

Constance

(Laughing in spite of herself.)

Love me? You’ve known me three minutes.

D'Artagnan

Three minutes or three centuries -- it doesn’t matter. What if I can’t help myself...

Constance

You are impudent, monsieur. Do you fall in love with every woman you rescue?

D'Artagnan

How can I know? You’re my first. But I know I could love you.

Constance

(She sings lightly, amused.)

Don’t speak of love. 
We have only met. You presume too much.
Don’t speak of love.
That was not a look. This was not a touch.
Don’t speak of love knowing well that I’m not free.
And don’t assume I see in you whatever you see in me.

D'Artagnan

Don’t speak of love.
When with every word you become more dear.
Don’t speak of love.
For the words you speak aren’t the words I hear.
Don’t speak of love. Just the word starts a fire.
And each time you turn away, just sharpens my heart’s desire.

Constance

Don’t be foolish.
D'Artagnan

Don’t be angry
Love can spark from just a glance.

Constance

Must my savior be a madman?
Give me peace.

D'Artagnan

Give me half a chance.

Constance

I’ll give you a black eye if you come any closer. Now just sit quietly for a moment -- over there. I have to collect my thoughts.

D'Artagnan

I’ll be quiet as that corpse there.

Constance

Oh, good.

(In another area, in an anteroom to the queen’s chambers, Buckingham is pacing. Anne enters.)

Buckingham

Your majesty!

Anne

Why are you here. You already know that it was not I who wrote that letter.

Buckingham

I have lost nothing by the journey, because I see you.

Anne

Yes, and in doing so you risk both your life and my honor. I see you only to tell you that everything separates us: The depths of the sea, the enmity of kingdoms, the sanctity of vows. We will never see one another again.
Buckingham

Upon what am I to live then? I have nothing but memory.

Anne

Say nothing. It is useless. I have never said I love you.

Buckingham

You have never said you did not.

Anne

Don’t speak of love.
We have never met. You presume too much.
Don’t speak of love.
That was not a look. This was not a touch.
Don’t speak of love knowing well I’m not free.
And knowing that I see in you all you see in me.

Buckingham

Don’t speak of love.
When with every word you become more dear.
Don’t speak of love.
For the words you speak aren’t the words I hear.
Don’t speak of love. Just the word starts a fire.
A flame that consumes me in a hopeless desire.

Anne

You’re too near now.

Buckingham

And a world too far.
Love can spark from just a glance.

Anne

Must my savior be a madman?
Give me peace.

Buckingham

Give your heart a chance.
Anne

You will go now.

Constance

We’ll have to go. It’s not safe here.

Anne

It’s not safe here.

D’Artagnan

I’ll take a look.

Buckingham

Just let me look at you.

Anne & Buckingham

Don’t speak of love.
We have only met. You presume too much.

D’Artagnan

You’re so lovely.
You’re so lovely.

Constance

Don’t speak of love.
That was not a look. This was not a touch.

Constance & D’Artagnan

Not so lovely.
Not so lovely.

Don’t speak of love when it never can be.
Beyond the years, in spite of vows, nor across the sea.

Anne, Buckingham, Constance and D’Artagnan

Don’t speak of love.

Anne

Not this love, Not this love...

Buckingham & D’Artagnan

When with every word you become more dear.

Constance

Not so fond, my dear...

Anne, Buckingham, Constance and D’Artagnan

Buckingham

Don’t speak of love.

All my love...
Anne & Constance
For the words you speak aren’t the words I hear. Sudden love, my dear...

Anne & Buckingham
Don’t speak of love. Just the word starts a fire. Just the danger
A flame that consumes me in a hopeless desire. makes my heart beat...

Constance & D’Artagnan

Anne & Constance
You’re too near now.

Buckingham & D’Artagnan
And a world too far.

Anne, Buckingham, Constance and D’Artagnan
Love’s a moment stopped in time.
Always yearning, always madness
Half in torture, half sublime.

Anne, Buckingham, Constance and D’Artagnan
Don’t speak of love... Please, never

Anne, Buckingham, Constance and D’Artagnan
Don’t speak of love... Always...

Anne, Buckingham, Constance and D’Artagnan
Don’t speak of love.

D’Artagnan
I think the coast is clear.

Constance
I have business at the palace.

Anne
I hear someone. Please go. As you love me, please go.
**D’Artagnan**

Wait! When will I see you again?

**Constance**

Leave the matter to me and rest easy.

**Buckingham**

I love you... Wait, please... Anything. Give me something, something to treasure -- something to remember you...

**Anne**

Will you depart? If I give you what you demand?

**Buckingham**

Yes.

**Anne**

This very instant?

**Buckingham**

I swear it.

**Anne**

\(\text{From a small box she pulls a sash with 12 diamond studs. She hands both to him.)}\)

Here, my Lord. Keep this in memory of me.

\(\text{(Buckingham takes the box, drops to his knees and kisses her hand. Then he rises and goes. Ann turns away from the door, weeping.)}\)
Scene 6

(The Cardinal’s chambers. Richelieu is sitting at a small desk as Bonacieux pleads.)

Bonacieux

I tell you, I’ve done nothing. Whatever my wife has done, I know nothing! If she is guilty, I renounce her! I curse her!

Richelieu

You are accused of high treason.

Bonacieux

But I swear to you, I know nothing about it.

Richelieu

You have conspired with your wife, and with the Duke of Buckingham.

Bonacieux

No! My wife! I swear it was she alone! She said that Cardinal Richelieu had drawn the Duke of Buckingham to Paris to ruin him -- to ruin the queen.

Richelieu

She said that?

Bonacieux

Yes, sir, but I told her she was wrong... that his Eminence was incapable...

Richelieu

Hold your tongue! You are stupid.

Bonacieux

That’s exactly what my wife said, sir.

(There is a knock.)

Richelieu

Yes?
Rochefort

Milady de Winter has just arrived your Eminence.

Richelieu

Bring her in. I’ll... dispose of this matter quickly.

(Rochefort bows and exits.)

Bonacieux

(Dropping to his knees.)
Your Eminence? Oh, forgive me, your Eminence! I didn’t know! How could I know? Are you truly the Cardinal -- the great Cardinal -- the man of genius that all the world reveres?
(The Cardinal seems about to make a short reply, but suddenly stops.)

Richelieu

Rise my friend! You are a worthy man.

Bonacieux

The cardinal has touched me with his hand! I have touched the hand of the great man! The great man has called me his friend!

Richelieu

Yes, my friend, yes, and as you have been unjustly suspected, well, you must be indemnified. Here, take this purse of a hundred pistoles, and pardon me.

Bonacieux

I pardon you, monseigneur! Of course I pardon you, monseigneur!
(Milady & Rochefort enter.)

Richelieu

Only one thing I ask, could do this for me?

Bonacieux

Ask any task, sir, I swear I will do it.

Richelieu

As you may know, your wife is now free
Welcome her home now, but don’t overdo it.
Take notice of all that she says!
Don’t let a moment go unwatched, unheeded.
Should anything rouse your suspicion,
Get word to me quickly and you’ll have succeeded
in serving me consummately. Do this for me.

Bonacieux

Of course, sir! With pleasure.

Richelieu

That’s all you need know now.

Bonacieux

I’m your servant for life sir!

Richelieu

I’m sure. You may go now.

(Bonacieux bows out backward, tripping.)

Milady

What was that?

Richelieu

It defies description. But he’ll make a fair spy upon his wife. Now, on to matters of greater urgency:

You’re sure she has seen him alone?
The queen and the duke? They have met, no mistake now?

Rochefort

Your spy is quite sure of the facts.

Richelieu

That’s all well and good, but what did she take now?

Rochefort

Concealed in a small rosewood box,
Were the twelve diamond studs Louis gave her last autumn.
He was seen as he passed the south gate.
The box in his hand with her seal on the bottom.
He’s taken the studs, that is sure. Given by her.

Richelieu

I’m sure you will do this for me.

Milady

You only need speak. The task’s undertaken.

Richelieu

You’ll set sail for London tonight.

Milady

I’m seeking the duke? Or am I mistaken?

Richelieu

He’s giving a fete on the sixth,
He’ll wear the queen’s diamonds, to show his devotion.
Get just two of them in your possession.
Cut them off while you are dancing -- or cause some sort of commotion.
I only need two, do you see? Do this for me.

Milady

I’ll send word when I have them. A clear enough thing.

Richelieu

And now that it’s settled, I must see the King.

(The Cardinal strides to the king’s chamber.)

Richelieu

Sire, could you do this for me?
Your lady, the queen has asked for a ball now.
Let’s humor her, say two weeks hence?
She’s looked so unhappy of late, why not call now,
And give her the news of this fete?

Louis

You’re too good, my friend. She’ll be quite delighted.
Richelieu

Perhaps she can wear her new studs,
The diamonds you gave her?

Louis

She was so excited...

Richelieu

Indeed, how thrilled she will be, if you do this for me.

Louis

A ball in a fortnight, all Paris atwitter...

Richelieu

And draped from her shoulder your diamonds will glitter...

Louis

You’ve mentioned those diamond studs twice now, Richelieu. What are you thinking?

Richelieu

All that I do, I do to serve your majesty.

Louis

We’ll see what Anne thinks of this.

(Leaving Richelieu, Louis stomps to Anne’s rooms. Constance is helping her dress.)

Louis

My dear, you will do this for me.
Prepare for a ball, with an orchestra, dancing.  Two weeks from tonight, I believe.
And wear if you will, on your shoulder enhancing your gown, the diamonds I gave you.

Anne

The diamond studs sire, you gave as a present?
Louis

The same. Why, I thought you’d be pleased.

Anne

Indeed I am sire. It’s sure to be pleasant.

Louis

Such elation’s a rare thing to see. You will do this for me.  

(Louis exits.)

Anne

Dear God, all is lost then. Buckingham has them.

Constance

My lady, I’m here for you. What may I do for you?

Anne

How can you do this for me?  
Spies everywhere... The Cardinal who hates me.  
You’d never see London alive.  
The king must know too. You see how he baits me.

Constance

Your highness, we all have our friends.  
My husband, I’m sure, will do as I ask.  
I’ll send him to London this night.  
I’ll answer for him to accomplish the task.

Anne

The Cardinal’s behind this decree. Can you do this for me?

Constance

Always my lady.

Anne

You’re the last I can trust in...
Constance

I promise, my lady, You can always trust in me.

Constance & Anne

He (You) will do this for me.

(M. Bonacieux’s rooms. Constance and her husband are speaking.)

Constance

But it’s only a small thing I ask.

Bonacieux

A journey to England is no trifling task.

Constance

But the fate of the Queen is in your hands.

Bonacieux

Not three minutes back, and you’re making demands.

Constance

Monsieur, as you love me, I beg you to hear.
The matter is desperate, I spoke for your loyalty.
Deliver this letter to London...
Life hangs in the balance, the fortunes of royalty.
How great a reward you could see,
If you do this for me.

Bonacieux

Money means nothing to me.
Plus your intrigues are costly. I scarce can afford you.

No! In your absence, I am a changed man.
The Cardinal himself had me in for a chat.
He gave me his hand and a hundred pistoles.
He called me his friend! What say you to that?

Constance

You’ve danced with the devil then?
Bonacieux

I serve his eminence!

Constance

One in the same, I say. What of the queen then?

Bonacieux

Your mistress a Spaniard! An enemy of France.

