

The title 'MILADY' is rendered in a large, black, serif font. A diagonal line, representing the shaft of a quill pen, cuts across the letters from the bottom left to the top right. The tip of the quill is positioned at the top right of the letter 'Y', where it holds a red fleur-de-lis. The letters 'M', 'I', 'L', 'A', 'D', and 'Y' are spaced out along the shaft of the quill.

M I L A D Y

**Adaptation and dialogue**

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**Based on the novel by Alexandre Dumas**

**A film by Martin Bourboulon**

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NOTE: The film opens on a "previously" recalling the essentials from the first film. The attempted on the king's life. The declaration of war. The imminent departure for La Rochelle. It ends on the kidnapping of Constance and the shot of d'Artagnan unconscious on the ground.

THE THREE MUSKETEERS

Chapter 2

- MILADY -

**INT./EXT. COFFIN/ROAD - DAY**

D'Artagnan wakes with a start.

He tries to sit up but hits his head hard on something wooden. He has been locked up in a dark box!

It's a coffin that has been loaded on to an old hearse driven on a road by Ardanza.

**EXT. LOUVRE - DAY**

Captain de Tréville rides into the courtyard of the Louvre, escorted by several Musketeers.

**INT. LOUVRE - COUNCIL CHAMBER - DAY**

Louis XIII, his face stern and his eyes betray an anger quite unlike him. Richelieu and Tréville are with him.

RICHELIEU

Achille Brandicourt and Nicolas Beaumont, the perpetrators of the attempt on Your Majesty's life, were found murdered in their cells this morning.

DE TRÉVILLE

Did they have time to confess? And reveal the secret of their code?

RICHELIEU

Unfortunately, no.

DE TRÉVILLE

This could not have happened without help on the inside. Sire, I beg you not to leave Paris until we discover the leader of this plot.

RICHELIEU

But isn't it in Paris, Captain, that the threat is most dire?

Tréville can barely hide his annoyance.

DE TRÉVILLE

We couldn't protect two prisoners inside the Châtelet. And you want His Majesty to set out on the highway, exposing himself to his enemies?

RICHELIEU

In this period of confusion, the King and France must be seen and never tremble.

Tréville turns to the King.

DE TRÉVILLE

All your officers, Sire, entreat you, as King David's captains once said, "Go no more with us to battle, that thou quench not the light of Israel."

RICHELIEU

You're quoting the Old Testament, I prefer the New. "No man taketh my life; I lay it down myself".

The King rises.

LOUIS XIII

It's sometimes painful to do one's duty but never so painful as to have failed to do it. I shall go to La Rochelle and Gaston shall command. And so, I hope, the light of France will shine through.

**EXT. ATHOS COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT**

Athos ride through a village in the cold night.

**EXT. CHÂTEAU DE LA FÈRE - NIGHT**

Athos rides slowly on to a large estate. At the end of a long lane of willows, a castle appears, with lights in several windows.

Athos turns. On a small rise far away on the grounds, the cross atop a tomb is silhouetted against the moon.

**INT. CHÂTEAU DE LA FÈRE - NIGHT**

Athos sheds his jacket in the vestibule. Despite the candles, there is something ghostly and abandoned about the huge manor.

Footsteps. A short woman (MARGUERITE, 70) steps out of the shadows, rifle in her hand. Recognizing Athos, she lowers her guard.

MARGUERITE

Bejesus! You scared me out of my wits, Your Lordship! Are you mad showin' up without warning!

ATHOS

Good evening, Marguerite.

MARGUERITE

And there's nothing for supper! Your bed's not made up! And...

ATHOS

Where is he?

Marguerite goes quiet.

MARGUERITE

In his room, sir.

**INT. CHÂTEAU DE LA FÈRE - JOSEPH'S ROOM - NIGHT**

A door opens on a small dark bedroom. Athos pads silently inside. He walks slowly to a single bed.

His steady eyes settle on a sleeping boy, about 7 years old.

This is JOSEPH. His son.

**EXT. COMTE DE CHALAIS' CHATEAU - NIGHT**

In the darkness, fires gleam, tents, and a château. The hearse coach, still carrying the coffin with d'Artagnan inside, rolls past soldiers in bivouac.

The coach approaches an medieval château with its drawbridge lowered over a black-water moat.

**INT. D'ARTAGNAN'S COFFIN - NIGHT**

D'Artagnan is rattling around inside the coffin. A few rays of light through the gaps.

Suddenly, the carriage stops. Muffled voices. Footsteps drawing closer.

ARDANZA (O.S.)  
(to a henchman:)  
Put him in irons.

D'Artagnan goes stock still. The coffin is tossed on the ground. It is dragged along the dirt. Silence returns. Footsteps. Then the characteristic sound of a crowbar being applied under the lid in order to remove it.

Light pours in all of a sudden. The face of a SOLDIER leaning over d'Artagnan, who suddenly kicks him in the head.

**INT. PANTRY - COMTE DE CHALAIS' CHATEAU - NIGHT**

D'Artagnan makes for the door as fast as he can. He sees Ardanza in the distance, going inside the château.

**INT. COMTE DE CHALAIS' CHATEAU - VESTIBULE - CORRIDORS - NIGHT**

D'Artagnan has stolen a soldier's clothing. He walks up a staircase. He walks silently down a hallway that feels more like a dungeon. Coats of arms, swords, daggers and various awe-inspiring weapons seem to be standing guard.

Distant, muffled voices are coming from inside an office. D'Artagnan walks silently to the service doorway.

**INT. COMTE DE CHALAIS' CHATEAU - OFFICE - NIGHT**

POV d'Artagnan: Comte de Chalais is inside with Ardanza.

ARDANZA  
She hasn't talked?

CHALAIS  
Not a word.

ARDANZA  
Mayeul questioned her?

CHALAIS  
She bit him so hard she practically  
took his finger off.

D'Artagnan is astounded. Could he be speaking of Constance?

CHALAIS (CONT'D)  
Go down to the kitchen, they'll get  
you something to eat. Get your  
strength back, you'll need it to  
face that devil woman.

ARDANZA  
She'll talk. So will the Musketeer.

CHALAIS  
I have no doubt.

ARDANZA  
Good night, sir.

Ardanza walks out.

**INT. COMTE DE CHALAIS' CHATEAU - OFFICE - NIGHT**

Chalais leans over his desk, littered with papers. A knock at  
the service door.

CHALAIS  
Yes?

Another knock. Annoyed, Chalais walks to the door, opens it.  
A dagger is stuck under his chin.

D'ARTAGNAN  
(low voice)  
Not a sound.

Chalais holds his breath.

D'ARTAGNAN (CONT'D)  
Let's go see your prisoner. If I  
were you, I'd meet as few people as  
possible along the way.

**INT. CHATEAU - STAIRWAY - NIGHT**

D'Artagnan walks Chalais at knifepoint down a winding staircase. They speak in whispers.

CHALAIS

Do you know who I am?

D'ARTAGNAN

I have no idea, and I don't much care. Move!

CHALAIS

If you knew my name, perhaps you'd be in less of a hurry.

D'ARTAGNAN

Then tell me who's at the point of my dagger.

CHALAIS

Henri de Talleyrand Périgord. Comte de Chalais. Leader of the Catholic League!

D'ARTAGNAN

So many words for such a small person.

CHALAIS

I can make you a rich man or a dead man.

D'ARTAGNAN

I can only make you a dead man, so don't try anything. Come on.

D'Artagnan nudges the count in the side with his dagger.

**INT. COMTE DE CHALAIS' CHATEAU - CELLS - NIGHT**

D'Artagnan and Chalais walk into a damp recess lit by torches. A man is standing guard outside a door.

D'Artagnan prods the Count from behind with his dagger.

CHALAIS

Take us to the prisoner.

CUT TO:

A hallway with an arched ceiling, very low.

The guard stops outside a cell and opens the lock. D'Artagnan grabs Chalais around the neck and shows his dagger.

D'ARTAGNAN  
(to the guard:)  
Easy, friend. Get inside.

The guard does as he's told. He pushes the door open... goes inside the cell with his hands out. D'Artagnan pushes the count and follows him inside.

A young woman is chained up in the shadows, facing the wall.

D'ARTAGNAN (CONT'D)  
Constance!

The young woman turns around. D'Artagnan freezes. It's Milady de Winter!

D'ARTAGNAN (CONT'D)  
...!

MILADY  
Careful!

In the instant of d'Artagnan's astonishment, Chalais runs off. The guard rushes d'Artagnan but he gets a right to the jaw for his trouble. The guard goes down.

MILADY (CONT'D)  
Hurry!

D'Artagnan hesitates once again, then flips his dagger to Milady and takes the guard's keys.

MILADY (CONT'D)  
Quickly!

**INT. COMTE DE CHALAIS' CHATEAU - COURTYARD - NIGHT**

D'Artagnan and Milady come rushing out into the courtyard. D'Artagnan, sword drawn, runs toward the stables, suddenly realizes he is alone. He looks around - Milady is running in the opposite direction, toward the château.

D'ARTAGNAN  
?!?

D'Artagnan takes off again after her, a bunch of soldiers on his tail.

D'ARTAGNAN (CONT'D)  
What are you doing?!



Milady doesn't answer, runs toward the door. They pile inside.

**INT. CHATEAU - HALLWAY - NIGHT**

D'Artagnan and Milady bound down a hallway while Chalais' men start breaking down the door. It won't hold very long.

MILADY  
Hold them off!

Milady races back down the hall. D'Artagnan, breathless, positions himself in front of the door, in good balance, sword out and ready to fight.

The door suddenly gives way. A growl. The snout of a dog appears in the jamb.

D'ARTAGNAN  
(screaming:)  
Aaaaah!

D'Artagnan turns around and starts running away full out. He's running so fast that he catches up to Milady, then passes her.

D'ARTAGNAN (CONT'D)  
Sorry! Dogs - I can't!

The barking is getting closer. Milady barely has time to tear off a piece of her dress and wrap it around her arm when the dog leaps at her. She buries her wrapped arm in his snout and, with the other hand, stabs it with the dagger.

She catches her breath, but Chalais' soldiers come rushing up. She is about to be captured but d'Artagnan doubles back, armed with a halberd and yelling for all he's worth.

Milady and d'Artagnan fight side by side. Milady wields her sword expertly, felling several soldiers.

They manage to drive them back and continue on their way. But the soldiers' footsteps are hot on their heels.

**INT. CHATEAU - CORRIDORS - COMTE DE CHALET'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

They run toward the count's office. Milady opens the door.

**INT. CHATEAU - COMTE DE CHALET'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

Milady rushes to the fireplace and grabs a poker. Footsteps grow more present.

MILADY  
(mocking)  
So did we get a nasty bite as a  
boy, d'Artagnan?

D'Artagnan shrugs, a little ashamed. He slides a large shelf unit over to block the door.

Crack! Milady uses a poker to pry open the drawers, then searches them. Suddenly, her eyes light up. She seizes a leather pouch bearing the seal of the Comte de Chalet.

