

THE THREE MUSKETEERS

by

Alexander Dumas

in a new adaptation by

Ken Ludwig

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Cast of Characters

Men

D'Artagnan

Athos

Porthos

Aramis

Cardinal Richelieu

Rocheport/Stanley

King Louis XIII / D'Artagnan's father / Basille / Fouquet / Fache

Treville / Duke of Buckingham / Ravanche / Ruffian / Inkeeper/ DeBris

Women

Sabine

Milady/Old Woman

Constance Bonacieux / Adele / Sister at school

Queen Anne / D'Artagnan's mother / Elise / Mother Superior / Abbess

Synopsis of Scenes

Act One

- Scene 1: Outside a farmhouse in Gascony, a spring day in 1625
- Scene 2: Outside the Cardinal's Palace, that night
- Scene 3: The village of Mauriac, the next day
- Scene 4: The house of M. de Treville, the next day
- Scene 5: The street below, immediately following
- Scene 6: A garden at the Royal Palace, a few minutes later
- Scene 7: Behind the Luxembourg Palace, that night
- Scene 8: A tavern, immediately following
- Scene 9: A room in the Cardinal's Palace, the next day
- Scene 10: The courtyard of the Cardinal's palace, immediately following
- Scene 11: The Convent of the Sacred Heart, a few minutes later

Act Two

- Scene 1: A room in the Royal Palace, a few weeks later
- Scene 2: The Cardinal's Palace, an hour later
- Scene 3: Various locations on the way to London
- Scene 4: The Duke of Buckingham's Palace outside London, a few days later
- Scene 5: The ballroom at the Royal Palace, a few days later
- Scene 6: A terrace outside the ballroom, immediately following
- Scene 7: At the Siege of La Rochelle and a farmhouse nearby, a few weeks later
- Scene 8: A street in Paris, two days later
- Scene 9: The Carmelite Convent at Bethune, a few days later
- Scene 10: The garden at the Royal Palace, soon thereafter

ACT ONEScene One

The stage is empty and the lights are up. Suddenly, with a loud cry, TWO MEN burst into view. They fight in the aisle of the theatre, then onto the stage, coming perilously close to maiming each other for life. This duel is in earnest. Indeed, we might even think that the men are two actors from our play who have gotten into an argument and grabbed two production swords.

However, as the two men fight, the set forms around them, and soon we're outside a farmhouse in Gascony in the spring of 1625. The men continue to fight furiously. One of them is 18 years old, the other in his late 40s. Both are simply dressed, as yeomen. At first one has the advantage, then the other. They really go at it hammer and tongs, grunting, shouting and crying out, each trying desperately to kill the other with all his might. At last, the older man gets the advantage, disarms the youth, and holds the point of his sword at the young man's throat. The young man quails for a moment ... then breaks into a smile.

His name is D'ARTAGNAN. He is Youth. He is Hope. He has all the traits you would expect of a young hero, and he's rebellious enough to make them interesting.

D'ARTAGNAN

Father, how do you *do* that?! It's like a magic trick.

FATHER

Misdirection, son. Get your opponent to lose his focus, then move like lightning. *Hey! Snap! Ha!*

(He's done it again.)

If you want to conquer worlds, concentrate. Draw your mind to the center, like a magnet. Couple that with common sense, a will to succeed and, above all, a kind heart, and you'll be a great man as I predict.

D'ARTAGNAN

Like my father.

(They embrace.)

FATHER

It's time you were going.

D'ARTAGNAN

Did you leave home at my age, sir?

FATHER

Yes, and for the same reason. To be a musketeer.

D'ARTAGNAN

I dream about it every night. Fighting duels, defending the King, standing up to the Cardinal and his –

FATHER

Stop.

D'ARTAGNAN

What?

FATHER

Never say that. You do not want Cardinal Richelieu as your enemy.

D'ARTAGNAN

But he opposes the King at every turn. They say he has spies everywhere! That his dungeon is filled with hundreds of (prisoners) –

FATHER

Just stay away from him! If, by the grace of God, you become a musketeer some day, your job is to defend the King and protect the Queen.

D'ARTAGNAN

But the Cardinal's their enemy.

FATHER

Not openly. He wouldn't dare. Just do your duty and never *ever* engage the Cardinal directly. *Is that clear?*

D'ARTAGNAN

Yes, sir.

(grumbles)

Unless he starts it first ...

(Father shakes his head. Children ...)

FATHER

Here. Take my sword. You'll need it.

D'ARTAGNAN

(overwhelmed)

Father ...

FATHER

Use it well, to fight for justice. For justice, like mercy, is divine and deserves your courage. Always stand up for what you believe in. Never back down unless you're wrong. If a man insults you, turn the other cheek. If he insults you again, kill him. Make courage your watchword. But courage is more than arms and legs. It takes courage to be yourself, so do it. Above all things, live a life of honor. Honor the people you love, the ideals you cherish and the man inside you.

D'ARTAGNAN

I promise.

FATHER

Now a few parting gifts and you're on your way. Twenty-five crowns. Say nothing. I wish it were more. Second, a letter, recommending you to Monsieur de Treville.

D'ARTAGNAN

Your old friend.

FATHER

Now Captain of the Musketeers.

D'ARTAGNAN

Oh I know! They say that he's fought hundreds of duels in the King's service. They say the King relies on him for everything. They say –

FATHER

“They say, they say.” He was my *schoolmate*. We were lads together. And he will help you thread the needle of Paris. Now keep this safe.

D'ARTAGNAN

Yes, father.

FATHER

Third, I want to give you ...

(he gets tears in his eyes)

I want you to have something that ...

(he can hardly speak for the emotion)

it's my beloved ...

SABINE

To take on the world, father. My bags are packed, my affairs in order, and I look on life as my own small oyster.

D'ARTAGNAN

What's going on?

FATHER

Sabine is going with you to Paris.

D'ARTAGNAN

What?!

FATHER

I've arranged for her schooling. She's my daughter! I want her to read and write. And I want you to get her there and protect her on the way.

D'ARTAGNAN

But I-I'll look ridiculous, entering Paris with a little sister. And I'll have enough to worry about without playing nursemaid to some ...

SABINE

I trust, brother, that I shall be no burden to you, but rather do your bidding as you require.

(Father and Mother turn to d'Artagnan as if to say "Do you see?"
With her parents turned away, Sabine sticks her tongue out at
d'Artagnan and makes a face.)

D'ARTAGNAN

That's it, I'll kill her –

(D'Artagnan chases Sabine until Father grabs him by the ear.)

FATHER

Do you do as I ask?! Or do you dishonor the ancient name "d'Artagnan"?

D'ARTAGNAN

As you wish, father.

FATHER

Fine then. Be off with you.

MOTHER

Blubber, blubber, blubber.