Constance

You traitor! How dare you? Denouncing the queen?

Bonacieux

You’re only a woman. Keep to your cooking.

Constance

I’d known you were greedy, cowardly and mean. But never before thought you evil.

Bonacieux

Say what you will. I serve only his Eminence. You see he rewards my loyalty well. But perhaps I can help you in some other way... To whom is this letter? Go on, you can tell...

Constance

The letter is nothing.

Bonacieux

Go on, tell me everything.

Constance

Affairs of her family...

Bonacieux

Why don’t you wait here, then...
Constance

Where are you going?

**Bonacieux**

You’ll wait right here?
Wait for me...
Do this for...
Do this for...
Do what you’re going to do,
but just do this for me!

**Constance**

Wait and see...
Do what you... 
Don’t wait for...
Do what you’re going to do, 
but don’t do this for me!

*(Bonacieux exits. Constance paces, in turmoil as D’Artagnan swings through the window.)*

D’Artagnan

Allow me to tell you, you have a bad sort of husband.

**Constance**

You overheard us?

**D’Artagnan**

The floorboards. Remember?

**Constance**

But what? What did you hear?

**D'Artagnan**

Enough to understand that your husband is a fool -- for which I am sorry -- and that you are in trouble -- of which I am quite glad -- as it gives me an opportunity of placing myself at your service. And finally, I heard that the queen wants a brave, intelligent, devoted man to make a journey to London for her. I have at least two of those three qualities, and here I am.

**Constance**

But how can I trust you? You are almost a boy. How can I give you such a letter?

**D'Artagnan**

You were about to give it to your husband.
Constance
He had sworn to love me -- and the queen.

D'Artagnan
But I am here. And I do love you.

Constance
You say so.

D’Artagnan
I am honorable.

Constance
You say so.

D’Artagnan
Then put me to the proof. My lady, will you trust me?

Constance
Trust you? You know nothing of this, of how many lives rest on this one thing you ask. I swear to you, before God who hears us, that if you betray me, I will kill myself while accusing you of my death. Do you understand?

D’Artagnan
I swear I’d die before I’d break your trust.
And love you past the time I’d turned to dust.
Without knowing why, I’ll perform any duty you’ll give me to do.
Just admit you only dare to trust in me, because somewhere, some way, you love me too...

You only trust my words for love of me.
You only hold to hope for love of me.
Beyond thought, beyond vows, you believe me because within, you know me.

You only touch my face for love of me.
You only meet my eyes for love of me.
All that’s strong, all that’s good finds its way to my soul, because you love me.
Spoken without speaking, in your faith, you give your love.
Sharing all your secrets, shows your heart so clearly.

That you only turn away for love of me.
Say you tremble just for love of me.
Don’t pull back, turn aside, just gaze into my eyes,
for love of me.

Constance

So much you ask for me to set aside,
To surrender myself to a man I do nothing of.
And yet, I am poised at this moment to do whatever you ask,
Yes, admitting the extent that I trust in you, hiding naught, to set aside the mask...

I’m ready to risk all for love of you.
Confiding every trust for love of you.
Beyond thought, beyond vows, I believe you because,
Somehow, I love you.

I only risk my name for love of you,
Place all within your hands for love of you.
Not a doubt, not a pause for it’s clear, very clear
that you love me too.

Constance & D’Artagnan

Spoken without speaking, in your faith, you give your love.
Deep inside your eyes, I see your heart too clearly.

That you only clutch my hand for love of me.
Twist deep into my soul for love of me.
Every word, every breath, from this moment ‘till death. //
Is only for love of you.

D’Artagnan

I’ll go. Give me the letter. I’ll go this instant.

Constance

But how will you go? Your regiment... your captain...

D’Artagnan

I’ll go to Treville. He’ll see to a leave for me.
Constance

But if you are followed, if you are taken.

D’Artagnan

I’ll ask leave for my friends as well -- the musketeers. They’ll go with me. If four set out, surely one will arrive.

Constance

But one more thing. You have, perhaps, no money.

D’Artagnan

Perhaps is one word too much.

Constance

Then take this bag.

D’Artagnan

The Cardinal’s? We shall save the queen with the Cardinal’s gold. You are perfect.

(He takes Constance in his arms.)

I will come back for you.

(He kisses her passionately.)

Constance

Yes. I believe you.

(Without another word, D’Artagnan rushes from the room.)

Spoken without speaking, in your faith, you give your love. Deep inside your eyes, I see your heart too clearly.

For you only clutched my hand for love of me. Twist deep into my soul for love of me. Every word, every breath, from this moment ‘till death, Is only for love of you.
Scene 7

(Buckingham’s Chambers. Buckingham is busy as Patrick enters.)

Patrick

My lord: There is a French guardsman outside with his lackey. He has a letter that he says he will deliver only into your hands.

Buckingham

A letter from?

Patrick

He will not say.

Buckingham

Send them in.

(Patrick steps aside and admits D'Artagnan and Planchet, rather road-worn, tired and battered.)

Well?

D’Artagnan

You are the Duke of Buckingham?

Buckingham

I am.

D’Artagnan

For you. I am to wait for a reply.

Buckingham

(Reads the brief letter and looks up again.)

Dear God, I have compromised the queen.

D’Artagnan

Not if I return with what she gave to you.
Buckingham

They are here.

(He begins to open the box from the queen.)

But how did you manage to cross the channel with this letter -- The Cardinal sees everything...

D’Artagnan

My friends and I were discovered long before we reached Calais. The three men I love best in the world, I have left somewhere on the road: one was caught in a duel, one in an ambush, the third was lying wounded. I don’t even know if they are still alive.

Buckingham

(Pulling out the ribbon with the diamond studs.)

Here are the diamonds then. I entrust them to you. For the sake of the friends you have left behind, get them safely to Paris. But wait! Bloody hell! Who did this?

D’Artagnan

What?

Buckingham

Look! There were twelve. Two have been cut off. Who...

D’Artagnan

Ten will not serve.

Buckingham.

That woman! The one they call Milady... Only she was close enough.

D’Artagnan

Then the Cardinal has them -- or soon will.

Buckingham

Not if we move fast enough. Patrick!!

Patrick

(entering)

My Lord?
Buckingham

Close the ports. Detain the French ambassador. No ships are to sail without my direct order.

Patrick

And if His Majesty should ask the reason that his ports are closed?

Buckingham

Say that I have decided upon war with France and it is my first act of aggression.

Patrick

Yes, my Lord.

(He exits.)

Buckingham

If she has not yet left for France, she will not now. It will give us time.

D’Artagnan

You have just begun a war? For the love of the queen?

Buckingham

For the love of your queen, I would split the world in two. Stay here. I’ll have food sent up for you and your lackey. Before sunrise there will be two new studs made to match the ten here. And the only ship to leave England will be the one I send you home upon. Patrick! My jeweler! (Shouting, Buckingham leaves the room.)

Planchet

We are at war?

D’Artagnan

And for an impossible love.

Planchet

And our friends?

D’Artagnan

Porthos was wounded, Aramis set upon...
Planchet

Remember how Athos shouted for us to go on as he held three men back.

D’Artagnan

So much blood. And more to come.
   To what end?
   What price upon the lives of my friends?
   If I could turn back -- had it all to do again,
   Tell me, would I?

Planchet

To what end.
We all do what we must do in the end.
Don’t think of going back when it’s too late to make amends.
No, you wouldn’t.

Planchet & D’Artagnan

It’s all so clear at the beginning, nothing questioned, nothing feared
And then you find the way is not so clear.
Still you try to do your duty, forge ahead whatever comes...

D’Artagnan

Never knowing the cost.

Planchet

Even if you knew the cost...

Planchet & D’Artagnan

Still having to pay when the price becomes to dear.
To what end?

Planchet

I’m still standing by you.

D’Artagnan

At least you’re still beside me, my friend.
Planchet & D’Artagnan

Looking backward is seductive, but there’s nothing there to gain. And look behind too much, and there is nothing left but pain.

Planchet

Look ahead.

D’Artagnan

Look ahead.

Planchet

It’s all we have

D’Artagnan

All we have.

Planchet & D’Artagnan

All we have is the chance for a better tomorrow.

(The lights fade to black.)
Scene 8

(The Grand Ballroom at The Louvre. In attendance are Louis, Richelieu, Milady, Rochefort, Treville & D’Artagnan with Planchet. Bonacieux hovers alone. Constance stands in the shadows.)

The Company

What a night for a ball, what a fabulous fete.
The pantomime ready, the players all set.
Faces are painted, self-confident, yet...
Expectation.

A spark in the air, concealed with some style.
The tension is palpable, as is the guile.
An offhand remark, a treacherous smile...
Expectation.

Too many whispers near too many fans,
And something approaching alarm.
Words left unfinished on silken divans,
A coup de grace met with some charm...
What’s the harm?

An uncertain glance, a stranger’s remark,
A guess, then a rumor, a shot in the dark,
An arrow that misses, a word finds the mark.
Expectation.

Offstage Voice

His Eminence, Cardinal Richelieu.

Richelieu

And where is her highness? The night is half gone.

Louis

She’ll be down in a moment, she’s looking quite wan.

Richelieu

She’s wearing the twelve diamond studs, I assume?
Louis

And if she is not, what am I to presume?

Richelieu

All will be clear when she enters the room.

Offstage Voice

Her highness, Anne of Austria, Queen of France.

(Anne enters, sans diamond studs.)

Louis

Madame, I requested that you wear a certain diamond ribbon. Why then do I find your shoulder bare?

Anne

I feared, sire for their safety.

Louis

You were wrong, Madame. I gave them as a present to adorn you. Get out! When you return, I will expect to see them there.

Anne

Your majesty.

(She bows and leaves.)

The Company.

A suggestion of anger, the start of a tear?
A moment of triumph, a moment of fear.
Too loud to ignore and too silent to hear...
Expectation.

Richelieu

Your highness, a moment.

Louis

What are you about?

(Richelieu hands him two diamond studs.)
Richelieu

If the queen has the diamonds which I very much doubt. Count them and see if these two she’s without.

Louis

Has she entered the room? No I can’t see from here.

Richelieu

Relax, my dear friend, soon all will be clear.
See for yourself, for the queen now draws near.

The Company

Expectation.

Louis

I’m pleased that you have humored me and worn the gems, my queen. But two, it seems are missing, as plainly can be seen.

Anne

But, your highness, if you give me these, I shall then have fourteen.

Louis

Richelieu, what is the meaning of all this?

Richelieu

Only that I was desirous of giving the queen a small gift, and hesitated to offer them myself.

Anne

I am all the more grateful, being certain these two studs alone have cost you more than all the others cost his majesty.

The Company

A lost expectation, but one must go on.
Unfinished business is left for the dawn.
an unwary moment, a dagger that’s drawn.
Expectation... Expectation... Expec...

(Constance takes D’Artagnan’s hand.)
Constance

Come with me.

(The Ballroom darkens as Constance leads D’Artagnan to Anne’s anteroom.)

D’Artagnan

Why am I here?

Constance

Trust me.

D’Artagnan

Wait! Will I see you again?

Constance

Tonight. I promise. Tonight.

(She leaves as the queen quietly enters from the other direction. D’Artagnan drops to his knee.)

D’Artagnan

Your highness!

Anne

Take this. In gratitude.

(He kisses her hand. She slips from the room, leaving D’Artagnan gazing at a diamond ring.)