The guards are trying to force open the door.

D'ARTAGNAN  
What now?

Without a word, Milady walks to the window, opens both sides and... jumps through it!

D'ARTAGNAN (CONT'D)  
Again?!

D'Artagnan can't get over it but the door is starting to give way.

He takes a deep breath and runs through the window.

**EXT. CHATEAU - MOAT - NIGHT**

D'Artagnan takes a flying leap and falls directly into the dark water of the moat.

**INT. CHATEAU - COMTE DE CHALET'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

The door finally gives way. Ardanza leads the guards inside.

Chalet, livid, enters in turn. After a glance at the broken desk, he walks to the window. He looks at the dark water in the river.

CHALAIS  
(to Ardanza)  
Find them. And deliver their heads  
to La Rochelle.

**EXT. RIVER - INLET - NIGHT**

D'Artagnan and Milady approach the shore. They pull themselves out of the water, gasping for breath. Milady holds her hand up, protecting the leather pouch.

D'ARTAGNAN

What's in there that's so important?

MILADY

The name of the person who tried to kill the King.

D'Artagnan pretends to think this over.

D'ARTAGNAN

Let me guess. He's tall, dresses in red and he has a little beard?

She stands up and starts walking along the riverbank.

MILADY

You're handsome. Too bad you're so stupid.

D'ARTAGNAN

Hey! You might be more pleasant with the man who just saved your life.

MILADY

You weren't trying to save me, you were trying to save Constance Bonacieux.

D'Artagnan stops. Thrown.

D'ARTAGNAN

What?!

MILADY

She was kidnapped because she saw the faces of the traitors.

D'Artagnan is astounded.

D'ARTAGNAN

Where is she?!

MILADY

You'll have to find the Comte de Chalais and ask him.

**EXT. BRIDGE - NIGHT**

Ardanza and his men cross a bridge. There are a dozen of them, armed to the teeth. They split up into three groups.

**EXT. FOREST - NIGHT**

D'Artagnan and Milady walk through the forest.

An old two-story building appears in the darkness.

**INT. HUNTING LODGE - NIGHT**

All is silent. They slip inside the broken down lodge. It has obviously been abandoned for a good while.

CUT TO:

D'Artagnan throws a log into the fireplace.

MILADY

I went to the castle, saying I'd been attacked by bandits. That swine Chalais took the bait.

D'ARTAGNAN

Apparently not completely.

MILADY

I was ordered to fetch proof as quickly as possible. I was derelict in my duty.

Milady carefully dries Chalais' letters out, laying them flat on a chair. D'Artagnan examines them - a series of coded letters and numbers.

D'ARTAGNAN

Do you understand that?

MILADY

Not yet. But we'll figure it out sooner or later.

Milady starts removing her soaking wet clothing.

MILADY (CONT'D)

If you don't undress, you'll die of cold.

D'ARTAGNAN  
(uneasy)  
Don't worry about me.

MILADY  
If they come back, I'll need you  
alive.

D'ARTAGNAN  
Why would the head of the Catholic  
league be mixed up with  
protestants? It makes no sense.

She walks to d'Artagnan and forces him to take off his  
dripping wet jacket. He reluctantly lets her.

MILADY  
If you look upon courtly games with  
candid eyes, you'll always get it  
wrong. Appearances are always  
deceiving.

D'ARTAGNAN  
...?

MILADY  
Both sides want war. Only the King  
wants peace.

D'ARTAGNAN  
What about your Richelieu?

MILADY  
He protects the King against all of  
them, sometimes against himself.

D'ARTAGNAN  
(ironic)  
Like when we met in London?

MILADY  
Richelieu's power comes from the  
King. If the King falls, so does  
he. Why would he want to kill him?

They stare at one another. They are now both almost naked.  
D'Artagnan, a little uneasy, lowers his eyes.

MILADY (CONT'D)  
You can look death in the eye but  
you lower your eyes before a naked  
woman?

She takes off her shirt, now completely bare.

MILADY (CONT'D)

(amused)

What are you afraid of? Me or yourself?

D'ARTAGNAN

You're quite presumptuous. What makes you think I...

MILADY

Your eyes, your voice, your body. Everything makes me think so.

D'ARTAGNAN

Sorry, but my heart belongs to Constance.

MILADY

I'll settle for the rest.

She walks to him.

D'ARTAGNAN

Sorry. I cannot.

MILADY

If you love her, forget her. That may save her life.

She is very close.

MILADY (CONT'D)

We are killers, d'Artagnan. Whether you like it or not. Wherever we go, death is there as well.

D'ARTAGNAN

I'm not like you.

She touches his face. He takes a step back.

MILADY

You know very well you are. Let the devil take you. Heaven can wait.

D'ARTAGNAN

I want no part of your hell, Milady.

D'Artagnan grabs his soaking wet jacket and walks away.

MILADY

It won't ask what you want, d'Artagnan.

D'ARTAGNAN  
In the meantime, I'll take the  
first turn on watch.

Milady watches him go, wearing a strange smile.

**EXT. HUNTING LODGE - DAWN**

Dawn.

**INT. HUNTING LODGE - DAWN**

The sound of a chamber being armed. D'Artagnan opens one eye.  
There is a pistol in front of his face. It's Ardanza,  
whispering:

ARDANZA  
Where is she?

D'Artagnan looks around.

D'ARTAGNAN  
I don't know.

Ardanza grabs him by the hair and pulls him out of the bed.  
Not a trace of Milady anywhere in the room.

**EXT. HUNTING LODGE - YARD - DAWN**

In the yard, two horses. One of Ardanza's soldiers (Soldier  
1) is armed with a musket. Ardanza marches d'Artagnan outside  
and puts his pistol to the back of his skull.

ARDANZA  
(yelling)  
Hey!!! Can you hear me?! Milady de  
Winter! I know you can hear me!

Ardanza looks up at the outside of the house.

ARDANZA (CONT'D)  
You took something that doesn't  
belong to you. I'll give you ten  
seconds. Ten seconds to return what  
you've taken. Hear me? Otherwise  
your friend will pay with his life!

Ardanza cocks the pistol.

ARDANZA (CONT'D)

10! 9... 8... 7... 6... 5...  
4...3...2...

BANG! A shot rings out.

D'Artagnan freezes for a second, but it's the body of Soldier 1 that collapses. Milady is the one who fired. He uses the moment of confusion to upset Ardanza, whose gun fires harmlessly. They are both on the ground. They trade blows.

Punches, headbutts... It's very violent. They roll around on the ground. Ardanza takes the dagger from his belt, tries to stab d'Artagnan, who blocks his wrist. D'Artagnan rocks him over on his side, then rushes to Soldier 3's body and takes his dagger.

They are out of breath. They rush one another, daggers first. Ardanza gets the momentum, hits d'Artagnan and knocks him to the ground. But d'Artagnan's dagger is thrust into his belly.

Ardanza lets loose one last gasp.

They are lying one on top of the other. D'Artagnan, on the bottom, is too exhausted to move. He can hardly breathe. He finally pushes his adversary off and props himself up on all fours, catching his breath. The sound of hoofbeats draws his attention.

Milady, majestic upon a horse, locks down at him. The other horse is tethered behind her.

MILADY

The ending was a little long I thought.

D'ARTAGNAN

(out of breath)

You might have given me a hand.

MILADY

I never heard him bark.

They look at one another, d'Artagnan on his knees.

MILADY (CONT'D)

So long Musketeer. No hard feelings.

Before d'Artagnan has a chance to answer, Milady kicks her horse and rides off with the other horse in tow.

He watches her go, unable to suppress a smile.



From his breast pocket, D'Artagnan then pulls out... one of the coded letters.

D'ARTAGNAN  
No hard feelings.

He slips the letter under his shirt as he makes for the door. Milady is galloping away in the distance with the horses.

**EXT. CHÂTEAU DE LA FÈRE - TOMB - DAY**

The tombstone reads:

*"Here lies Anne de Breuil, wife of Hauteville, Countess of La Fère, who died on December 5, 1620 at the age of 28. Pray for her soul."*

Athos motions to little JOSEPH, who lays a bouquet of wild flowers at the tomb. He pays his respects a moment. Then JOSEPH, still staring at his mother's grave, asks:

JOSEPH  
Is it true you're going off to war?

ATHOS  
Yes. I came here to tell you goodbye.

JOSEPH  
So if there was no war, you wouldn't have come?

Beat. Athos makes no answer. He squats, eye to eye with his son.

ATHOS  
I'm a soldier, JOSEPH. That's what God has chosen for me. It's an honor. To be committed to something great, something larger than ourselves. But it's also a heavy load, a load I place on your shoulders, though you never asked for anything. I don't know when I'll return from La Rochelle.

JOSEPH struggles to contain his emotion.

ATHOS (CONT'D)  
If I die, please respect the one who killed me.

(MORE)

ATHOS (CONT'D)

Tell yourself that he, too, has a son and that he knows what it means to take a father from his son. But also know that I did not die for naught. And that you can bear your name with no shame. You, the future Comte de la Fère.

Beat. Father and son gaze at one another. After hesitating a moment, Joseph rushes into his father's arms.

JOSEPH

Promise me you'll come back.  
Promise me.

**INT. LOUVRE - KING'S COUNCIL - DAY**

Anne of Austria's pale complexion is reflected in the window. A few footsteps are heard and the King appears in the reflection.

ANNE OF AUSTRIA

Sire.

The King puts his hands on her shoulders. He looks at her.

LOUIS XIII

One day, a very good friend told me, "You are here but I can feel your mind is elsewhere."

The Queen smiles.

LOUIS XIII (CONT'D)

Have you no news of Miss Bonacieux?

The Queen takes the King's hands in her own.

ANNE OF AUSTRIA

I'm worried about her, but my heart skips when I think of you. They tried to kill you, and...

LOUIS XIII

I'm well guarded, never fear.

ANNE OF AUSTRIA

Your goodness blinds you. Beware of every man. And every woman.

LOUIS XIII

Even yourself?

ANNE OF AUSTRIA  
I shouldn't be offended if it's for  
your protection.

A knock on the door, which opens.

DOOR GUARD  
The King's Brother!

GASTON enters, in full armor, head to toe.

GASTON  
(turning to show off the  
armor)  
Look at this wonderful thing!

LOUIS XIII  
You thus resemble our father.

GASTON  
Madame...

ANNE OF AUSTRIA  
Gaston.

The Queen nods ever so slightly. Louis and Gaston embrace.

GASTON  
I'm so proud that you've entrusted  
me with this command. I couldn't  
bear the wait any longer. I leave  
tonight.

Louis puts his hand on the back of his brother's neck.

LOUIS XIII  
Promise me you'll look after your  
own life, each day.

GASTON  
I promise. And I also promise to  
restore your authority, whether  
gently or by bloodshed.

Louis XIII shakes his head at so much ardor.

LOUIS XIII  
Leave now. Go to your troops before  
I change my mind.

**EXT. MUSKETEER'S TOWNHOUSE - DAY**

The musketeers are preparing to leave. They finish loading the horses.

DE TRÉVILLE  
Where's the other animal?

Aramis and Porthos exchange an awkward glance.

ARAMIS  
He had an appointment for a mission that, with the exception of Porthos, one would prefer to accomplish alone.

PORTHOS  
And one is wrong. Quantity takes nothing from quality. It's in our motto - "One for all..."

The three musketeers are amused.

DE TRÉVILLE  
All right, that's enough. Tell him I'd prefer he avoid becoming a deserter before he's actually a musketeer.

A young boy crosses the yard and hands Aramis a letter.

BOY WITH LETTER  
Sir...

Aramis rips the seal off and starts reading. His features immediately freeze.

PORTHOS  
What is it?

Without answering, Aramis promptly leaps on his horse as Porthos looks on in surprise.

PORTHOS (CONT'D)  
What are you doing?!

Aramis kicks his horse and rides out.

**INT. FILLES-DE-SAINT-THOMAS CONVENT - CORRIDOR - NIGHT**

A young woman with bright eyes (MATHILDE) follows two nuns down a hallway. Despite her gray monastic dress, Mathilde shines with spirit and determination.

**INT. FILLES-DE-SAINT-THOMAS CONVENT - DORMITORY - DAY**

She walks into the sprawling room. Dozens of beds on either side and a small chapel at the other end. When she sees Aramis, she is astonished.

MATHILDE

Aramis?!

ARAMIS

Mother wrote to say you're taking your vows. What is this all about?

MATHILDE

You can't stay here. You...

The door bursts open. It's Porthos.

PORTHOS

Good evening. Excuse me, I'm accompanying this gentleman.

Mathilde's face lights up.

MATHILDE

Porthos?

Porthos is astounded. He walks to her.

PORTHOS

How you've changed little Mathilde!  
You're so pretty!

Mathilde can't help smiling. He's going to embrace her but Aramis coughs, annoyed.

ARAMIS

We were in the middle of a conversation.

MATHILDE

I don't...

Aramis motions for her to stop.

PORTHOS

I understand.

Porthos looks to the two nuns.

PORTHOS (CONT'D)

Good evening, sisters. Would one of you mind putting me up?

The two nuns look down, without saying a word.

PORTHOS (CONT'D)  
Oh well. I'll go seek some  
Christian charity from one of your  
mattresses.

**INT. FILLES-DE-SAINT-THOMAS CONVENT - CHAPEL - NIGHT**

ARAMIS  
You're out of your mind!

Aramis and his sister face off the little chapel.

MATHILDE  
Yes. Out of my mind in love with  
this little soul I'm carrying.

Aramis tries to suppress his exasperation.

ARAMIS  
Who is the father?

MATHILDE  
The Holy Spirit.

ARAMIS  
Watch your tone! Have you thought  
of your family's reputation?

MATHILDE  
(laughing out loud)  
Reputation? Can you swear on the  
Holy Cross you've never impregnated  
one of your mistresses? I've always  
thought Vicomte de Malestroy's son  
had eyes just like yours.

ARAMIS  
That's different.

MATHILDE  
It's exactly the same. The apple  
never falls far from the tree.  
You're just like father. And I  
guess so am I.

ARAMIS  
Mathilde d'Herblay shall not be an  
unmarried mother, believe me. Who  
is the father of this child?

MATHILDE

I've forgotten.

ARAMIS

You won't tell me? Fine.

Aramis puts his hand on his sister's belly. She takes a step back, but too late.

ARAMIS (CONT'D)

I'd say... Three months. Is that right? Fine... June. You were at the Domain, mother said. There was a party, isn't that right? Who was there? The usual spongers I suppose. Bralinguet? No, he has yellow teeth. Codaven is too old and his breath is foul. Montemare? His wife is hideous. Is he the one who turned your head?

Mathilde raises her eyes to heaven.

ARAMIS (CONT'D)

One of the Balestan brothers? Don't tell me my nephew is the son of one of those degenerates!

MATHILDE

Don't you have to be somewhere? I heard war has broken out.

Aramis stiffens.

ARAMIS

A soldier. It's a soldier - you've always liked soldiers.

Mathilde's eyes mist over.

ARAMIS (CONT'D)

(penny drops)

My God. I know. Villeneuve de Radis!

**INT. FILLES-DE-SAINT-THOMAS CONVENT - DORMITORY - NIGHT**

Aramis storms out of the chapel. Porthos, lying on one of the beds has been listening to the conversation. He rises and gives Mathilde a most sympathetic look. She walks to him.

MATHILDE

Please, Porthos. You're the only one who can stop him from killing the father of my child.

PORTHOS

Where is he?

Mathilde lowers her eyes.

MATHILDE

With his regiment. He's left for La Rochelle.

**EXT. VAL DE GRÂCE ABBEY - CLOISTER & GARDEN - DAY**

A group of hooded monks walk through the gardens in the cloister. Head down, they walk past an armed guard.

They go into the chapel.

**EXT. VAL DE GRÂCE ABBEY - CHAPEL - DAY**

Queen Anne of Austria, kneeling in the first pew, is praying.

The monks come along the aisle from the side. Their footsteps echo in the silence. They walk toward the Queen.

The first monk approaches. It's Richelieu.

ANNE OF AUSTRIA

(in a low voice)

Your Eminence.

RICHELIEU

(in a low voice)

Your Highness.

ANNE OF AUSTRIA

What is the emergency? It was difficult for me to take leave of the King.

He comes over and kneels beside the Queen.

RICHELIEU

I needed to separate you from certain ears and eyes. I have something I must confess.



**EXT. ROADS OF FRANCE - (ATHOS' VOYAGE) - NIGHT / DAY**

Athos, on horseback, rides toward La Rochelle. Night, day, one atmosphere after the next.

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - DAY**

D'Artagnan, still dressed in tatters, walks up alongside the army. A long ragtag line of regiments, horses, chariots, cannons drawn by oxen.

A passing wagon splashes d'Artagnan with mud. He steps aside. A voice comes from behind him.

MAN (O.S.)  
Make way, yokel!

D'Artagnan, exasperated, turns around.

D'ARTAGNAN  
I am...

He freezes upon seeing Athos, beaming, on his horse.

D'ARTAGNAN (CONT'D)  
Athos!

ATHOS  
What the devil happened to you?!

D'ARTAGNAN  
More mishaps than you could ever  
imagine.

ATHOS  
Come on, then! You've made me  
thirsty. I can't listen until I've  
had a drink. Get on.

Athos holds out his hand, D'Artagnan hoists himself up behind Athos on the horse.

ATHOS (CONT'D)  
Our friends are waiting.

He kicks the horse and gallops away.

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE CITADEL - EVENING**

Evening settles over the Citadel, waisted by its retaining wall and opening on the ocean.

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - MUSKETEER CAMP - CAMPFIRE - EVENING**

At the edge of a wood, barricades are being put up and tents pitched on the soft ground. Royalist flags float on the breeze.

Around a campfire, nestled between two rows of tents, where uniformed soldiers come and go, d'Artagnan regales his friends with his misadventures.

D'ARTAGNAN

Chalais is the one who kidnapped  
Constance!

The Musketeers are perplexed.

D'ARTAGNAN (CONT'D)

I'll find him. He'll either tell me  
where she is or I'll kill him, I  
swear.

ARAMIS

D'Artagnan, he's not a mere  
soldier. He's...

D'ARTAGNAN

A traitor!

ARAMIS

He's also one of the most powerful  
men in the realm.

PORTHOS

With at least four thousand men at  
his command.

D'ARTAGNAN

(bragging)

I'll take a thousand, you can take  
care of the others.

Athos looks d'Artagnan straight in the eye.

ATHOS

So... Everything you know you got  
from listening to this Milady de  
Winter?

D'Artagnan is about to answer...

ATHOS (CONT'D)

The same woman who, to show she was  
trustworthy, shot at you and tried  
to kill me in London.

D'ARTAGNAN

I'm telling you she was Chalais' prisoner!

ATHOS

Perhaps she was there to kill him as well.

D'ARTAGNAN

No. She was there for this!

D'Artagnan takes out the stolen coded letter and holds it up like a trophy. The message composed of letters and the numbers is passed from hand to hand.

ARAMIS

Do you know what this message means?

D'ARTAGNAN

No.

ATHOS

Then how do you know whom it incriminates? What makes you think it isn't Richelieu himself?!

D'Artagnan has no answer for that.

ATHOS (CONT'D)

Beware, d'Artagnan. That woman has put a spell on you... I've heard enough for tonight. I'll give this letter to Tréville.

Without explanation, Athos seizes the letter and walks away into the night.

PORTHOS

(to d'Artagnan)

What did you do with that girl in the woods anyway?

ARAMIS

Porthos...

PORTHOS

What?! There are times and certain things a man must pay for with his body.

**EXT. MUSKETEER CAMP IN LA ROCHELLE - NIGHT**

D'Artagnan paces along the lines of tents, accompanied by Aramis. They have obviously had too much to drink. Aramis claps him on the back before walking away.

ARAMIS

Enjoy your last night before the war.

He goes inside. D'Artagnan continues to his tent.

**INT. D'ARTAGNAN'S TENT - NIGHT**

D'Artagnan enters the dark tent. He has just put the flap back when he sees, in a shaving mirror hung up on the tent frame, a shadow moving behind him. It's Milady, and she puts a dagger to his throat.

MILADY

(in a whisper:)

You act all innocent and then you go through young women's pockets under cover of night?

Milady presses the blade.

MILADY (CONT'D)

Where is that letter?

D'ARTAGNAN

I don't have it anymore.

MILADY

I can no longer trust you. I'm going to have to see with my own eyes.

With one hand Milady holds d'Artagnan at bay, with the other she rips the buttons off his shirt. Milady runs her hand over his bare torso.

D'Artagnan finally grabs her arm and pushes her backward. They roll around together. She winds up on top of him and gives him a quick kiss, destabilizing him. He pushes her backward. She kisses him again. The fight resolves to an amorous tussle.

**EXT. MUSKETEER CAMP IN LA ROCHELLE - NIGHT**

All is calm in the camp.

**INT. D'ARTAGNAN'S TENT - NIGHT**

D'Artagnan awakens with a start. He had drifted off. Water is heard behind a curtain. He concludes that he hasn't been dreaming. He grabs his trousers. A voice from behind the curtain.

MILADY (O.S.)

You sleep like you have a clear conscience.

D'ARTAGNAN

I have a clear conscience.

D'Artagnan rises, getting dressed. Milady looks out from behind the curtain.

MILADY

I could say a thing or two that might disturb your sleep.

D'Artagnan smiles. Milady ducks back behind the screen.

D'ARTAGNAN

I doubt it. He's a stubborn one.

MILADY

Your sleep is Gascon as well?

D'Artagnan smiles. He grabs his shirt.

D'ARTAGNAN

That's right. What about you? Where does your sleep hail from?

Milady is partially visible in the reflection of the shaving mirror, starting to get dressed.

MILADY

Oh. A very small land with few plains or fields. But many ravines.