D’Artagnan

A sovereign who’s grateful, a reckoning delayed. Friends to be rescued and debts to be paid. A late assignation, with a beautiful maid... Expectation...
Scene 9

(The chambers of M. de Treville.)

D’Artagnan

Monsieur, I have come to ask your help.

Treville

It is yours. Just tell me what you require.

D’Artagnan

A woman -- a woman whom I have sworn to protect -- disappeared last night. She is a servant to the queen, Monsieur, Constance Bonacieux. Just outside the Louvre. A beggar saw it all. She was dragged away by three men, All directed by a woman. The one they call Milady.

Treville

I can see the queen. Her majesty has many friends. Perhaps your young lady can be found. And this one you call Milady, If she is who I believe her to be, I know her brother-in-law. Something may be learned from that quarter. In return, I only ask that you follow this advice:

D’Artagnan

I will do whatever you say.

Treville

If I were to guess, I would say that at the ball last night, the queen’s happiness and the Cardinal’s displeasure had something to do with your trip to England. No. Not a word. I have guessed too much already. But understand that if you were to meet with some accident, there are those who wouldn’t grieve. Let me suggest that -- for your health -- You might wish to take in the waters of Forges. On your way, you could inquire of the friends who did not return to Paris with you.

D’Artagnan

I take you at your word, sir. I will go and find my friends.

(In another area. Porthos is sitting up in bed. He quickly pulls up the bedclothes to hide a large, bloody bandage on his shoulder.)

D’Artagnan

Porthos You’re alive! What happened? Why haven’t you come home?
Porthos

Oh, just a sprain... It’s kept me stuck here in bed. You should have seen me! I dispatched four assailants. But it seems in walking from the battle, I turned my ankle. It simply won’t heal...

D’Artagnan

What relief! Down below we were told you were wounded.

Porthos

Foul liars! Only jealous of my unquestioned victory.

D’Artagnan

We’ll leave you with your ankle now we know you’re safe -- that it’s only a sprain.

Planchet

One of those strange sprains that bleed from the shoulder.

D’Artagnan.

Quiet! I think Porthos would rather have his shoulder punctured than his vanity.

Planchet

Believe me, his vanity will mend sooner. He cares for it well.

D’Artagnan

(Laughing.)

Oh shut up. Let’s see what’s become of Aramis.

(Aramis is in another area, in a cassock and whipping himself with a knotted cord.)

D’Artagnan

But my friend, what is this? What on earth are you doing?

Aramis

When we were ambushed I found I was wounded -- I was actually near death. I made a promise to God. I have determined to return to my studies for the priesthood. I’ve put them off too long.

D’Artagnan

And I see how serious you are by the way you do penance. So I suppose I’ll just tear up this letter
I found waiting for you. Scented with some perfume. Bah! For a priest, that will never do.

**Planchet**

Allow me, I'll take it down to the fire master...

**Aramis**

You touch it and you die.

*(Aramis reads the letter.)*

I thought she had forgotten me. I thought she despised me. She was only detained at Tours! She still loves me!

**D’Artagnan**

But what of the church?

**Aramis**

*(He is ripping off the cassock and cavorting around in his underwear.)*

To hell with the church. Planchet -- you want to burn something, burn this cursed whip! Order up some wine! She loves me! She loves me!

*(D’Artagnan and Planchet discover Athos, very drunk, reclining against a vat of wine.)*

**Athos**

Go back or I'll shoot!

**D’Artagnan**

Athos? Is that you?

**Athos**

D’Artagnan? It’s about time. I was running low on the landlord’s wine.

**D’Artagnan**

Athos! You’re drunk. What in hell are you doing down here?

**Athos**

Well, those five men set upon us. I called for you to run. Then I fought my way down here to the cellar and barricaded myself in. See! I’ve made myself a fair fortress.
D’Artagnan
The innkeeper is upstairs weeping. He’s next door to ruined. You see, all of his food, all his wine, all his provisions, in fact were locked up down here with you.

Athos
And it’s made me many fine meals I assure you. I have no sympathy. He was part of the plot, so he got what he deserved. Sit down, friend, there’s still one more bottle.

Planchet
He’s not drunk enough?

Athos
You want to try me, boy? I said to sit down. The whole evening’s before us. What is the matter my friend? What has happened? You have a sad air about you.

D’Artagnan
We’ll talk of it later.

Athos
Later? Why later. You think I am drunk? Well, remember, I am never so clear -- and certainly never so honest as when I am drunk. And I am VERY drunk. Tell me then -- why the face?

D’Artagnan
A woman -- the woman I love -- she’s been carried off -- kidnapped.

Athos
Why, you have been rescued then.

D’Artagnan
What are you saying?

Athos
Rescued I say. The Cardinal’s done you the favor of carting off your mistress. Did she love you?

D’Artagnan
I know she did.
Athos

There is not a man lives who does not believe his mistress loves him -- and there is not a man lives whose mistress has not deceived him.

D’Artagnan

Speak you -- who hate all women and have never loved one.

Athos

I could tell you a tale of love -- of real love -- that could chill those moonstruck eyes of yours into frozen little bagatelles of ice.

D’Artagnan

(Settles back, Planchet beside him.)

All right, tell me then. Tell me who you loved.

Athos

Not me. A friend.

D’Artagnan

Ah! A friend.

Athos

Yes. A friend.

She was sixteen, my friend twenty-eight, it was summer. The face of a seraphim, burning with love, early summer. A voice that was soft with the chant of the siren Fairness so exquisite... Skin so untouchable...

So much I loved. Hours of love. She was sweetness. Two melt into one. That was our love. Utter sweetness. Hands as soft as the glance of her eye. A smile to melt stone, an innocence waiting... And I married her.

(Athos pauses, seeming lost for a moment...)

We were riding that day, chasing through fields. It was summer. Her hair flying back. Trees racing by, early summer. Sunlight and sod and the grass and the wind rushing... A crack and a rip, flying and falling and...

There she was on the ground. Still on the ground.
Stumbling to her, tears streaming down my face.
Sure she was finished, clutching, caressing her...
Praying she’s breathing, dress torn from her shoulder.
Her shoulder. She’s moving. Dress torn from her shoulder...
There it was. There. On her shoulder.

Branded, my friends. My darling was branded.
Some executioner left his mark scorched on her.
Just a small fleur de lis -- for the guilty, condemned to die.
Still I’d believe her. However the brand was made.
She need only tell me. Who did this awful thing?
Who had defiled her? Just who and I’d slit their throat.
Who, tell me... Who, please God... Who, tell me, I’ll believe.
Who, tell me, who, my love, Who did...

Then I looked in her eyes. That was all. Only that. No more Summer.
She knew and I knew, everything gone. That was Summer.
The shriek that escaped from her lips...
Like daggers her eyes as she clawed at me, tore me.

With the hiss of an Asp she spit venom with truth.
Church vessels stolen, a lover, then many more.
Bottomless fury as she gloated of murder,
and greed and of poison and betrayal,
Hatred and crime and deception and fools.
And the biggest fool I.

Why not tell all? My dagger was in her hand.
Coming so quickly -- flashing there in her hand.
Then buried, just here. In my side to the handle.
Four inches of steel. I just stared at the handle.

Then I did what had to be done.
I ripped at her dress, twisted it round her neck.
Then to the tree. Dragged her there by her neck.
And gasping, still stuck like a pig, dripping blood,
I hanged her.

(There is a silence as Athos drinks.)

**Planchet**

Jesus Christ.
D’Artagnan

She is... dead then?

Athos

Who knows? You’d have to ask my friend. Here, try some of the Burgundy. It’s exquisite.

(Athos smiles and opens another bottle.)
Scene 10

(D’Artagnan & Milady are in her sitting room, just beyond is her bedroom.)

Milady

(laughing)
You are as charming as you are gallant, my fair Gascon.

D’Artagnan

And your enchantment, Milady, is matched only by your beauty.

Milady

What luck that Monsieur de Treville introduced you to my brother-in-law.

D’Artagnan

No indeed. The luck was that your brother-in-law introduced me to you. I had seen you many times from a distance, and knew I had to find you.

Milady

You are too kind.

D’Artagnan

It is an easy thing to be kind to such a gentle creature as yourself.

Milady

Your words bring a blush to my cheek.

D’Artagnan

Do I dare I think your blush may have the meaning I hope for?

Milady

Surely you can read its meaning. Have I not made it clear to you...

   Everything you say, how your gaze may stray, more with every day,  
   Leaves me breathless, ever more breathless.  
   Every word I hear, your desire’s clear, every time you’re near,  
   Leaves me breathless, ever more breathless.
D’Artagnan

Intoxicating eyes, captivating gaze,
Breathless every moment you are there.
Captured by your look, caught with your allure,
Breathless and too charmed to even care.

Every smile you share, each expression rare, every touch I dare,
Leaves me breathless, ever more breathless.
Every curve of you, every turn you do, every rendezvous,
Leaves me breathless, ever more breathless.

Milady & D’Artagnan

Stirred by every touch, roused with each caress,
breathless in that moment we’re alone.
Dreaming when awake, burning in my dreams,
forced to quell every passion I have known.

For every day gone by, every way I try, each infernal sigh,
Leaves me breathless, ever more breathless.
All the need I see, every urge in me, every agony,
Leaves me breathless, ever more breathless,
Ever more breathless.

(They end with a long, slow kiss.)

Milady

Will you come to me? Tonight? At eleven there would be few prying eyes...

D’Artagnan

More I could not ask.

Milady

(rings a small bell.)
Kitty will show you out by another way -- the way to use tonight. You understand?

D’Artagnan

Perfectly. Until tonight... My love.

(Kitty enters)

Kitty

Milady?
Milady

Yes. Until tonight. Kitty, show D’Artagnan out -- by the Rue de la Guerre.

Kitty

Yes, Milady.

(They leave. Kitty closes the door between the sitting room and bedroom and stops.)

Kitty

Monsieur Chevalier, will you speak with me?

D'Artagnan

I am at your service, my dear.

Kitty

Do you love her so dearly, Monsieur?

D'Artagnan

If I do, I am insane. Perhaps I am... Who can say?

Kitty

Alas, monsieur, that is too bad. Because you see, my mistress does not love you at all.

D'Artagnan

Has she charged you to tell me this?

Kitty

No, I tell you because... Because... All is fair in matters of the heart.

D'Artagnan

Ah! I see...

Kitty

But you don’t believe me. (Milady’s little bell is heard.)

Go, quickly. She mustn’t know we’ve been speaking!
D'Artagnan

Go to your mistress.

Kitty

But...

D'Artagnan

Go!

(D’Artagnan shoves Kitty toward the door and manages to hide himself just as Milady enters.)

Milady

Are you stupid that you don’t respond when I call? Has he gone?

Kitty

Yes, Milady.

Milady

God, what a fool.

(She sits and writes a brief note.)

Kitty

A fool? I had thought Milady loved him...

Milady

Love him? Don’t be inane. You know the Comte de Wardes is the only man I would give a snap of my finger. D’Artagnan is firmly on the hook, my dear. That idiot nearly made me lose face with His Eminence. Oh, Believe me, I’ll be revenged. Love him? I detest him.

Kitty

But has Madame not already taken revenge on his little woman... His little Constance?

Milady

And you see how quickly he’s forgotten her? I’ve tucked her safely away -- until I need her. Now be quiet. Here: Take this to the Comte de Wardes. Bring me his answer.
Kitty

Yes madam, surely...