D'Artagnan slips his trousers on. He stops to look at Milady in the reflection. She is beautiful. Terribly beautiful.

MILADY (CONT'D)

Some steep and rugged mountains. With pointy ridges.

D'Artagnan gazes into the mirror. Milady gathers her hair, baring the back of her neck. It's an elegant neck indeed, but one which is branded by the fleur de lis! The infamous mark left by the executioner!

D'Artagnan is stunned beyond expression. In his mind's eye he sees what Athos described to him. (Sc 152 of film 1).  
Milady's voice merges with that of Athos.

ATHOS (O.S.)

*He did what any great man must do,  
he turned her into the court. She  
was tried and sentenced to be  
branded, then hanged.*

Shots of the Count's young wife, a red hot iron branding her with the fleur de lis on the back of her neck. She screams. The face now streaked with tears is that of Milady.

Smiling, Milady looks around the screen.

MILADY

My sleep must be...

Seeing d'Artagnan's stunned expression in the mirror, Milady understands. She turns back around, not like an angry woman but like a wounded panther. Her eyes fill with rage, then meet d'Artagnan's. Before he can say a word, Milady dives for d'Artagnan's gun. She points it at him.

For a moment, nothing moves. Milady and d'Artagnan stare at one another, short of breath. Milady disappears through the back of the tent.

**EXT. MUSKETEER CAMP IN LA ROCHELLE - NIGHT**

D'Artagnan wanders aimlessly among the tents, as if in a state of shock.

**INT. ATHOS' TENT - NIGHT**

D'Artagnan, barely dressed and white as a ghost, finds Athos, putting on his boots, absolutely thrilled to see him barge in like that.

D'ARTAGNAN

Don't laugh. I swear on my soul  
there is nothing to laugh about.

ATHOS

That's for sure! I gave the letter  
to the Captain and he...

Seeing d'Artagnan's stricken expression, Athos stops.

ATHOS (CONT'D)  
What have you done, my friend?  
What's going on?

D'Artagnan hesitates, then approaches.

D'ARTAGNAN  
Are you quite sure she's dead?

ATHOS  
She?

D'ARTAGNAN  
Your young wife, the one you told  
me about on the boat to London.

ATHOS  
Wait. What are you talking about?

D'ARTAGNAN  
Milady de Winter. She is branded on  
her neck, the fleur de lis.

**INT. D'ARTAGNAN'S TENT - NIGHT**

Athos charges into d'Artagnan's tent. He stands there, his eyes on fire, sniffing the air in the empty tent. He gathers up the sheets, brings them to his face. He almost falls over, but straightens up when... He spots a white pearl earring forgotten on the ground. He picks it up and stares at it in the palm of his hand.

CUT TO:

*FLASHBACK: the smiling face of Athos' young wife (Milady) rocking a newborn in her arms. The young woman is wearing the white pearl earrings.*

Distraught, Athos slowly turns to d'Artagnan, who has just stepped inside.

ATHOS  
She was dead. I saw her with my own eyes, hanged with a rope. This is a devil come to haunt us. Because of me, you're cursed now as well.

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - ROYAL FORT - DAY**

The majestic outline of the royal Fort with the ocean in the background.

**INT. LA ROCHELLE - KING'S WAR COUNCIL - DAY**

Louis XIII is standing before an enormous model of La Rochelle. The walls of the citadel are represented there, the Île de Ré, as well as the advancement of English ships.

Alongside the King are Gaston and Richelieu.

RICHELIEU

Buckingham sailed from Portsmouth with his ships. They'll be in La Rochelle in two days, three at the outside.

GASTON

If we drive them off, others will be on their way. Let's concentrate on the city. And let's cut it down to size.

Louis XIII looks back at him intently.

LOUIS XIII

Then what? Carcassonne? Montauban? Castres?

GASTON

We must make an example! Let every heretic in the realm know the cost of defying his king!

LOUIS XIII

I want La Rochelle to be the end of the war, not the beginning of a new one. And I will not waste the blood of Frenchmen.

The King and Richelieu gaze through the window at the Citadel in the distance.

RICHELIEU

We'll surround the city. Cut off from the outside world, it will eventually fall like a ripe apple.

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - MUSKETEER CAMP - DAY**

Movement in the camp. Athos is seated in front of the extinguished fire, staring into the distance. Porthos, carrying his kit, joins him.

PORTHOS

Have you seen Aramis?



Athos, looking bleak, doesn't answer.

PORTHOS (CONT'D)  
I can't stress enough how gleeful  
Anjou wine can make a person.

Porthos sets his kit down on the ground. He spots Aramis further on, speaking to an officer from another regiment. He slips him a purse before walking away.

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - CAMP AISLE - DAY**

Aramis walks down an aisle in the vast military camp. Porthos hurries up behind him.

ARAMIS  
Would you mind giving me a little  
privacy? By myself?

PORTHOS  
Something tells me it's not privacy  
you crave, but meeting a certain  
officer.

Aramis doesn't answer.

PORTHOS (CONT'D)  
What will you do when you have  
Villeneuve de Radis in front of  
you?

ARAMIS  
I'll speak to him of Mathilde.

PORTHOS  
And what if he doesn't feel like  
talking about her?

ARAMIS  
I'll speak to him anyway.

Aramis walks faster. He obviously knows where he's going.

PORTHOS  
This can't end well.

ARAMIS  
We'll speak like two well-bred men.

PORTHOS  
Fine. In that case, I'll bet you a  
thousand ecus that you'll challenge  
him to a duel.

ARAMIS

You don't have that much.

PORTHOS

The important thing is, you do.

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - VILLENEUVE'S SMALL FORT - DAY**

Porthos and Aramis make their way up a rocky hillside. They go inside a small royalist fort facing the Citadel. All around, soldiers are preparing for battle.

Aramis speaks to a soldier, who points to a rampart a little higher up.

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - VILLENEUVE'S SMALL FORT - RAMPART - DAY**

Aramis and Porthos walk up to an officer who is looking out at the Citadel through a spy glass. Aramis clears his throat. The officer turns around. He is VILLENEUVE, a well-dressed and elegant man.

ARAMIS

(cool, introducing  
himself:)

Sir d'Herblay, King's Musketeer.

VILLENEUVE

Ah! Aramis himself! You're a legend around Béarn, you know? What wind blows you this way, Dear Sir?

ARAMIS

A gentle and fragrant wind, by the name of Mathilde.

The two men stare each other down. Villeneuve starts walking through the interior courtyard of the fort. Aramis and Porthos follow.

VILLENEUVE

She wrote me a while ago, to tell me she wanted to enter a convent.

ARAMIS

You must be aware of where that desire was born, are you not?

VILLENEUVE

Yes. The letter was rather long.

ARAMIS

And?

VILLENEUVE

And well... Much of what she wrote me rang quite true, but none of it could sway me, nor shake my soul.

They go inside a tent. Aramis tries to remain calm.

ARAMIS

You made her certain promises.

VILLENEUVE

If I were to cite the name of everyone to whom I made that promise, we'd be here until nightfall.

ARAMIS

Captain, I have only one sister and...

VILLENEUVE

May I speak frankly, Aramis?

ARAMIS

I thought you'd already begun.

Villeneuve smiles.

VILLENEUVE

I shall not marry your sister. The only reason I could have to marry would be for money. And, please don't be offended, but you are not rich.

Aramis glances around at Porthos. He looks like he's about to explode.

VILLENEUVE (CONT'D)

Tell your sister not to despair. Like pleasure, pain is momentary.

ARAMIS

You have a duty of honor.

VILLENEUVE

My honor is reserved for the field of honor.

ARAMIS

You leave me no choice. The altar  
or the duel.

Aramis tosses his handkerchief in Villeneuve's face. Porthos  
lifts his eyes to heaven.

VILLENEUVE

No.

ARAMIS

What do you mean, no?

Villeneuve sits down. He picks up the handkerchief.

VILLENEUVE

I'm sitting down. I'll be more  
comfortable to talk.

Villeneuve, very relaxed, smiles at Aramis.

VILLENEUVE (CONT'D)

Sir Aramis, I like to play but I  
hate to lose. You're one of the  
most accomplished swordsmen in the  
realm. And if, by some miracle, I  
slayed you - which I don't believe  
is possible - then one of your  
friends would avenge you.

Villeneuve glances at Porthos, who is shaking his head no.

ARAMIS

I give you my word that not one of  
my companions will...

VILLENEUVE

Words, words, words... Your very  
presence here is proof that a word  
is not worth much.

ARAMIS

You're a coward.

VILLENEUVE

Between death and dishonor, I  
choose dishonor. And you can't tell  
me you'd wish to have such a man as  
your brother-in-law!

Villeneuve blows his nose in Aramis' handkerchief... and  
Aramis draws his sword.

ARAMIS

Defend yourself or I'll skewer you!

VILLENEUVE

Don't make me call my guard.

ARAMIS

On your feet, scoundrel! I...

BOOM!!!

A terrible explosion, followed by a thick cloud of smoke. A shell has just blown the tent to bits. The debris falls to the ground like rain.

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - VILLENEUVE'S SMALL FORT - DAY**

The tent is gone. There is gunfire in every direction now. Porthos is standing in the smoke and rubble. His face bloodied and covered in dust, he looks all around.

PORTHOS

Aramis!? Aramis!?

He spots him in the rubble. He seizes him and pulls him up. Aramis is all right. He looks around.

ARAMIS

Where is he?

He looks all around. Porthos points to a spot in the middle of the remains - a pair of boots, still upright, but nothing left inside them.

They look at one another.

**INT. LA ROCHELLE - FIELD HOSPITAL - DAY**

Soldiers carry stretchers inside the tent where they are met by a doctor and nuns.

DOCTOR

Take him to the back, I'll be right there.

Aramis and Porthos enter, carrying their injured man. They freeze, stunned. Standing there, wearing a monastic tunic, is Mathilde d'Herblay.

ARAMIS

What... what are you doing here?!

Porthos looks from Aramis to Mathilde.

MATHILDE  
I came to keep you from doing what  
cannot be undone.

Aramis looks away.

ARAMIS  
Mathilde...

MATHILDE  
(worried)  
What's happened?

Beat. Aramis holds out his bloody hands.

ARAMIS  
I swear it wasn't my doing.

Mathilde starts to answer.

MATHILDE  
No...

ARAMIS  
I only wanted to make him...

Mathilde rushes to him.

MATHILDE  
What have you done?! I...

Porthos steps in and takes her in his arms.

PORTHOS  
Mathilde...

MATHILDE  
(wild with rage)  
Let me go! I'm going to kill him!

Porthos holds her back as well as he can.

PORTHOS  
Listen to me! Villeneuve died on  
the front! As a hero! He... He  
saved Aramis' life!!!

Mathilde stops struggling.

MATHILDE  
What?!

Porthos looks daggers at Aramis.

MATHILDE (CONT'D)  
(to Aramis)  
He saved you?

ARAMIS  
Uh yes. He was... uh...

PORTHOS  
Extraordinary! Incredible bravado!  
He could feel the attack coming and  
he stepped in front of the danger!  
He put his body between the enemy  
and your brother.

MATHILDE  
Good Lord...

PORTHOS  
He fell, mortally wounded, but his  
last words were for you. Isn't that  
right, Aramis?!

ARAMIS  
Yes... He told us about... about  
your letter. Your long letter.

PORTHOS  
Right! He spoke of promises he had  
made to you.

Tears are streaming down Mathilde's cheeks. She holds Porthos tightly in her arms. Aramis walks to them and joins the embrace.

PORTHOS (CONT'D)  
And before going to meet Christ, he  
said, "If I die, tell Mathilde not  
to despair. Pain, like pleasure, is  
momentary."

MATHILDE  
I knew it. I knew he was a man of  
honor.

**EXT. VENDÔME HILL - DAY**

D'Artagnan climbs the hill among the tents, the Chalais banners are flying in full view.

POV d'Artagnan: Chalais is getting a shave, among his men.

Suddenly, a soldier comes out of nowhere. In his momentum, d'Artagnan bumps into him.

D'ARTAGNAN  
Sorry, I didn't see you.

D'Artagnan looks at the imposing, figure of a black soldier (Prince Idriss Aniba, aka Hannibal). The man looks back at him.

HANNIBAL  
I don't often go unnoticed.

D'Artagnan tries to walk on, but Hannibal blocks the way.

D'ARTAGNAN  
You're in my way, sir. I'm trying to get by.

D'Artagnan takes a step back and stares at the man.

D'ARTAGNAN (CONT'D)  
Are you looking for trouble?

HANNIBAL  
If I'd come looking for trouble I would've found it already. I came looking for you.

D'ARTAGNAN  
May I know who's looking for me.

HANNIBAL  
Captain de Tréville.

D'Artagnan is surprised.

D'ARTAGNAN  
You're a musketeer?

HANNIBAL  
Why? Don't I look like one?

D'ARTAGNAN  
I don't know, are you from Gascony?

HANNIBAL  
Sure. Equatorial Guinea.

**INT. TENT - MUSKETEER CAMP - EVENING**

De Tréville is standing across from d'Artagnan and Athos Behind them, Hannibal.



The tent flaps are open on the comings and goings in the camp. Musketeers and horses pass by, as well as chickens hopping along on the dusty ground.

DE TRÉVILLE

I thought I'd made myself clear.  
(to Athos:)  
Didn't you relay my orders?

D'ARTAGNAN

Athos relayed your orders  
faithfully.

DE TRÉVILLE

Which were?

D'ARTAGNAN

Forbidding me to approach that  
traitor under any circumstances.

Tréville eyes a chicken near the entrance to the tent.

DE TRÉVILLE

Have you any idea why chickens  
don't fly?

D'ARTAGNAN

Because their wings have been  
broken.

DE TRÉVILLE

Don't make me regret I've left you  
yours.

D'ARTAGNAN

He has the woman I love, Captain.

DE TRÉVILLE

Make one more wrong move... ONE  
more! And I'll send you packing  
back to Gascony!

D'Artagnan looks straight back at Tréville a moment, then lowers his eyes.

**INT. KING'S WAR COUNCIL - DAY**

GASTON

(feverish)

Soldiers of France, the day has  
come to cut the dragon's head off!

In the King's Council, Gaston is addressing the squadron leaders, each with his second officer. Tréville and Hannibal are there among the others.

Richelieu stands off to one side, watching the King's brother.

GASTON (CONT'D)

The English Navy is approaching. Tomorrow night it will enter the bay. We must prevent them from disembarking at any cost. For this baptism of fire, two companies will have to volunteer. That first attack will also be the most perilous. Few of those who go will come back. But their sacrifice will not be in vain because it will be in the name of the King, of God and of France!

Richelieu steps forward and asks for the floor.

RICHELIEU

Your Grace...

GASTON

Your Eminence.

RICHELIEU

An officer who, because of his military expertise, imagined just such an attack yesterday, has informed me of his ardent desire to be the first man into the battle.

Admirative reactions among the soldiers.

GASTON

And who is the brave man who anticipated the call?

RICHELIEU

The Comte de Chalais, Your Grace.

Gaston, and especially Chalais, stare at Richelieu, astounded. But the count hides his surprise as he bows to the King's brother.

GASTON

Well then, My Lord, you shall lead this first attack. Take a step forward.

Chalais does so. Tréville and Hanibal exchange a glance. The ambiguity of this situation has not escaped them.

CHALAIS  
(furious)  
It's an honor, sir.

GASTON  
And who will be the...

Tréville... takes a step forward!

GASTON (CONT'D)  
Captain de Tréville!

DE TRÉVILLE  
When there's a plan to go to town,  
the King's Musketeers will be  
there.

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE CITADEL - STREETS - NIGHT**

A child runs through the streets of the citadel.

**EXT. PROTESTANT COMMAND POST - DAY**

The child arrives, out of breath, at the protestant command station. Horace Saint-Blancard, Benjamin de la Fère and several other men are there.

CHILD  
This is for you, sir.

The child humbly presents Horace with a message. Horace opens it - a coded message. Horace opens a bible to a bookmarked page. There is a table with letters and number. Horace decodes the message. His face freezes.

SAINT-BLANCARD  
They're going to attack tonight.

**INT. TENT - MUSKETEER CAMP - NIGHT**

Tréville is surrounded by the blackened faces of his musketeers. He is leaning over a map.

DE TRÉVILLE  
We'll wait for the tide, then  
attack from the south. To advance  
to the towers and the cannons...

**EXT. SOUTH WALL OF THE CITADEL - NIGHT**

In the dark water of the bay, points of light slide silently along. They are flaming wicks wound around the wrists of Louis XIII's men.

DE TRÉVILLE (O.S.)

We must penetrate the Citadel and cross through it. We'll be in the open. No reinforcements and no way to retreat. Musketeers! Soldiers to the death, I'm sending you to where death awaits! All for one...

MUSKETEERS (O.S.)

All for one!

In the lead, Tréville, water up to his neck, in a cloud of mist. D'Artagnan, Aramis, Porthos, Athos, Ventador and another Musketeer follow behind. Chalais and his six men bring up the rear. In the icy water, d'Artagnan and Tréville exchange a look of utter contempt.

Athos is the first on the dock. He takes out two men on patrol, without a sound. He motions that the coast is clear. The others come out of the water along the Citadel wall.

Tréville unfolds a telescope. Ships of the English fleet are coming toward the coast. The captain pans around to the lookout tower, where Huguenot soldiers patrol behind the cannons.

The group enters the Citadel.

**EXT. CITADEL - NARROW STREETS - NIGHT**

The musketeers still in the lead, the commando slides down a narrow street. All is empty and silent.

They turn a corner on to a small square, and stop. Aramis and Porthos are the first to risk it. Nothing. They move on.

**EXT. FLEMISH CANTON - NIGHT**

The musketeers enter the area known as the Flemish Canton. Just then a shot explodes a few inches from Porthos' head. In the windows and on the rooftops, dozens of muskets are trained on them. It's a trap!

The musketeers start beating a retreat into the narrow street but they find Chalais and his men, hanging back, are pointing their weapons at them as well. The musketeers are caught in the middle.

Tréville and Chalais stare each other down.

CHALAIS

You promised your men death. Make one move and your promise will be fulfilled.

Tréville looks at him with sheer contempt. Chalais comes through the band of Musketeers. A wave of fury comes over them. Stepping from the shadows, Saint-Blancard, Benjamin and their escort appear. Athos and Benjamin exchange a meaningful glance.

SAINT-BLANCARD

Gentlemen. Welcome.

CHALAIS

(to Saint-Blancard)

Sir, I've availed myself of your services in the past. Today, I've come to offer you mine.

SAINT-BLANCARD

Killing our brother prisoners was clearly not part of our pact.

CHALAIS

I only put them out of their misery. Would you have rather seen them drawn and quartered?

Beat. They stare each other down.

SAINT-BLANCARD

This evening I see proof of your good will, sir. But if you're here then your master must have deserted you. And if you no longer serve your master, what can you have to offer us?

Saint-Blancard gives a signal. Before Chalais even has time to answer, a shot rings out and Chalais goes down, hit in the chest.

SAINT-BLANCARD (CONT'D)

Besides your life, that is.

D'Artagnan, horrified, is about to rush to Chalais, who is bleeding on the ground, but Aramis gives him a look that stops him dead in his tracks.

Everyone is stunned. Chalais' men, in the protestants' line of fire, don't dare move.

SAINT-BLANCARD (CONT'D)  
(to Tréville)  
Captain. Spare us the carnage and  
lay down your weapons.

Saint-Blancard turns around. The first bell of midnight rings out. Tréville puts his musket on the ground. Second bell. Third bell. Fourth bell.

DE TRÉVILLE  
By the faith of a man you thanked  
with a bullet, do you think you  
will triumph?

Fifth bell. Sixth bell. Saint-Blancard turns around.

DE TRÉVILLE (CONT'D)  
Looking around here at all your  
best soldiers, I can see the fear  
my men inspire in you. And you're  
quite right.

Seventh bell. Eighth bell.

DE TRÉVILLE (CONT'D)  
But in that case, sir... Who is  
protecting your towers?

#### **EXT. SOUTH TOWER OF THE CITADEL - NIGHT**

Huguenots are lying dead on the ground. Hannibal is at the top of the South Tower, surrounded by musketeer. They've taken control of the site and they're moving the cannons down toward the bay. With one exception, all are facing the Citadel, ready to fire.

HANNIBAL  
On my order!

Ninth bell. A musketeer lights the fuse on a cannon.

#### **EXT. FLEMISH CANTON - NIGHT**

Tenth bell. Saint-Blancard's eyes mist over.

DE TRÉVILLE

We shall probably die tonight. But  
we will have won.

Eleventh bell. Then...

BOOM!

A huge explosion rings out. The tower overlooking the square  
explodes. So do the roofs of several buildings.

A cloud of dust and gravel envelops the square. Making the  
most of the surprise, the musketeers open fire on the La  
Rochelle forces, sending them into retreat. But Tréville is  
shot and goes down.

**EXT. SEA - ENGLISH SHIP - NIGHT**

An English ship in flames. It has just been struck by a  
cannonball. Another blows up another ship.

**EXT. SOUTH TOWER OF THE CITADEL - NIGHT**

HANNIBAL

Fire! Fire! Fire! Fire at will!

The noise is deafening. The musketeers' cannons are fired  
again and again.

A third ship is hit. The sail goes up in flames. Without  
preparation and without defense, the English ships who had  
thought themselves protected, turn tail in panic as the  
French advance on them.

**EXT. FLEMISH CANTON - NIGHT**

It's blind chaos. The dust forms a wall of invisibility.  
There is a buzz in the air after the explosions. Shot are  
fired this way and that. Aramis aims at Saint-Blancard,  
fires. The protestant leader collapses.

Benjamin de la Fère and one of the soldiers drag Saint-  
Blancard to shelter.