Milady

Then don’t just stand there! Fly!

(Milady hands Constance a folded note and sweeps out. D’Artagnan emerges.)

Now you see monsieur?

D'Artagnan

Let me see it.

Kitty

But, sir...

(D’Artagnan reads aloud.)

D'Artagnan

“My dear Comte. Know that my love for you burns as bright as ever. And I know from both your words and deeds that you are devoted to me and will do all I desire. Come here tonight at eleven. You will meet on the Rue de la Guerre a young guardsman. Quarrel with him on some pretext. When you have killed him, come to me. Your reward will be all you have dreamed.”

God! What a creature this is!

Kitty

So you see you must not come here tonight.

D'Artagnan

Oh, I will come.

Kitty

But, monsieur...

D'Artagnan

Here, give me some paper.

Kitty

Monsieur! What are you doing?
D'Artagnan

You are supposed to bring a reply from her lover, the Comte de Wardes, are you not?

Kitty

Yes, but...

D'Artagnan

Then here it is.  

(He reads what he has written.)

“Milady de Winter, my dearest heart. While I wish I could do all you require, you must not wait for me tonight. I have so many affairs of this kind, I am forced to apportion myself. When your turn comes, I shall have the honor to inform you of it. I kiss your hands. The Comte de Wardes.”

Kitty

But Monsieur! This will put her in a rage.

D'Artagnan

I count on it, my sweet. I count on it.  

(The lights fade out, and restore in a moment in Milady’s boudoir. Milady, in nightclothes, is pacing in a fury as Kitty enters.)

Kitty

D’Artagnan is here, Milady.

Milady

Well, don’t just stand there. Have him in you simpleton.

Kitty

Yes, Milady.  

(Milady re-reads the note from de Wardes.)

Milady

“When my turn comes!!” Oh, this will not do. This will not do at all.  

(D’Artagnan enters.)
D’Artagnan

Tonight you look radiant! You’re flushed. Are you well? Should I go?

Milady

If I am flushed, it is only because I see you. Do you love me?

D’Artagnan

Can’t you feel my emotions?

Milady

I can... But how can I know? Kiss me.

(As they kiss, Milady slides the doublet off D’Artagnan’s shoulders.)

I feel your embrace, yet how far would you go for that love?

D’Artagnan

To the ends of the earth! Anything! The stars up above... Come again, kiss me.

Milady

I have an enemy. One who insulted me, smeared my good name, lied and dishonored me...

D’Artagnan

Name him. My arm is yours. Ask what you will, I’ll agree. Kiss me.

Milady

The Comte de Wardes is the villain I name.

D’Artagnan

What would you have me do? What is the game?
Milady

Spit him upon your sword like a roast pig.

D’Artagnan

And in doing so, win you?

Milady

My heart ever true...

D’Artagnan

Show me.

Milady

My pet, the things I will show you...

D’Artagnan

Show me.

Milady

(Unlacing the neck of her robe.)

My love... How I will show you...

Milady & D’Artagnan

Tonight let us show how much we are willing to do...
Kiss me...

(They fall to the bed as the lights fade to black as music crashes in. When the lights return, both are in bed, partially covered by a sheet, Milady in a low-cut gown that drapes from her shoulders, D’Artagnan naked, or nearly so.)

Milady

You will find de Wardes then? This very morning?

D’Artagnan

You love me truly? With all your heart?
Milady

Have I not just proven it?

D’Artagnan

Then you will forgive me a small foolishness?

Milady

Forgive you, my love? I would forgive you anything.

D’Artagnan

Then, forgive me. I cannot kill the Comte de Wardes -- not, at least, without committing suicide.

Milady

What is this! Are you afraid of him?

D’Artagnan

No, I’m afraid I AM him.

Milady

What do you mean?

D’Artagnan

I mean that the letter you received from the Comte de Wardes -- the one that put you in such a fury -- That letter was written by me.

Milady

(Suddenly all comes clear to Milady. Her face contorts in a fury. With both fists she delivers a great blow to D’Artagnan’s chest.)

No!!! You vile cur!

(She begins to bolt from the bed, but D’Artagnan has grabbed the shoulder of her nightdress. As she springs to her feet, the dress rips from her shoulder. A fleur de lis is branded there. Both of them freeze for an instant.)

D’Artagnan

Dear God... Your shoulder...
Milady

You wretch! You have my secret. By God, you will not leave this room alive!

(She springs for her table and turns back to D’Artagnan holding out a dagger. She rushes at him, but D’Artagnan grabs his sword. He covers himself with a pillow and backs from the bed, all the while holding Milady at bay.)

D’Artagnan

Back! Get back!

Milady

(screaming as if insane)
You vile snake! Scoundrel! Infamous liar! I’ll see your blood! You hear me! Your blood!

D’Artagnan

Calm yourself, lady, or I’ll cut a second fleur de lis on your other shoulder.

Milady

Die!

(She throws herself at D’Artagnan, but Kitty, alarmed by the noise, has opened the door.)

Kitty

What is wrong... What has hap...

(D’Artagnan shoves her back through the door and escapes, slamming the door in Milady’s face and propping a chair beneath the handle.)

Milady

You filthy swine! Vicious wretch! Open this instant! Now! Lecher! Villain! Liar! Assassin!! Assassin!!

(Violently, she is stabbing through the thin wood of the door with her knife.)

D’Artagnan

Quickly! Give her time to think, and she’ll have us killed by the servants.
Kitty

You can’t leave like that...

D’Artagnan

Give me something -- anything. Hurry! Hurry!

Kitty

(Giving him her cloak.)

Here. Run!

(D’Artagnan and Kitty rush from the room. Milady has dropped to the ground, spent and gasping. She takes a moment, controls herself, and then she rises like a Phoenix.)

Milady

What I shall do!
He never has known vengeance like the vengeance that I bring.
What I shall do!
Cold as ice and swift as death, before he’s felt a thing.
What I shall do!
Payment may be lengthy and retribution slow.
But come it will in darkness, and the fools will never know what I shall do.

(D’Artagnan and Kitty are on a dark street.)

D’Artagnan & Kitty

How did it go so far?

D’Artagnan

I lost my head.

Kitty

I lost my reason.

D’Artagnan & Kitty

How did it go so far, and how long shall we have to watch behind?
D’Artagnan

How many days, how many years...

D’Artagnan & Kitty

Through the changing of how many seasons?

Milady, D’Artagnan & Kitty

What I shall do!

Athos

(Alone in his room.)

What shall I do to stop the memory...

Buckingham

(Alone in his room.)

Memories of her...

Athos

When I can still see her smile?

Buckingham

For just a smile...

Athos

What shall I do to end the hatred.

Bonacieux

(Alone in his room)

How she must hate me.

Buckingham

Does she love me?

Athos & Buckingham

What shall I do to end the pain...
Bonacieux

But there still is much to gain...

Athos & Buckingham

Still so much pain!

Constance

Refuge here with holy sisters. Pray he’ll somehow come for me.

Abbess

You are safe within these walls.

Constance

Pray that he still loves me,

Abbess & Constance

Pray for all that still may be...

Kitty & D’Artagnan

When will it end?

Constance & Abbess

What still may be...

Milady

How it will end...

Richelieu

What I shall do to make them mine, heart and body!

Louis, Treville, Porthos & Aramis

Sides must be taken!

Richelieu

What I shall do to win their mind!
Rochefort.

Live to fight, fight to serve.

Richelieu

Men like that should not be broken, heart nor body!

Louis, Treville, Porthos & Aramis

Never show weakness!

Richelieu

To have a hundred of their kind!

Rochefort.

Know your foe, know him well.

Richelieu

Make what allies you can make, but break the enemy within.

Louis, Treville, Porthos, Aramis & Rochefort. (The Fighters)

Take your side, and take your chances, and be certain that you win.

Milady & Constance

I shall win!

Bonacieux, Athos, & Kitty

How to win?

Richelieu, D’Artagnan & Buckingham

Never doubt that I’ll win!

Planchet

You see, Monsieur, I am here at your side!!!

<table>
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<th>D’Artagnan &amp; Constance</th>
<th>The Fighters</th>
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<tr>
<td>What I shall do!</td>
<td>To cross the oceans...</td>
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before he’s felt a thing.
What I shall do!
Payment may be lengthy
and retribution slow.
But come at will in darkness,
and the fools will never know
what I shall do.

Bon: His friend! Service
Planchet & Abbess Fight ing...
I’m standing by you. ever...
to the end.

D’Art, Constance & Buck Arm...
Just to be near you... and...
Again to hear you... sword now...

Bon: His friend! to...

Athos the...

To crush you from my mind. death...

Kitty

If only he could love me too!

Richelieu

What I shall do to make them mine,
heart and body!
What I shall do to win their minds!
Men like that should not be broken,
Heart nor body.
To have a hundred of their kind...

Milady

What I shall do!
They will be mine!
Planchet & Abbess Wanting
Always with you!
Milady Needing
What I shall do!
Before I am done
What I shall do!

DArt, Buck, Cons, Kit Always
Loving
always
Wanting
Always
Needing
Always

The Company

Only God in heaven knows the things that I shall do.
And woe to those who try to stop me, Pay the devil all that he is due.
God forgive me, God forgive me for what I must do,
I shall do! I shall do!

(Blackout)
Act II, Scene 1

(Athos’ apartments. D’Artagnan bursts in wearing only Kitty’s cloak. Athos bursts into laughter.)

D’Artagnan

Stop it. Don’t laugh. On my word, it is no laughing matter.

Athos

The matter may not be laughable, but you make a poor strumpet...

D’Artagnan

Will you give me something to wear?

Athos

(Tossing D’Artagnan some clothes.)
I’m sorry. Truly. But you’re so pale. Are you wounded? What is it my friend?

D’Artagnan

Are you certain she is dead?

Athos

Who?

D’Artagnan

The one you spoke of that night -- the woman with the brand - with the fleur de lis?

Athos

God! Was I so drunk that I...

D’Artagnan

Yes, you told me everything. But I must know: Is she dead? Are you certain?

Athos

She must be. Yes, she has to be...
D’Artagnan

That creature of the Cardinal’s, the one who calls herself Milady... There’s a brand on her shoulder. I saw it. A small fleur de lis.

Athos

Dear God.

D’Artagnan

She’s twenty-six or twenty-eight?

Athos

Fair hair... Blue eyes...

D’Artagnan

The brand is deep and red.

Athos

As if rubbed raw in efforts to remove it... No. She has to be dead.

D’Artagnan

She is not.

Athos

She knows you saw the brand?

D’Artagnan

She tried to kill me.

Athos

Then she will try again.

D’Artagnan

I still have my sword. I’ll be fine.

(There’s a beating at the door. Athos admits Planchet.)
Planchet

Master! Finally... I’ve been looking everywhere. A letter...

D’Artagnan

A letter? From whom? Why the haste...

Planchet

It has the seal of the Cardinal.

(D’Artagnan takes the letter and reads.)

D’Artagnan

I am summoned to the Palais Cardinal. Tonight at eight o’clock. I am called before his eminence. Surely she hasn’t had time...

Athos

How could she... It’s barely after daybreak. But the Cardinal may have other reasons...

Kitty

Who knows what she has done? She is close to the Cardinal She could tell him anything...

Athos

An invitation from his eminence cannot be refused.

D’Artagnan

No. It can’t. I’ll be there.