Porthos catches Tréville and puts him on his back.

PORTHOS

Retreat! Retreat!

Furious, Aramis doubles back to cover d'Artagnan. Pistol in one hand, sword in the other, he slays every man who makes a move on d'Artagnan, as the bullets go whistling by them.

D'Artagnan rushes to Chalais, lying on the ground. He's alive but badly wounded.

ARAMIS

(yelling:)

Leave him!!! Let him die like a dog.

D'ARTAGNAN

(yelling:)

If he dies, I'll never find Constance.

D'Artagnan lifts him on to his back and runs toward the exit, Aramis still providing cover. A bullet shatters his sword. They join Porthos, who is still holding Tréville.

PORTHOS

This way.

A round of gunfire. Porthos, too, is hit. A sudden silence settles around them. Three protestants with muskets step out of the smoke. The Musketeers are trapped. Aramis, alone with his broken sword, is helpless.

LA ROCHELLE SOLDIER

On the ground!

ARAMIS

I only kneel before God or a woman.

The La Rochelle man shoulders his musket but suddenly Aramis appears out of the shadows and, like a deadly tornado, slays all three soldiers with his sword. The protestants fall, one by one, as the Musketeers look on in wonder.

ATHOS

The coast is clear.

#### **EXT. MUSKETEER CAMP - DAWN**

At the entrance to the royalist enclave. Soldiers wait anxiously for the return of their comrades-in-arms.

All at once, emerging in the mist, a group of Musketeers appear. Athos, then Aramis helping Porthos to walk. Then d'Artagnan, with Chalais on his back, then Hannibal carrying Tréville on his.



Cries of joy are heard. The Musketeers are hailed as heroes.

**INT. FIELD HOSPITAL - DAWN**

D'Artagnan, out of breath, deposits Chalais, bloody and unconscious, on a bed. The large room has been divided by bed sheets into rooms of four or five beds.

Nuns and a doctor come running.

D'ARTAGNAN

He took one to the chest.

The doctor examines the wound. His chest is bloody and swollen. It's a ghastly sight.

D'ARTAGNAN (CONT'D)

Will he live?

DOCTOR

Too soon to say. He's lost a lot of blood.

Mathilde leads d'Artagnan's outside.

MATHILDE

Come... We'll do all we can.

D'ARTAGNAN

If he comes to, promise me you'll send for me. Day or night. I'm d'Artagnan of the Musketeers.

MATHILDE

I will.

D'ARTAGNAN

A young woman's life is at stake.

MATHILDE

I promise you, d'Artagnan.

**EXT. FIELD HOSPITAL - DAWN**

D'Artagnan, exhausted, comes outside. Athos and Aramis are standing there. Athos embraces him.

ATHOS

The English fleet turned back. We succeeded.

Aramis embraces him as well.

ARAMIS  
Did Chalais talk?

D'ARTAGNAN  
No.

ARAMIS  
He'll pull through. Traitors are  
stubborn that way.

D'Artagnan looks to Athos.

D'ARTAGNAN  
And Captain de Tréville?

ATHOS  
He'll be sidelined for a while, but  
he'll pull through.

ARAMIS  
Let's go celebrate.

D'Artagnan goes off on his own, in no mood for celebration.

D'ARTAGNAN  
I'll stay here.

ARAMIS  
Tut tut. It's bad luck not drinking  
after a victory.

PORTHOS (O.S.)  
Well then...

The Musketeers turn around. Porthos is leaning on a crutch  
outside the tent.

PORTHOS (CONT'D)  
Not going to wait for Porthos?

The Musketeers smile and walk to him.

PORTHOS (CONT'D)  
Hurry.  
(to Aramis:)  
Your sister will kill me if she  
sees me out of bed.

**INT. LA ROCHELLE - COLOMBIER ROUGE (RED DOVECOT) TAVERN - DAY**

The Musketeers are seated at a table. Hannibal is there as  
well, he too with his arm in a sling. Porthos comes limping  
in.

ARAMIS

If it's a matter of drinking and merry-making, Porthos always keeps his promises.

They all burst out laughing.

PORTHOS

I know that laugh means you're laughing at me. But as long as we're laughing, fine with me!

He puts out his hand to Hannibal.

PORTHOS (CONT'D)

Isaac du Vallon de Bracieux de Pierrefonds, but my friends call me Porthos. I'd be flattered if you'd join them.

HANNIBAL

Idriss Aniba, Prince of Assinie. But my friends call me Hannibal. Pleasure.

ARAMIS

To the English!

The Musketeers raise their glasses.

HANNIBAL

Let's not be too angry with them for trying to invade us! If we had their wine, their women and their cooking and their wine, we'd be across the Channel too!

Everyone laughs. Porthos winces, holding his ribs.

PORTHOS

Stop it! Please don't make me laugh!

D'Artagnan smiles but his heart isn't in it.

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - SEASIDE CAMP - DAY**

D'Artagnan strolls alone along the cliff. He stops outside an improvised altar with lighted candles.

He kneels and begins to pray.

D'ARTAGNAN

Lord... I don't deserve anything  
and I ask for nothing for myself.  
Neither riches nor neither glory.  
But spare her. I beg you. She  
deserves to be happy. If you think  
I have nothing to offer, then take  
her away from me, but let me know  
she's alive. Send me a sign.

**INT. FIELD HOSPITAL - DAY**

Chalais suddenly opens his eyes. Moaning, short of breath, he  
looks around. The sheets, the tent, Mathilde walking toward  
him.

MATHILDE

(calling)

Doctor!

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - AISLES IN CAMP - DAY**

Mathilde runs through the camp. A soldier is telling her  
which way to go.

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - SEASIDE CAMP - DAY**

Mathilde sees d'Artagnan near the little altar by the sea.

MATHILDE

He woke up!

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - FIELD HOSPITAL - DAY**

Boots. Soldiers walking. Men standing guard.

**INT. LA ROCHELLE - FIELD HOSPITAL - DAY**

The boots walk down along a line of stretchers; the figure of  
a man pushing back the sheets, then coming to Chalais'  
bedside. The latter opens his eyes and discovers Gaston, the  
King's brother, standing there.

Gaston's eyes are filled with gentleness.

GASTON

You've been a great soldier. I'm  
proud to have fought at your side.

Chalais starts wriggling around. He turns his head, wants to cry out but he's too weak.

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - AISLES IN CAMP - DAY**

Mathilde and d'Artagnan walk through the camp.

**INT. LA ROCHELLE - FIELD HOSPITAL - DAY**

Gaston runs his fingers through Chalais' hair, as if to soothe him. He makes a sign of the cross over his forehead.

GASTON

In the name of the Father, the Son,  
and the Holy Ghost. May the Lord  
forgive the sins you have committed  
by seeing...

Gaston puts his hands over Chalais' eyes, ears, mouth, hands... The Count is more and more agitated.

GASTON (CONT'D)

...hearing, by speaking and by  
touching. May the all powerful  
demon be vanquished in you through  
my hands.

Gaston's hand is placed over Chalais' throat. He strangles him without hesitation. Chalais can't breathe.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK: The secret meeting as seen by Constance. The Comte de Chalais and Ardanza are standing across from a third man, as yet unseen.

CHALAIS

You have your war. You will soon  
have the country.

MAN (O.S.)

The prisoners?

ARDANZA

They won't talk.

Constance leans forward to see the face of the traitor. Her eyes go wide open like she'd just seen the devil himself. It's Gaston.

GASTON

May the Lord be with us.

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - FIELD HOSPITAL - DAY**

D'Artagnan and Mathilde arrive outside the tent, now minded by an armed guard.

MATHILDE

Let me through. I...

The guard stops her from entering. D'Artagnan draws his sword.

D'ARTAGNAN

Don't make me cut my way through.

Suddenly, the guards stand aside. Gaston comes out, walks up to d'Artagnan, puts his hand on his shoulder.

GASTON

Musketeer, France has just lost one of her greatest sons. Thanks to you and your bravery, the Comte de Chalais will be rewarded with the honors due to men of his standing.

Gaston walks away. D'Artagnan rushes inside...

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - FIELD HOSPITAL - DAY**

...and comes to Chalais' bedside. Eyes and mouth open, white as a sheet, Chalais is dead.

D'Artagnan falls to his knees.

**INT. LA ROCHELLE - PROTESTANT COMMAND POST - DAY**

Huguenot soldiers are gathered round Benjamin de la Fère and Saint-Blancard, wounded. Slumping on a chair, looking haggard, he is presiding over the crisis council.

HUGUENOT 1

Without the English we can hold out for a month. Two, if we ration supplies.

Saint-Blancard straightens up, holding on to a dagger.

SAINT-BLANCARD

I swear I'll ram this into the heart of the first man to speak of surrender. And you can turn it against me if ever I speak of capitulation!

BENJAMIN

You ask for us to do, by our own hand, what they wish to do to us? That's what you want for your people?

SAINT-BLANCARD

What I want is the death of the King.

BENJAMIN

If the Lord would save us, it shall not be through another crime.

SAINT-BLANCARD

Wars are not won by saying prayers.

BENJAMIN

Gaston will not keep his promise. If he becomes King, he'll betray us just as he betrayed Chalais. He'll never grant our independence.

Silence falls on the group.

BENJAMIN (CONT'D)

I'll go to London. And I'll return with Buckingham and his troops.

SAINT-BLANCARD

What if he doesn't come back?

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - COLOMBIER ROUGE TAVERN - DAY**

Porthos is urinating as best he can in the bushes. He can hardly stand up straight. Aramis is standing behind him and holding him up.

PORTHOS

Don't let go of me.

ARAMIS

Hurry it up, will you?

Aramis sees a group of men arrive on horseback. Intrigued, he takes a closer look at one of the men.

Aramis lets go of Porthos and walks over behind a tree for a better look. The man walks up the steps and around the timbered passage on the side of the inn. Before entering one of the rooms, he glances around behind him. It's Richelieu.

ARAMIS (CONT'D)

Well now...

Aramis turns around. Porthos is gone.

ARAMIS (CONT'D)

Porthos?

Aramis hears a moan. He discovers his friend laid out in the bushes.

**INT. LA ROCHELLE - COLOMBIER ROUGE TAVERN - DAY**

Aramis makes his way to Athos, inside the tavern.

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - COLOMBIER ROUGE TAVERN - DAY**

Aramis and Athos come running outside. They pass Porthos, sitting on the ground and leaning against a tree trunk.

PORTHOS

I'll bet you two sous she likes to be spanked.

ARAMIS

Stay there. We'll be right back.

PORTHOS

I'm not moving from this spot. I'm going to sleep until springtime.

Athos looks to the other side of the courtyard. Two men are standing guard downstairs. A third is up on the terrace.

ARAMIS

You didn't take Porthos' bet.

ATHOS

Neither did you.

Both smile. They walk like a couple of customers toward the outside steps.

CUT TO:

Up on the timbered passage, they pass the man standing guard and casually enter the next room.



**INT. LA ROCHELLE - INN - ADJACENT ROOM - DAY**

Athos and Aramis close the door behind them. There is a couple making love in the bed. The man freezes up in disbelief.

ATHOS  
Please carry on like we weren't  
here.

MAN IN BED  
Are you joking?!

Aramis sees a chair with a uniform laid over the back.

ARAMIS  
(to Athos:)  
Corporal.

ATHOS  
Actually, carry on like we are  
here. Not a word, Corporal.

ARAMIS  
That's an order. Sh. A kiss  
goodnight and go to sleep.

The couple hide under the sheets.

Athos grabs the stove pipe leading to the wall and rips it off, puts it to his ear. He can now hear Richelieu's voice ringing out in the conduit.

RICHELIEU (O.S.)  
There is a ship waiting at Fort de  
la Pointe.

MILADY (O.S.)  
Then I must get there today.

That voice! Athos is dizzy.

ARAMIS  
...Athos?

ATHOS  
(other-worldly)  
Go find d'Artagnan. Quick!

MAN IN BED  
Are you going to send for the whole  
company?!

Aramis gives him a dirty look before leaving the room.

**INT. LA ROCHELLE - INN - RICHELIEU'S ROOM - DAY**

Richelieu and Milady are facing one another in the next room. (*Cross-cut between this scene and Athos listening*).

RICHELIEU

When you get to London, find  
Buckingham.

MILADY

I thought he was on the Île de Ré?

RICHELIEU

He's left and won't be returning.

MILADY

Aren't you afraid he'll be wary of  
me?

RICHELIEU

I trust you have methods to allay  
his wariness.

MILADY

And what do you hope from this  
encounter, Eminence?

Richelieu walks toward the window.

RICHELIEU

I hope for a world-changing event,  
the likes of which occur now and  
then.

A pregnant silence.

MILADY

Your Eminence is so cultured, I  
wouldn't want to make a mistake.  
Could you cite such an occurrence,  
so I may share your confidence in  
the future?

RICHELIEU

Well, I could point to your former  
King Henry IV who, having had an  
unfortunate encounter, had to forgo  
his invasion of Austria.

MILADY

Your Eminence is surely referring  
to his encounter with Ravailac's  
knife?

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - MUSKETEER CAMP - DAY**

Aramis comes galloping into the Musketeer camp. He stops and calls out from the saddle:

ARAMIS  
(yelling:)  
D'Artagnan! D'Artagnan!

**INT. LA ROCHELLE - INN - RICHELIEU'S ROOM - DAY**

Milady now understands what the Cardinal expects of her.

MILADY  
Doesn't Your Eminence fear that  
Ravillac's punishment might deter  
any who would imitate him?

RICHELIEU  
The love of France is very  
reassuring.

MILADY  
One would have to be head over  
heels in love not to be deterred by  
the gallows.

RICHELIEU  
When I met you for the first time,  
in prison, didn't you tell me that  
everything you do you do for love?

MILADY  
There is no great love without a  
great act of love.

RICHELIEU  
And what act could France perform  
to prove its love for you?

MILADY  
A pardon. An order written in your  
own hand, absolving me for anything  
I've done or will do, as it is done  
for the grandeur of France.

Richelieu sits down at a table to write.

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - FIELD HOSPITAL - DAY**

D'Artagnan is with Mathilde. They are outside the hospital when they hear Aramis calling.

ARAMIS (O.S.)  
(screaming)  
D'Artagnan! D'Artagnan!

Aramis comes riding up. He extends a hand to d'Artagnan.

ARAMIS (CONT'D)  
Hurry! I'll explain on the way.

D'Artagnan gets on the horse behind him. They ride away.

**INT. LA ROCHELLE - INN - RICHELIEU'S ROOM - DAY**

Richelieu hands the pardon to Milady. He puts his coat back on.

MILADY  
Now that I've received Your  
Eminence's instructions concerning  
his enemies, might I say two words  
about my own?

RICHELIEU  
(ironic)  
You mean you have enemies?

MILADY  
Yes, Eminence, enemies against whom  
I rely on you for protection, since  
I made them in your service.

RICHELIEU  
And we're speaking of..?

MILADY  
Musketeers.

RICHELIEU  
Not another word. Musketeers are  
soldiers; many die every day in the  
service of France.

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - COLOMBIER ROUGE TAVERN - DAY**

Richelieu, wrapped in his coat, leaves the room and walks down the stairs, flanked by his guards.

**INT. LA ROCHELLE - INN - RICHELIEU'S ROOM - DAY**

Milady slips the pardon into her corset. She picks up her coat as the door opens behind her. She turns around.

It's Athos, hat covering his eyes.

MILADY

Who are you? What do you want?

Athos lifts his head and holds out his sword.

ATHOS

Your husband. To kill you.

A moment of terror. The two former lovers look at one another.

MILADY

Killing me once was not enough then? Seeing my body hanged did not temper your fury?

ATHOS

So you're a devil back from hell.

MILADY

Where you threw me. What crime did I commit, besides loving you?

Pause.

MILADY (CONT'D)

I'd have done anything for you and you put me through the wringer. The best and the worst of life. Right up until the last second I believed you would rescue me. I thought you loved me as much as...

ATHOS

I did love you.

Athos is moved. His eyes well up. There's nothing he can do.

ATHOS (CONT'D)

Don't look at me with those eyes!

MILADY

They're the only ones I have.

Milady steps toward Athos' sword.

MILADY (CONT'D)

How is your son?

ATHOS

Don't come any closer.

MILADY

Does he remember me? Or the song I  
used to sing to him?

Athos grips his sword with all his might.

MILADY (CONT'D)

(singing:)

*Alas, my love, you do me wrong to  
cast me off discourteously, and I  
have loved you so long delighting  
in your company...*

ATHOS

Back away!

Milady keeps coming forward, singing Greensleeves (written by  
Henri VIII for Anne Boleyn).

MILADY

(singing:)

Greensleeves was all my joy,  
Greensleeves was my delight...

Milady presses herself against Athos and he is powerless to  
push her away. Tears run down his cheeks.

MILADY (CONT'D)

(singing:)

Greensleeves was my heart of gold.  
And who but Lady Greensleeves.

Athos falls to his knees, defeated. With one hand, Milady  
clutches Athos head to her breast. With the other, she draws  
a dagger.

ATHOS

Can you ever forgive me?

MILADY

I forgive you.

Milady raises her dagger. At that moment the door flies open  
and d'Artagnan enters, discovering Athos on his knees and  
Milady standing over him with the dagger, about to kill him.

D'Artagnan trains his pistol on Milady. Athos is in the line  
of fire.

ATHOS

Fire!

D'Artagnan cocks his pistol.

ATHOS (CONT'D)  
Fire, d'Artagnan!

MILADY  
If you kill me, you'll never know  
where Constance is.

D'Artagnan freezes. Milady backs up to the window.

MILADY (CONT'D)  
It wasn't Chalais who had her  
captured. It was the Cardinal.

ATHOS  
She's lying.

MILADY  
That night, she might have died  
right before your eyes. (Chalais'  
men were after her).

**EXT. BONACIEUX HOUSE - COURTYARD - NIGHT**

Constance turns into the courtyard. Ardanza is watching. He takes out his dagger. At the moment when he's ready to spring from his hiding place, he sees a figure rush out of the shadows and rush toward Constance!

Ardanza, astonished, ducks back into the shadows.

Constance struggles.

CONSTANCE  
D'ARTAGNAN!!!!

Reveal: It is actually Milady dragging Constance into the darkness, escorted by several men. They disappear into the shadows.

Hearing the scream, d'Artagnan bursts out of the house. But it's too late.

Then Ardanza steps out of the shadows and strikes d'Artagnan, who collapses.

CUT TO:

MILADY  
I saved her life.

D'Artagnan is petrified. Milady opens the door, steps outdoors, and vanishes.

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - ROYAL FORT - DAY**

Horses' hooves at a gallop. D'Artagnan pulls up in a cloud of dust and jumps down off his horse.

He walks toward the tent, guarded by two soldiers who draw their lances upon seeing him.

GUARD

Hey, hey.

Like a man possessed, d'Artagnan neutralizes the two guards and rushes into the tent.

**INT. LA ROCHELLE - RICHELIEU'S TENT - DAY**

Richelieu is seated at his work table, calmly peeling a hard-boiled egg. D'Artagnan points his weapon at him.

D'ARTAGNAN

Where is she?

Two more guards pile into the tent.

D'ARTAGNAN (CONT'D)

If they take one more step, I'll blow your brains out.

Richelieu motions for the guards to leave.

RICHELIEU

(unflappable)

Shame you wouldn't work for me. My mind and your courage...

D'ARTAGNAN

Where is Constance Bonacieux?

RICHELIEU

I don't know.

D'Artagnan cocks his pistol.

RICHELIEU (CONT'D)

Why ask me questions if you don't want to hear the answers?

D'ARTAGNAN

I know you're the one who kidnapped her.

Richelieu nods.



RICHELIEU

Indeed. But that's not the question you asked.

They stare each other down.

D'ARTAGNAN

What have you done with her?

RICHELIEU

I brought her to the house of the Lord.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK: Val de Grâce Abbey. The Queen turns around. The first monk approaches. He is Richelieu.

ANNE OF AUSTRIA

(in a low voice)

Your Eminence.

RICHELIEU

(in a low voice)

Your Highness.

ANNE OF AUSTRIA

What is the emergency? It was difficult for me to take leave of the King.

He comes over and kneels beside the Queen.

RICHELIEU

I needed to separate you from certain ears and eyes. I have something I must confess.

Worry in the Queen's eyes.

RICHELIEU (CONT'D)

You don't like me. I won't hold that against you, you're not the only one. But you don't like me for the wrong reasons. I am not the man you think I am. I have always tried to protect the King. Even from yourself.

ANNE OF AUSTRIA

How dare you?

RICHELIEU

I know who tried to kill the King.  
And I know it wasn't you.

ANNE OF AUSTRIA

Who?

RICHELIEU

You wouldn't believe me. But  
perhaps you will believe your  
confidant.

Richelieu turns around. A monk steps toward him. It's  
Constance Bonacieux.

CONSTANCE

Your Majesty...

The Queen is astounded. Richelieu rises.

RICHELIEU

Perhaps you'll think she's speaking  
under duress. I'll leave her with  
you. The time will come when her  
word and your own must be heard by  
the King.

CUT TO:

D'Artagnan's jaw is set tight.

D'ARTAGNAN

I don't believe you.

RICHELIEU

The Queen is in Luçon. Six hours'  
ride if the horse is strong and the  
rider well-trained. Go ask her if  
I'm lying.

Thrown, d'Artagnan lowers his weapon.

D'ARTAGNAN

If what you say is true, I'll ask  
your forgiveness.

RICHELIEU

It's true. And you shall pay for  
this insult.

Richelieu takes a bite of his egg.

**INT. LA ROCHELLE - FIELD HOSPITAL - DAY**

Aramis and Ventadour carry Porthos, in bad shape, to the hospital. Mathilde is there to meet them.

ARAMIS  
His wound opened again.