Athos

And so will I. I’ll find Porthos and Aramis. We’ll wait for you outside.

D’Artagnan

And if I don’t emerge?

Athos

Well, it’s been some time since we’ve had a skirmish with the Cardinal’s guards. Monsieur de Treville must think us dead.
Scene 2

(Richelieu’s chambers. He is working on a manuscript. He turns and holds it up.)

Richelieu

Miriam, a tragedy in five acts. I should like to complete it before I lead the troops for La Rochelle. D’Artagnan is it? From Gascony?

D’Artagnan

Yes, your eminence.

Richelieu

On your first day in Paris, you had chance for some swordplay behind the Luxemburg...

D’Artagnan

My friends and I...

Richelieu

Were on a picnic. Yes, I know. You were then placed in the guards of the king. Monsieur de Treville has given you hope you might some day wear a musketeer’s uniform.

D’Artagnan

Monseigneur is correctly informed.

Richelieu

Since that time you have done many things. You were in your landlord’s apartments one afternoon, with a young woman -- when it might have been better for you to be elsewhere. You lately made journey to England, leaving some friends to rest along the way. The cause of your visit?

D’Artagnan

Monseigneur, I went...

Richelieu

Hunting at Windsor -- or elsewhere. That’s not my concern. Upon your return you were met by some august personage. I see you wear the souvenir she left you.
D’Artagnan

I fear I’ve incurred your displeasure Monseigneur.

Richelieu

How could that be, monsieur? I punish the people who do not obey, Not those like you, who obey -- but too well. However, given all that’s transpired you can’t have helped but notice you retain a remarkable health. You are brave, Monsieur D’Artagnan. You are prudent, which is better still. But you are young. You are scarcely entering in the world and have made powerful enemies. If you do not take great heed, they will destroy you. You made your way to Paris on the hopes of making your fortune.

D’Artagnan

I am at the age of foolish hopes, Monseigneur.

Richelieu

There are no foolish hopes but for fools. What would you say, Monsieur D’Artagnan, to a commission in my guards?

D’Artagnan

Monseigneur... I may speak freely?

Richelieu

Yes, speak.

D’Artagnan

All my friends are in the kings musketeers and guards, and by an inconceivable chance, my enemies are all in the service of your Eminence. I should, therefore be ill received here and ill regarded there if I accepted what Monseigneur offers me.

Richelieu

That is to say, you refuse to serve me, monsieur.

D’Artagnan

Monseigneur...

Richelieu

Very well then, remain free. I wish you no ill, but it is quite trouble enough to defend our friends. We owe nothing to our enemies. Take care of yourself, Monsieur, from this moment I
withdraw my hand from behind you. I would not give a sou for your life.

**D’Artagnan**

Monseigneur, I have done only what I believed to be right. Would you have me do otherwise?

**Richelieu**

Young man, if I shall be able to say to you at any other time what I have said to you today, I promise you to do so.

*(Richelieu bows and turns back to his work. D’Artagnan hesitates, then leaves.)*

There are men who are beyond all price.
Those who never bend despite the vagaries of fate.
Such men are dear to me.

Fighting a continent, holding together a kingdom,
so much can be lost, so much falls away.
Through the years, through the struggles, what is the compromise?
What must be held to? What is untouchable?

Far out at sea, with the waves pouring in, storm raging,
heavy laden, what gets thrown from the boat?
Charity? Honesty? Pity? Desire? What have you lost,
In that desperate hour, clawing to keep all the others afloat?

Will I sacrifice him? Will I take him as my own?
What may I still have to do that may damn me?
Holding on forever to that one sure belief:
That if I lose my soul, If I offer my soul,
What does it matter, if while I’m alive, the soul of a nation can somehow survive.

I look to the sky, searching the void.
Is God watching over? Was he ever there?
And if he does see, then why is he silent?
How can we know, how are we to know,
when no way is moral, which way to choose?
When whatever you do, somehow justice and mercy and honor may lose.

*(He becomes quiet as he repeats...)*

Only God in heaven knows the things that I shall do.
And woe to those who try to stop me, they shall pay the devil his due.
And if I lose my soul, if I offer my soul,
Dear God forgive me, for what I must do,
I shall do!
Scene 3

(The common room of an inn. Athos, Porthos and Aramis are seated around a table drinking.)

Aramis

You think he’s safe tonight? She’s tried twice now for his life: first the assassins on the Rue de Rivoli...

Porthos

Yes, and the poison in the wine. By my faith, I would have liked it better if one of us could have stood guard duty with him.

Athos

He’ll be fine. At least at watch he has only the English army to fear.

Aramis

We must make a plan gentlemen. This can’t go...

Athos

Quiet. The door.

(The Musketeers spring to their feet as two hooded figures enter.)

Who goes there?

Richelieu

(removing his hood)

Who has the right to ask?

Athos

Excuse me, your Eminence. I didn’t recognize...

Richelieu

But I recognize the three of you. I know you are not quite my friends. I’m sorry for that. But you are still loyal servants of his majesty. Go on, Rochefort. You have business. These three will wait and guard me home.

Rochefort

I’ll send word at the proper time.
(He pulls up his hood and quickly leaves.)

Richelieu

I won’t be more than half an hour.  Wait for me here.  Allow no one upstairs.

(He exits by another way.)

Porthos

The cardinal is meeting someone?  At a common tavern?

Aramis

Someone, it must be presumed, that cannot afford to be seen at the Palais Cardinal.

Porthos

There were voices from upstairs earlier.

Athos

What voices?

Porthos

No fire is lit.  I could hear voices quite clearly through the chimney.

Athos

Then, gentlemen, perhaps we should move our party closer to the fire.

(Above, Richelieu is speaking with Milady.)

Richelieu

Sit down Milady.  Let us talk. You will sail tonight for London.  Contact Buckingham before the week is out.

Milady

I beg your Eminence observe, that since the affair of the diamond studs, His grace distrusts me.

Richelieu

You needn’t steal his confidence this time. Just see the duke and tell him I am aware of all of his preparations for war.  But let him know they give me no uneasiness, since at the first shot taken by the English, I will ruin the queen. He knows I have the means.
Milady

And if, in spite of this, the duke continues with the war?

Richelieu

Then I shall have no recourse but to pray for one of those events which have been known to change the destinies of states.

Milady

If your Eminence would quote to me some one of these events?

Richelieu

In 1610, King Henry was about to enter Flanders...

Milady

When he was killed by a knife in the Rue de la Feronnerie.

Richelieu

Precisely. There will be, in all times and in all countries, fanatics asking only that they be given the opportunity to sacrifice themselves as martyrs to a cause. The Puritans despise the Duke of Buckingham. Their preachers call him the Antichrist. All that’s needed then, would be some woman, handsome, young and clever, who has been offended the duke -- someone he has betrayed and ruined.

Milady

No doubt such a lady could be found.

Richelieu

If such a woman placed a knife in the hands of this fanatic, seeking only to be a martyr for his faith... But where to find such a woman?

Milady

She is found.

Richelieu

And the fanatic with the knife?
Milady

He will be found. Let’s be sure then that I am clear on your instructions. I shall see the duke and tell him what you have said. If he persists in waging war, then there is nothing more I can do no more than pray to God to work a miracle to save France.

Richelieu

I see you understand.

Milady

I have heard the instructions of your Eminence as concerns your enemies. Will Monseigneur now permit me to speak to him of mine?

Richelieu

Have you enemies?

Milady

The first, a girl named Constance. She was in my care for a time.

Richelieu

I know of her.

Milady

She’s been hidden by the queen. I need only to know where.

Richelieu

I see no problem in that. She has been placed in the convent of Bethune.

Milady

Your eminence is well informed. But there is another. You know him well. He has assaulted your guards. It was he who caused the failure of the matter of the diamond studs. He knows it was I who had his mistress carried off and has sworn to kill me.

Richelieu

Yes. I know the man you speak of.

Milady

I want a fair exchange then: Life for life. Man for man. Simply one for another.
Richelieu

I don’t know what you mean, nor do I wish to know. Do whatever you will do -- it won’t concern me. Do you understand?

Milady

Were I a Medici or Borgia, those words would be sufficient. There are those who can act without fear of retribution. Milady de Winter is not one of them.

Richelieu

Give me a pen.

Athos

Listen more if you will. I have to go.

Aramis

But what do we tell his Eminence?

Athos

Whatever you like.

(Athos exits.)

Richelieu

(Handing her the paper he has written.)

Here. I have done what you asked. See that you do the same.

(Richelieu exits as Milady reads aloud:)

Milady

“December Third, 1627. It is by my order and for the good of the state that the bearer of this has done what has been done. Richelieu.”

(Milady smiles as Richelieu enters below.)

Richelieu

Where is monsieur Athos?

Aramis

There was a disturbance outside. He’s gone ahead to make sure the way is safe.
Richelieu

He can meet us on the road. Come gentlemen. I am suddenly tired. See me safely home.

(The three exit, then Milady enters, puts on a cloak and opens the door. But Athos is there.)

Athos

Do you know me madam?

(She opens her mouth, but only a hiss escapes.)

I perceive you do.

Milady

The Comte de la Fère...

Athos

Yes, Milady, come expressly from the grave, for the pleasure of paying you a call.
I know you are a demon, set upon us all.
Once before you crossed my path. How were you saved?

I thought I had crushed you, was I mistaken,
Or did hell spit you back? Is it hell that I blame?
Was it hell that made you rich, hell that changed your name?
Hell may raise up whom heaven has forsaken.

But hell can neither take away the stains from your soul, nor the brand from your body.

Milady

What do you want with me?

Athos

I know it was you who stole two diamond studs, to cause the downfall of the queen.
I know it was you who had the girl carried off when you thought yourself unseen.

I know it was you, fatal in your wrath, asked D’Artagnan blood in exchange for your bed.
And again it was you, your secret uncovered, who has time and again, sworn to see him dead.
A life for a life -- is that how you put it?
The Cardinal was there, a bargain was made:
A man for a man, one for another,
D’Artagnan’s blood for the Duke’s? Is that how you’re paid?

Milady
It is you who are Satan.

Athos
Perhaps, but regardless, listen well.
Do what you like with Buckingham, he’s nothing to me.
But touch one hair of D’Artagnan, my companion, my friend,
You harm this man I love, and I swear,
that despite all that has been, all that has passed,
Milady, that crime shall be your last.

Milady
D’Artagnan has crossed me. D’Artagnan shall die.

(Athos draws his pistol, cocks it, and slowly presses it to her forehead.)

Athos
Madame, you will this instant deliver to me the paper the cardinal signed, or upon my soul, I will blow your brains out.

(She draws the letter from her bosom.)

Milady
Take it and be accursed.

Athos
And now -- now that I have drawn your teeth, viper, bite if you can.
Scene 4

(A small room in the castle of Lord de Winter. Milady is being escorted in by Felton.)

Milady

Tell me! I demand it! On whose orders was I taken from my ship? On whose orders was I conducted here? On whose orders am I a captive?

(de Winter enters.)

dede Winter

That will be all Mr. Felton. You may go.

(Felton exits.)

Milady

You? My... My dear brother? But why have you brought me here?

dede Winter

On the contrary, my dear sister-in-law -- why have you returned to England?

Milady

Why only -- only to see you.

dede Winter

Ah! To see me.

Milady

Of course to see you. What is so astonishing in that?

dede Winter

Then you see how well I have anticipated your every desire. I have discovered what ship you were upon. I have had you brought here. I have arranged a room for you -- where, to satisfy our mutual desire of seeing each other, you may see me every day.

Milady

I am then -- a prisoner?
de Winter

Do you find yourself badly lodged? Are the apartments not what you are used to? Simply tell me then, how your household was arranged by your first husband and I shall do my best to arrange something similar.

Milady

My first husband? You mean your brother, of course.

de Winter

No, I mean your French husband. In case you’ve forgotten, I can write the Comte de la Fère for the information. He is still living, of course. He now calls himself Athos, I believe. In fact, it was upon his kind suggestion that I arranged to have you brought here...

(Milady throws herself at de Winter, tearing at him with her nails.)

Come! I know your are accustomed to assassinate people, but I warn you, I’m perfectly willing to defend myself.

Milady

Yes. You are cowardly enough to raise your hand against a woman.

de Winter

Perhaps. But I’m sure mine would not be the first hand to be placed on you.

(He slowly reaches out his hand and touches the spot on her shoulder where she is branded. She recoils.)

Be assured there are judges in England who would take a dim view of a bigamist, a murderess and a harlot -- who would send you to an executioner who would make both of your shoulders alike. And except for the memory of my brother, I would do it with my own hands. For his sake, I have simply made arrangements to have you conducted, one week from now to one of our southern colonies, where you shall live out the last of your wretched days. Mr. Felton, come in now.

(He enters.)

Look at this woman. She is young. She is beautiful. She possesses all the earthly seductions. She is, in a word, a monster who, at twenty-six has committed more crimes than can be counted. She will try to seduce you. Perhaps she will try to kill you. Felton, I have raised you up from misery. I have been your friend, your benefactor, your father. Guard me -- guard yourself against this woman. Swear to me. On your faith as a Puritan, swear to me.

Felton

My lord, I swear it.
de Winter

If she tries to leave this chamber, shoot her. And now, Madame, try to make your peace with God, for you are judged by men.

(De Winter & Felton exit. Milady paces. Time passes... In another part of the stage, Athos and D’Artagnan are discovered.)

D’Artagnan

She is at the convent at Bethune? By God, I’ll leave for there this moment…

Athos

And how will you gain her freedom? Are you going to batter down the convent walls my friend?

D’Artagnan

If I have to.

Athos

Here’s a more practical plan: I’ll go to Treville this moment. Treville will see the queen. By tomorrow – the day after at worse – we will have an order for your young lady’s release.

D’Artagnan

But two days… When that creature knows where she is hidden as well…

(D’Artagnan and Athos disappear. Milady, hearing footsteps, slumps in her chair as if having fainted, a beautiful martyr. Felton enters with her dinner tray. He sees her and calls out.)

Felton

Lord de Winter. The lady has fainted.

Milady

Oh... Oh, God... God, how I have suffered.

Felton

Suffered, madam?

(de Winter enters.)
de Winter

What is this? Has the corpse revived already?

Felton

It seems so, sir.

de Winter

Don’t be deceived. It is only the first act of the comedy. The second act is certain to commence soon.

Felton

I had thought so my Lord, but I wished to be certain.

de Winter

Try some of the foul, Milady. It’s delicious. On my honor, it is not poisoned. I have an excellent cook -- and as he is not my heir -- I have every confidence in him.

(In a rage, Milady grabs the knife on her dinner plate, but alas, it is only a butter knife.)

See how she holds that knife, Felton? See how well she handles it. That knife was for me -- or perhaps you.

Felton

I see, my Lord.

(De Winter and Felton exit. Time passes...
Again, D’Artagnan is discovered in another area. Athos enters.)

D’Artagnan

At last!

Athos

I have the order – in the queen’s own hand.

D’Artagnan

Porthos and Aramis are waiting at the city gates – still three days to Bethune if the horses hold out…

(Again the action shifts to Milady’s prison. Milady paces. Then, as morning dawns, she throws herself on her knees and begins to sing:)
Milady

Thou leavest thy servants, Lord, to see if they be strong;  
But soon thou dost afford thy hand to lead them on.  
For all my tears, my cares, my exile and my chains,  
I have my youth, my prayers, and God, who counts my pains.  

*(Felton enters.)*

Felton

Woman! Why do you sing that?

Milady

Your pardon. I had forgotten that psalms were out of place in this castle. But may I not pray?

Felton

Pray, madam? That is not a Catholic mass.

Milady

A mass! I am not a corrupted Catholic, like Lord de Winter.

Felton

Of what religion are you then, Madame?

Milady

I will tell it, on the day when I shall have suffered sufficiently for my faith!

*With utter devotion and radiance, she launches into the second verse.*

One day our doors will ope, with God come our desire;  
And if betrays that hope, to death we can aspire.  
Let me to Baal be sent, To lions the martyr’s thrown!  
To God thou shall repent. From th’abyss he’ll hear my moan!

I am caught in the hands of my enemies! Well, let God save me, or let me perish for my God!

*(Felton exits, shaken. Time passes... Athos, Porthos, Aramis and D’Artagnan are discovered in another area. Wind and rain.)*

Porthos

The ferryman says he won’t cross – not in this gale
D’Artagnan

(drawing his sword)

He will when I ask him…

Athos

Be calm. A dead ferryman isn’t likely to help matters.

Aramis

And the storm is sure to pass by morning

D’Artagnan

Damn it all… Another day gone… An other day…

(In her room, Milady knots together bed sheets, loops one end, and throws the other over a beam. She then stands on a chair as if to hang herself. Felton enters.)

Felton

What is this, Madame?

Milady

Nothing, sir. In the boredom of captivity, I amused myself by twisting this sheet...

Felton

Then what were you doing upon that chair?

Milady

Do not question me. You know that we who are true Christians are forbidden to lie.

Felton

Remember, madam, our God forbids falsehood -- but he much more condemns suicide.

Milady

When God sees one of his creatures persecuted unjustly, placed between suicide and dishonor, believe me, sir, God pardons suicide for then suicide becomes martyrdom!
Felton

Never! As a prisoner, you shall not gain your liberty through me, and living, you will not lose your life through me.

Milady

But I shall lose that which is much dearer than life. I shall lose my honor! Only give me a knife -- bring it to me that I may escape this shame.

Felton

Who art thou? Who art thou, a demon from hell or a messenger from God?

Milady

Do you not know me, Felton? I am neither angel nor demon, I am a sister of thy faith, that is all.

(Slow applause is heard from the doorway as Lord de Winter enters.)

de Winter

Bravo. You see, Felton, the comedy has become a tragedy.

Felton

My Lord!

de Winter

Take care Felton. She is working on you. I can see it in your face. Listen:
   This woman!
   She has betrayed she has beguiled!
   This woman!
   she has debased, she has defiled.
   Bigamy, debauchery and death upon her head...
   Decay and devastation are what’s followed where she’s led.
   Don’t dare to be deceived by anything she’s said!

   This woman!
   She is cunning and she’s cruel.
   This woman!
   And if you follow, you’re a fool.
   Her sweetness is seduction, and her softness is a snare
   Her piety a pretense, My son, you must beware,
   That is this, this woman!

(In great distress, Felton rushes out. Lord de
Winter follows. Time passes... Athos, Porthos Aramis and D'Artagnan are sitting, nervous and disconsolate. Planchet enters.)

Planchet

Master! The boatman will take is now.

D’Artagnan

Thank God!

Athos

Two more days lost…

Porthos

Wait for me…

(The men rush out. In the chamber, Milady falls to her knees as her lips move in silent prayer. Felton enters and stands -- uncertain.)

Felton

Milady -- you must tell me. You must tell me everything.

Milady

Have you brought what you promised?

Felton

How could I...

Milady

Then there is nothing to be said.

Felton

(Producing a long, sharp knife.)

Here it is. Here it is. But I pray you. Don’t conceive of using it.

Milady

You are indeed a true friend.
Felton

But how have you come here! What has brought you to this?

Milady

You could never believe me.

Felton

I swear I will.

Milady

A man -- a demon -- I was but a young innocent. 
This man, this devil, followed me, begging me.
I told him it was hopeless, that we could never wed. 
He wasn’t of our faith. I doubted everything he said.

This man, this cad, he knew he’d never have me. 
This man, so mad, how he plotted, how he planned! 
In the darkness of the night, from my father’s house he bore me, 
Stealing me away! Whispering how he’d always adore me.

Determined to keep pure. Nightly how I did reject him, 
I pleaded and I cried. All my tears could not affect him.

Then, Oh horrid memory! He came to me at night. 
Tearing at my garments, he forced some liquid down my throat. 
I choked, I cried as this man drugged me and debased me. 
How I wept and I screamed as he bound me and embraced me!

And when he was finished, had taken all that he desired, 
How he laughed at my disgrace, my violated virtue! 
Then to seal my shame and seal my lips so no one could believe, 
He laid a sickening plan only a demon could conceive. 

And he took me, and he tied me as he heated up the iron. 
How it smoked and how it smoldered as it seared into my skin! 
My story ever locked in the silence that the scar commanded. 
Should I utter any word, he could show that I was branded!

(Milady rips away the shoulder of her dress to show Felton the brand.)

Here Felton! Behold the new martyrdom invented for a pure young girl, so that no one could ever again believe her terrible tale of innocence defiled! Learn so as to make yourself less easily the instrument of unjust vengeance!
Felton

My God! But who! Who could have done such infamy?

Milady

Who you ask? Who is the ravager of England? Who is the persecutor of true believers, who is the base ravisher of the honor of women. Who protects the Protestants today and will betray them tomorrow?

Felton

Yes -- It is he! I knew it had to be he!

Milady

It is the Duke of Buckingham!

(de Winter steps into the room.)

de Winter

Here it is. The last act of the tragedy Felton. Will you believe her?

Milady

Dear God protect me!

Milady

Thou leavest thy servants, Lord, to see if they be strong; But soon thou dost afford thy hand to lead them on. For all my tears, my cares, my exile and my chains, I have my youth, my prayers, Decay and devastation are what’s followed where she’s led. and God, who counts my pains.

de Winter

This woman! She has betrayed she has beguiled! This woman! she has debased, she has defiled Bigamy, debauchery and death upon her head

Felton

Ah! Such Tor-ment!

Can I believe her?

One day our doors will ope, with God come our desire; And if betrays that hope, to death we can aspire. Let this victim to Baal be sent, To the lions the martyr be thrown! Her sweetness is seduction, and her softness
Thy God shall teach thee to repent.  Her piety a pretense, My son, you must beware,
From th’abyss he’ll give ear to my moan!  That is this woman!  This angel!

**de Winter**

Felton! You can no longer be trusted with her. Leave! Now!

**Milady**

Dear God! I am lost... I am lost...

*(Felton rushes from the room -- a madman.  Milady grabs the knife and rushes for de Winter who throws her to the floor and leaves the room.  Time passes... D’Artagnan & Aramis are discovered.)*

**D’Artagnan**

Where can they be!

**Aramis**

Four good horses are not so easy to find. Ours are nearly ridden to death.

**D’Artagnan**

So close… So close… By tomorrow perhaps -- or surely by the day after…

**Aramis**

Here they are. Come on…

*(They run from the stage. Felton slips quietly into the room.)*

**Felton**

Not a sound! I am here to save you. Lord De Winter has sent me to Buckingham to sign the order for your captivity -- but I have other reasons for going there. There is a ship waiting for you, Milady. You will know it by the purple sail. It will bear you safely away from England.

**Milady**

But what of you -- my love... my life...
Felton

I have my own business with Buckingham. I will meet you on the boat by three o’clock. If I am not there by that hour, you must sail without me.

Milady

I could not... I cannot... There is no life without you. You must tell me. What will you do?

Felton

I do only what must be done. (He puts a hand to her lips and they steal from the room as the lights fade to black.)
Scene 5

(Buckingham’s chambers. The Duke has just emerged from his bath. Patrick enters.)

Patrick

My Lord, Mister Felton is here from Lord de Winter.

Buckingham

Send him in.

(Felton enters, Patrick retires.)

Felton

My Lord, I have brought the order of deportation for Milady de Winter. Will you sign it?

Buckingham

Give it to me.

Felton

Do you know Milady de Winter, my Lord? And you will still sign this?

Buckingham

Doubtless -- rather twice than once.

Felton

You would still sign that order? No! You will not. You will look into your soul and you will do justice to the lady!

Buckingham

I would do justice to her by sending her to the gallows.

Felton

Milady de Winter is an angel -- I know it. You know it -- and I demand her liberty of you.

Buckingham

Are you mad to speak to me thus?
Felton
You will hear me to the end. You have seduced this young girl. You have outraged and defiled her. Repair your crimes toward, let her go free and I will exact nothing else from you.

Buckingham
Exact from me? Withdraw sir, or I will have you placed in irons.

Felton
No! You will sign an order to liberate Milady de Winter. It is in God’s hands, my Lord.

Buckingham
Never!

(At the same moment, Felton draws his knife and Buckingham springs for his sword. But at that same moment, Patrick rushes in.)

Patrick
My Lord! A letter from Paris...

Buckingham
From Paris...

(Felton plunges the knife into Buckingham’s side. Buckingham falls into Patrick’s arms. Felton runs, but is met at the door by Lord de Winter. De Winter throws Felton to the ground and holds a pistol to his head.

de Winter
Too late by a minute, dear God, too late by a minute.

Buckingham
Patrick... Patrick, is it from her?

Patrick
Yes, my lord.

Buckingham
What has she written to me? Read it.
Patrick

“My Lord, as you say you love me, remove those great armaments which you are preparing against France. Put an end to this war, which it is whispered, you pursue only for love of me. Be careful too, of your life, which is menaced, and which will be dear to me from the moment I am not obliged to see an enemy in you. Forever, Anne.”

Buckingham

Is that all -- is there nothing else?

Patrick

At the bottom, my lord -- beside the seal -- she writes, “Know always that I love you.”

Buckingham

I loved her.
All the worlds beyond know how I loved her.
Never time enough, never near enough,
always yearning, always worlds apart
Never laughing, never touching,
Only grateful I could give my heart
And I loved her
Beyond vows and wars and countries
how I loved her.
Longing and praying, doing all that I could do
just in hope that she loved me too.

Felton

(looking from the window.)

Dear God, the purple sail! That’s her ship. What is the time, my Lord?

de Winter

The time? Are you mad?

Felton

I must know... What hour is it?

de Winter

It’s one o’clock by the tower.
Felton

She has sailed. Dear God, what have I done. She has sailed without me.

Buckingham

What can I send her? What can I give her... to remember me... Bring the box she gave me...

(They sing, their phrases overlapping.)

Felton

I loved her.
With an unbroken bond
I loved her.
Never time enough, never near enough,
So much regret.

Buckingham

I loved her
All the worlds beyond
know how I loved her.
So little time...
always yearning, always worlds apart.

Felton

Never laughing, never touching,
Giving my heart...
And I loved her!
Beyond vows and wars and countries,
how I loved her.
Longing and praying,
It was all I could do
just in hope that she loved me too.

Buckingham

Never a touch...
Only grateful I could give my heart
I loved her!
Over seas and over mountains,
And dreaming and craving,
doing all I could do
She loved me
How she loved me too.

Buckingham

(Handing Patrick the bloody knife in the box that had contained the diamond studs.)

Send her this. It is all I can see now.

(Felton breaks down on his knees. Buckingham dies, Patrick sobs over the body, sobbing.)

Patrick

My Lord...

Felton

So God has willed it.

de Winter

Be punished alone for what you’ve done. But I swear to you that your accomplice is not saved.

(Felton looks desperately out to sea...)
Scene 6

(The Convent at Bethune. Milady, dressed as a novice, is chatting with Rochefort who is pouring wine.)

Milady

How quickly you’ve come, my dear count. You must have flown on receiving my letter.

Rochefort

Your note wasn’t clear. I had to be sure.

Milady

Quiet. Come closer. Buckingham’s ship will not sail. He is dead.

Rochefort

Buckingham dead?

Milady

Or grievously wounded. You must get word to his eminence.

Rochefort

I’ll ride to Paris tonight. You’ve been busy, my dear. Is there anything else?

Milady

Beg that His Eminence remember of our bargain. Two men must be arrested and placed within the Bastille. The first is named D’Artagnan, the other one Athos. Tell him I have proof of their treason. The other two he need not worry about. Aramis knows nothing. Porthos is a fool.

Rochefort

Good. Is that all? Let me sure I have everything: Buckingham dead. D’Artagnan and Athos to prison. Aramis of no consequence. Porthos a fool.

Milady

Your memory is amazing. Commend me to his Eminence.

Rochefort

Commend me to Satan.
(Rochefort leaves. A moment later, The Abbess enters.)

Abbess

Your young friend has been waiting to see you, She’s looking quite wan. See if you can help her my dear.

Milady

Of course I will. Ask her in.

Constance

Excuse me, my friend. I was waiting for your visitor to leave. Can we speak?

Milady

Surely, come in. Sit down my dear. You’re so frail.

Constance

I’ve been so ill... I’ve hardly been able to eat... What a blessing you have come here too.

Milady

We have both been hunted and betrayed by the Cardinal have we not? It is only natural that we should become as sisters -- closer even than sisters.

Constance

I can hardly believe that I finally have a friend here that I can trust -- another who serves the queen.

Milady

And as her majesty suffers, so her friends suffer. I just hope that in all her troubles, the queen has not forgotten her poor servants.

Constance

Oh no. I know she has not. That is what I have come to tell you! I have just received a letter that assures me I am not forgotten.

Milady

A letter?
Constance

You see, I shall not be here much longer.

Milady

Indeed?

Constance

Her majesty has written that someone is coming for me. My only hope... He will be here soon.

Milady

Someone is coming? Coming for you? Who? When?

Constance

D’Artagnan is his name. He’s a soldier in the king’s guards. He may arrive any moment -- tonight at the latest. But it is sure to be today. Here! Read it...

Milady

Here you say? But what... But are you sure... How do you know this isn’t some trap?

Constance

Trap? What do you mean?

Milady

You have only received a letter -- His Eminence is wily. His forgers are excellent. What if it isn’t your lover who comes to rescue you -- but the Cardinal’s men, coming to take you away?

Constance

God! I never thought of such a thing. But how will I know? If the Cardinal takes me again...

Milady

I am here for you. I will help you. I just have to think. Things are moving too quickly. I must have a moment to think.

Constance

What will I do? How will I know?
Milady

Never fear. I won’t leave you. I will wait here with you. If it is a trick of his Eminence, we will escape together. If only there were more time we could...

(There is some commotion without.)

Constance

Do you hear? Could he be here already?

Milady

(Rushing to the window as Constance rises)

Men’s voices... Stay back! They mustn’t see you until we are sure who it is...

(The Abbess enters.)

Abbess

Constance? There are men here for you -- beating at the gate...

Constance

Gentlemen? For me? Tell them... Tell them...

Milady

Tell them she will be there in a moment. She has to collect her things.

Abbess

Very well. They must stay outside. We’ll miss you, my dear. Hurry now.

(The Abbess kisses Constance and leaves.)

Constance

It is him. It must be him.

Milady

No! Dear God! Wait! I can see them clearly now. It is the uniform of the Cardinal’s guards.

Constance

No! God, no! It must be D’Artagnan. Please, tell me it’s him...

Milady

No. Mother of God! They’re forcing their way in. Hurry!
Constance

What?

Milady

Hurry, you fool! Come with me. We’ll escape through the garden.

Constance

You go on. I can’t seem to breathe... God, don’t let me faint now.

Milady

For the last time... Will you come!

Constance

My legs have failed me. Go on alone. Save yourself!

Milady

Leave you here? Never!

(In a frenzy, Milady grabs the Abbess’ wine glass from the table and empties the contents of her ring into it.)

Here. Drink this. It will give you strength.

(Constance does.)

This is not the way I wished to avenge myself. But my faith! We do what we can!

D’Artagnan

(off)

Constance? Constance!

Constance

D’Artagnan?

(Milady makes her escape out the back as Constance slumps to her chair, breathing heavily. In rush enter D’Artagnan, Athos, Porthos, Aramis and Planchet.)

D’Artagnan! Thank God it’s you. Oh, my love. You’re here. You’re finally here. She told me it was someone else.

Athos

She? What “She?”
Constance

Why my friend... She just ran, thinking you were from the Cardinal.

D’Artagnan

Constance, her name... What was her name?

Constance

Yes... The abbess told me... But I feel so... I can’t quite see you...

D’Artagnan

Your hands are so cold. Athos! What’s wrong? She is ill. God, she’s losing her senses...

(Athos is holding up the fatal glass.)

Athos

God could not allow such a thing.

D’Artagnan

Water! Please... Athos... Someone get her water...

Constance

I’m all right. Don’t worry for me.

D’Artagnan

Yes! Yes, you look better now. Thank God. But this woman. Tell us her name.

Constance

Why it was Milady. Milady de Winter.

D’Artagnan

No!

Planchet

Master...

Athos

Dear God.

Constance

Please. Hold me, my love. I’m so cold... Why is it suddenly so cold?

D’Artagnan

Hold on. Hold on to me. I’ll warm you. We’ll make everything right. I promise you. Just keep holding on.
Constance

It’s enough… Just to look at you… Just to hold you one more tome. If you only knew… If there were just words to tell you how much…

D’Artagnan

Spoken without speaking, in your faith, you give your love. Deep inside your eyes, I see your heart too clearly.

D’Artagnan and Constance

That you only clutch my hand for love of me. Twist deep into my soul for love of me. Every word, every breath, from this moment ‘till death. //

D’Artagnan

Is only for love of you.

Constance

I’ll wait for you, my love. Always.

(She kisses D’Artagnan and dies. D’Artagnan throws himself across her body, sobbing. Lord de Winter bursts into the room and stops dead.)

de Winter

May God protect us. Gentlemen. Please… I am in search of a woman. She must have passed this way, because I see death is here.

Aramis

Who are you?

de Winter

I am Lord de Winter. Brother-in-law of that woman.

Porthos

How did you…

de Winter

I set out five hours after her from Portsmouth. I arrived three hours after her at Boulogne. I
missed her by twenty minutes at St. Omer. That was when I recognized Monsieur d’Artagnan
galloping past. I tried to catch you, but you... But I see, in spite of everything, I am too late. Too late again.

(Athos picks up d’Artagnan and hugs him as D’Artagnan sobs on his shoulder like a baby.)

Athos

Dry your eyes and hear me, my friend. Women weep. Men avenge themselves.

D’Artagnan

Yes! Yes. She can’t have gone far. We’ll find her...

Athos

Yes. Rest easy. We will find her. If there is still a God in heaven, we will find her.
Scene 7

(A small house in the woods. Outside, a storm is building. There is no rain, but a strong wind is blowing with occasional lightning in the sky with an ominous rumble of thunder. Milady sits writing at a small table with a single candle burning. D’Artagnan bursts through the window. Milady screams and rushes for the door, but when she opens it, Athos is there. Again she shrieks and backs away but is met by Lord de Winter, who has entered from the back. Planchet enters behind D’Artagnan; Aramis and Porthos behind Athos.)

Milady

(Turning wildly from one to the other.)

What do you want!

Athos

We want Charlotte Backson, who first was called Comtesse de la Fère, and afterwards Milady de Winter, Baroness of Sheffield.

Milady

You know that is I. What do you want with me?

Athos

We wish to judge you according to your crime. You’re free to defend yourself. Justify yourself if you can. D’Artagnan. You have first right.

D’Artagnan

Before God and before men:
I accuse this woman of murder
Of the poisoning of Constance Bonacieux who died last night.
And whom I loved.

Lord de Winter

Before God and before men:
I call this woman a conspirator,
In the murder of the Duke of Buckingham.
I call this woman a harlot,
In the seduction of Felton, my friend.  
And I call this woman to account:  
My sister -- how did your husband die?  
Assassin of Buckingham, Assassin of Felton  
Assassin of my brother...  
I demand justice upon you.  
And I swear that if it not be granted,  
I will perform it myself.

Athos

I married that woman when she was a young girl.  
I gave her my wealth.  I gave her my name.  
She took from me my life.

D’Artagnan:  What is the penalty you demand against this woman?

D’Artagnan

The penalty of death.

Athos

My Lord de Winter:  What is the penalty you demand against this woman?

de Winter

The penalty of death.

Athos

Messieurs Porthos and Aramis, you who judge her,  
What is the penalty you pronounce upon this woman?

Porthos and Aramis

The penalty of death.

Athos

Charlotte Backson, Comtesse de la Fère, Milady de Winter:  
Your crimes have wearied men on earth and God in heaven.  
If you know a prayer, say it -- for you are condemned,  
and this night you shall die.  

(Milady opens her mouth to speak, but no words will come.  The storm building, the men take her from the room, Athos and D’Artagnan leading,)
Planchet and de Winter holding Milady on each side, Porthos and Aramis following. In half-darkness, with lightning flashing, they come to the banks of a river. There they stop. Porthos and Aramis bind her hands and feet as she screams into the storm.

Milady
You are cowards, miserable assassins -- six men combined to murder one woman. Beware! If I am not saved, I shall be avenged.

Athos
You are not a woman. You are not of the human species. You are a demon escaped from hell, we only send you back again.

Milady
If I am guilty, take me before a tribunal. You are not judges! You cannot condemn me!

de Winter
I offered you Tyburn. Why did you not accept it?

Milady
Because I am not willing to die! Because I’m too young to die!

Planchet
My master’s lady was even younger.

Milady
(A final, long, agonized cry from the soul as she sinks to her knees.)

No!!

D’Artagnan
Must it be here? Like this?

Milady
D’Artagnan! D’Artagnan! Remember that I loved you!
Athos

One more step and we shall cross swords.  
(D’Artagnan sinks to his knees, head bowed.)
I pardon you the ill you have done me.  I pardon you my blasted future, my lost honor, my defiled love.  I even pardon you my despair.  Die in peace.

Lord de Winter

I pardon you the poisoning of my brother, the assassination of the Duke of Buckingham, for the death of poor Felton.  Die in peace.

D’Artagnan

I pardon you for the murder of my love, and for your vengeance against me.  I pardon you and I weep for you.  Die in peace.

Milady

In the name of God!  Will no one save me?

Athos

It is over.  
(Milady slumps forward, her head bowed.  
Porthos and Aramis kneel, crossing themselves.  
Athenos raises his sword overhead.)
Let the justice of God be done.  
(With a final flash of lightning and deafening crash of thunder, Athos brings down the sword with all his might as the stage goes black.)
Scene 8

(The Cardinal’s chambers. D’Artagnan is conducted into the room by Rochefort.)

Richelieu

Monsieur, you have been arrested by my orders.

D’Artagnan

So they tell me, monseigneur.

Richelieu

Do you know why?

D’Artagnan

No, I do not, for the only thing of which I am guilty is still unknown to your Eminence.

Richelieu

What does that mean?

D’Artagnan

If Monseigneur will tell me what crimes I am accused of, then I well tell you of what crimes I am guilty.

Richelieu

You are charged with having corresponded with the enemies of the kingdom. You are charged with having given out state secrets. You are charged, in short, with treason.

D’Artagnan

And who charges me with this, monseigneur? A woman branded by the justice of the country? A woman who has espoused one man in France and another in England? A woman who has committed murder more times than can be counted?

Richelieu

What do you say, monsieur? Of whom do you speak thus?

D’Artagnan

Of Milady de Winter, of whose crimes, your Eminence is doubtless ignorant since you have
honored her with your confidence.

Richelieu

Monsieur: If Milady de Winter is guilty of these crimes, she will be punished.

D’Artagnan

She has been punished, Monsieur.

Richelieu

And who has punished her?

D’Artagnan

We.

Richelieu

She is in prison?

D’Artagnan

She is dead.

Richelieu

Dead! Did you say she was dead?

D’Artagnan

Three times she tried to kill me and three times I pardoned her. She then killed the woman I loved. And so my friends and I took her, tried her and condemned her.

Richelieu

So, you have constituted yourself judges, knowing that they who punish without license to punish are assassins?

D’Artagnan

Monseigneur. I have no intention of defending myself. I submit to whatever punishment you see fit to inflict. I no longer hold life dear enough to be afraid of death.

Richelieu

I can assure you beforehand that you will be tried -- even condemned.
D’Artagnan

Another might say that he held his pardon in his pocket. I say only: do what you must.

Richelieu

Your pardon?

D’Artagnan

Yes, Monseigneur.

Richelieu

And signed by whom -- the king?

D’Artagnan

No. By your Eminence.

Richelieu

By myself? You are insane.  

(D’Artagnan hands the Cardinal the carte blanche Athos took from Milady.)

Richelieu

“December third, sixteen twenty-seven. It is by my order and for the good of the state that the bearer of this has done what has been done. Richelieu.”

(There is a long silence while Richelieu contemplates. Then, coming to a decision, he rips the carte blanche in half. He then writes a few lines on another piece of paper.)

Here monsieur: I have taken from you one carte blanche to give you another. Only the name is wanting. You may write it yourself.

D’Artagnan

This... Monseigneur. This is a commission to the rank of lieutenant in the Kings’ musketeers...

Richelieu

I am aware. I just wrote it.

D’Artagnan

Monseigneur, my life is yours to do with what you will. But... There are others more deserving
of this favor than I.

Richelieu

The name is blank. Give it to whom you will. But remember that it was to you it was given -- by me.

D’Artagnan

I shall never forget it. You may be certain of that.

Richelieu

You are a brave youth, D’Artagnan. I shall count upon you.

(D’Artagnan leaves the cardinal’s rooms deep in thought.)
Scene 9

(Athos’ rooms. Athos paces as Porthos and Aramis sit nervously. D’Artagnan enters.)

Aramis

You’re free!

Athos

What happened?

Porthos

We were ready to storm the palace...

D’Artagnan

The Cardinal has given me this.

(He hands the commission to Athos.)

Porthos

What is it?

Athos

A commission. A lieutenant’s commission in the King’s musketeers.

D’Artagnan

Take it, Athos. It is yours. You have earned it.

Athos

My friend, for Athos this is too much. For the Comte de la Fère it is too little. Keep the commission, my friend. God knows you’ve purchased it dearly enough.

D’Artagnan

Then Porthos, what about you? Surely a lieutenant’s uniform would suit you splendidly...

Porthos

Yes. Yes, that would flatter me very much. But as I was just telling these gentlemen, I’m about to be married. I’ll be leaving the service of the King in favor of that of a rich widow. I am tired. Take the commission. I have less trying business at my tailor’s. Stay well my friend.
(Porthos hugs D'Artagnan and leaves.)

D’Artagnan

Aramis?

Aramis

After what has passed? No. I’m returning to how I began. Next week I enter the order of the Jesuits. Keep this, D’Artagnan. The profession of arms suits you. You’ll make an excellent captain. I only waited to see you safe. Take care my friend.

(He too, hugs D’Artagnan and leaves.)

D’Artagnan

You have all refused me.

Athos

Because this could only be yours. Allow me.

(Athos takes the paper and writes in D’Artagnan’s name.)

D’Artagnan

But everyone is gone... Nothing is as I had planned. I had such dreams... My love is gone. Now my friends are gone, and I am left with nothing. Nothing but bitter memories.

Athos

You are wrong. You are young. And your biter memories still have the time to change themselves into sweet remembrances. Remember... Always remember. Live your life, do your duty, trust whom you trust, Fight all the battles, do what you must, but always remember.

Think of the good, in time the bad may fall away. Yes, there are wounds that won’t heal, try however you may, but even the darkest may lighten someday. That is how we remember.

Remember all those -- every one who was dear. And always remember your life As a musketeer.

(D’Artagnan rests his head on his friend’s
shoulder, lost in thought as other characters are seen -- each in their own space.)

Buckingham

Remember...

Anne

I shall always love you.

Buckingham

Though we’re apart, know how each night I kiss you.

Ann

Remembering...

Buckingham

Just remember me,

Anne

Counting each day, every hour I miss you.

Buckingham

If you’ll only remember.

Richelieu

We do what we can with the years that we have.
Time will judge us -- who can know.
Never forgetting that while we are here,
how much we can change... the ways that we can go.
Remember.

Constance

Remembering me. Remember I’ll always be waiting.

Milady

Remember me too. I’ll always be part of you... never too far.
A part of what makes you whoever you are.
de Winter

Remember! A life of adventure, leading the best.

Felton

Remember. Doing what’s right when you’re put to the test.

Felton & de Winter

Remember. Remembering the good you have done, forgetting the rest.

(By now Athos & D’Artagnan are barely seen. D’Artagnan sits, crying silently. The commission he once so longed for is now crumpled in his fist.)

The company except Athos & D’Artagnan

Live your life, do your duty, trust whom you trust, fight all the battles, do what you must, but always remember.

Planchet

I know you’ll always remember me, master.

Rochefort

And me -- how could you forget?

The Company except D’Artagnan & Athos

Think of the good, in time the bad may fall away. Yes, there are wounds that won’t heal, try however you may, but even the darkest may lighten someday.

Planchet & Richelieu

That is how we remember.

Constance

Heartaches and loss become only great loves to be cherished No, you won’t forget the ones who have perished...

Aramis & Porthos

In the passage of time the most frightful of crimes will seem only a great
adventure...

Milady

And that’s what to remember.
Always remember...

The company except Athos & D’Artagnan

Good times and bad, all the heartbreaks you’ve had will return a treasured adventure.
Those who have gone, in your heart will live on,
And that’s what we must always remember.

Athos

Remember all those -- every one who was dear.
And always remember your life...

D’Artagnan

I’ll always remember my life...
As a musketeer.

(D’Artagnan slowly uncrumplies the commission to the King’s Musketeers. He looks at it with new found hope as the music swells and the stage fades to black.)