Mathilde looks at Porthos' bandages, soaked in blood.

MATHILDE  
What happened to you?

PORTHOS  
I was showing them the saraband.  
It's a Spanish dance that...

MATHILDE  
I told you not to move!

PORTHOS  
Yes, but I only like what is  
prohibited.

MATHILDE  
Lay him down there.

They lay Porthos down - he lets out a cry of pain, clutching his chest.

MATHILDE (CONT'D)  
What's the matter?

PORTHOS  
My heart is bleeding for you, my  
child.

MATHILDE  
(furious:)  
I'm going to nurse you back to  
health, and after that you better  
watch out!

Porthos gives her a big smile.

PORTHOS  
Women and their promises...

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - CITADEL - NIGHT**

Under cover of darkness, four men slip outside the citadel.

They come out of a trench and run off into the woods.

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - TADON WOOD - NIGHT**

By the light of the moon, the four men rush through a marshy wood. Several explosions are heard. Two of the men go down. The remaining two raise their hands.

Several royalist soldiers step out from behind the trees.

**EXT. ROADS TO LUÇON - NIGHT**

D'Artagnan gallops along roads.

**INT. LA ROCHELLE - KING'S WAR COUNCIL - NIGHT**

The two prisoners, wounded, are on their knees with their hands tied behind them. One of them is Benjamin de la Fère.

Gaston is standing there, cold as ice. A soldier hands him a purse and an envelope.

SOLDIER

We found this on them.

Gaston opens the envelope. Another coded message.

GASTON

Pillory. And distribute the money to your men. They've earned it.

Benjamin spits at Gaston's feet. He gets a hard rifle stock across the cheek for his trouble.

**EXT. ROYAL MANOR - LUÇON - DAWN**

Daybreak. D'Artagnan rides out of the woods. He comes to a stately royal manor, there in the morning mist.

**EXT. ROYAL MANOR - LUÇON - Paddock - DAWN**

D'Artagnan is escorted to a paddock where the Queen is training a horse on a tether. When she sees d'Artagnan, she walks toward him, taking off her gloves.

D'Artagnan kneels.

D'ARTAGNAN

Your Highness. Forgive me for disturbing you at this early hour, but I must speak to you about a burning issue... though I may be consumed.

ANNE OF AUSTRIA

I should be very sorry if such a thing were to occur. Rise, Musketeer.

The Queen raises her hand - everyone exits.

D'ARTAGNAN

You'll probably think I've lost my mind in battle; But the Cardinal admitted to me that... that he had entrusted her to you.

ANNE OF AUSTRIA

He spoke the truth.

D'Artagnan can hardly believe it.

D'ARTAGNAN

Constance is alive then?

ANNE OF AUSTRIA

Yes. She wanted to write you, but couldn't. For her own safety.

D'ARTAGNAN

Where is she? May I see her?

ANNE OF AUSTRIA

I've put her in a place safe from the plots and traitors which populate this court.

D'ARTAGNAN

Ma'am... Tell me where I can find her. I beg you.

The Queen draws closer to d'Artagnan.

ANNE OF AUSTRIA

(very low)

I've left her in the care of the only person you and I can trust.

D'Artagnan studies her, hanging on her every word.

ANNE OF AUSTRIA (CONT'D)  
(very low)  
She is in London with our mutual  
friend. The Duke of Buckingham.

**EXT. SHIP - DAWN**

On the bow of a ship sailing over a dark sea is Milady de Winter.

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - CITADEL PILLORIES - DAY**

Outside the royalist front lines, Benjamin and his companion are tied, hands over their heads, to wooden poles which are anchored in the sand.

GASTON (O.S.)  
They say a man can last for days  
without food or drink.

**EXT. KING'S WAR COUNCIL - DAY**

Gaston, flanked by his guard, is giving his orders.

GASTON  
Shoot anyone who approaches.  
(with a smile)  
Let's see how far they'll go for  
their fellow soldiers.

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - CITADEL PILLORIES- EVENING**

The sun goes down over the citadel. The water is rising along the pillories. The danger of death approaches.

**INT. LA ROCHELLE - ATHOS' TENT - EVENING**

Athos is getting ready. He checks the hammer of his pistol. Aramis is pacing around him, tense and nervous.

ARAMIS  
You'll get yourself killed.

ATHOS  
What kind of man would I be if I  
let my brother die like that?

Beat.

ARAMIS

Fine. I'm going with you.

ATHOS

This is my battle. Not yours.

ARAMIS

What kind of man would I be if I  
let my friend die like that?

Moved, Athos puts his hand on his friend's shoulder.

ATHOS

I hope you will forgive me.

The surprise in Aramis' eyes is fleeting. Before he can say a word, Athos clocks him with a powerful right hook. He catches his friend before he falls.

He lays him down gently on the ground.

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - TRENCH IN FRONT OF THE CITADEL - EVENING**

A group of musket-bearing soldiers is on patrol through the rocky area. They hunker down to avoid being spotted. A little further on, facing the citadel, are the two men on the pillories. Footsteps. Athos steps out of the shadow.

ATHOS

Good evening, men. I'm...

LIEUTENANT 1

We know who you are, My Lord.

ATHOS

Any disturbances?

LIEUTENANT 1

No, all is calm.

ATHOS

Good.

Athos, in the open, looks at the citadel. The pillories.  
Benjamin.

LIEUTENANT 1

Excuse me, My Lord, but if you stay  
where you are you may be shot.

ATHOS

That's very true, Lieutenant.  
Especially since I'm going to walk  
directly over to the prisoners, and  
free them.

The soldiers buzz with disbelief.

SOLDIER 1

Why is that, My Lord?

ATHOS

Because even a rabid dog deserves  
better treatment than this.  
Besides, one of them is my brother.

Athos walks on toward the pillories. The soldiers watch him,  
astonished.

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - MUSKETEER CAMP - EVENING**

D'Artagnan, covered in mud, rides into camp.

**INT. LA ROCHELLE - ATHOS' TENT - EVENING**

D'Artagnan rushes inside Athos' tent.

D'ARTAGNAN

Constance is in London. We must...

He stops when he sees Aramis on the ground.

D'ARTAGNAN (CONT'D)

Aramis?!

D'Artagnan finds a water pitcher and empties it over his  
face.

D'ARTAGNAN (CONT'D)

What happened?

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - CITADEL - PILLORIES - EVENING**

Athos walks toward the pillories. The soldiers, behind him,  
have no idea how to react. The lieutenant calls:

LIEUTENANT 1

Come back, My Lord! We'll have to  
open fire!



ATHOS

If you want to kill me, soldiers,  
aim for the cross!

There is a cross emblazoned on the back of his Musketeer  
cape.

LIEUTENANT 1

(to a soldier:)

Go find a senior officer! Quick!

Athos makes it to the prisoners. The first one's tongue is  
hanging out - dead from his wounds. Benjamin's eyes go wide  
in surprise when he sees his brother.

BENJAMIN

Good Lord... Armand.

Athos cuts his ties and takes him in his arms.

BENJAMIN (CONT'D)

(weak)

Leave me here. Think of your son.

ATHOS

Sh. Save your strength.

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - ROYALIST CAMP - EVENING**

An officer threads his way through the rocks.

OFFICER

A Musketeer?!

LIEUTENANT 1

Yes, sir. Athos de la Fère.

A roar of hoofbeats comes up and they turn around. Aramis and  
d'Artagnan, with a third horse in tow, come galloping toward  
the citadel.

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - CITADEL - PILLORIES - EVENING**

Aramis and d'Artagnan's ride along the rocky hillside,  
passing the soldiers!

They stop when they get to Athos, who is sitting on the  
ground with his brother in his arms.

ATHOS  
(to Aramis)  
You are hard-headed, Sir Aramis of  
Herblay.

D'ARTAGNAN  
I don't mean to rush you, but...

In the distance, the soldiers arm their muskets.

ATHOS  
There's a boat waiting for us at  
the Pointe du Plomb.

Aramis and d'Artagnan look toward the Tadon Wood, a hundred  
yards away. The end of the earth.

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - TRENCH ACROSS FROM THE CITADEL - EVENING**

OFFICER  
Shoot them down.

The hapless lieutenant focuses his visor on Athos. Just  
then...

HANNIBAL (O.S.)  
I wouldn't do that if I were you.

The men quickly turn and see Hannibal, who seems to have  
burst out of nowhere. He's smoking a cigar.

OFFICER  
Who's this one?

HANNIBAL  
Idriss Aniba, Prince of Assinie. My  
friends call me Hannibal. Call me  
Prince.

Hannibal holds out his fist. The ring he's wearing bears the  
French royal coat of arms.

HANNIBAL (CONT'D)  
That's the name used by my  
godfather, Louis, King of France.

The men take their hats off and bow.

**EXT. LA ROCHELLE - CITADEL - TADON WOOD - EVENING**

The Musketeers gallop away into the darkness.

**EXT. ROAD THROUGH THE ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT**

A rider trots along an English country road. In the distance, there is a carriage stuck by the side of the road with a broken wheel in front.

The rider approaches. The coachman is tending to the horse. A little further up the road is the passenger, a young woman with a fur hat screwed down tightly on her head.

ENGLISH RIDER

Is everything all right, ma'am?

The face of the young woman comes into view. It's Milady.

MILADY

Just a little shaken up.

ENGLISH RIDER

I'll send help. In the meantime, let me take you to Duchy. You'll be safe and warm.

MILADY

It was Providence that sent you.

**INT. DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM'S MANOR - DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT**

Milady is warming up by the fire. A door opens and the Duke of Buckingham enters. (Note: this conversation in English.)

BUCKINGHAM

Sorry it took me so long. I've just been informed. I'm very pleased to meet you, Miss.

The Duke walks to her and kisses her hand.

MILADY

Lady Clarick.

BUCKINGHAM

Make yourself at home, Lady Clarick.

MILADY

And who is the gentleman showing me such kindness?

BUCKINGHAM

George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham. At your service.

Milady acts surprised. She bows.

MILADY

Your Grace. How could I ever thank you?

BUCKINGHAM

By accepting my invitation to supper.

MILADY

Your hospitality commends you, Your Grace. But I wouldn't dare impose. As soon as my wheel is repaired, I...

BUCKINGHAM

My Lady, this week I lost twenty-three ships and many, many men. Another disappointment at this juncture would simply break my heart.

MILADY

I would never wish for that to happen.

BUCKINGHAM

Fine. For once, my horseman has shown some initiative. I'm keeping you.

MILADY

He was a perfect gentleman.

BUCKINGHAM

One more compliment and he's fired.

Milady smiles. The Duke opens a door. Before ushering her through it, he stops to look at her.

BUCKINGHAM (CONT'D)

If I'd met you before, I'd remember. Yet there is something in your voice that reminds me of something. I can't place it.

MILADY

You must recognize the face of gratitude.

It's the Duke's turn to smile. They go into...

**INT. BUCKINGHAM'S MANOR - DINING ROOM - NIGHT**

...a dining room. A table is set for three.

BUCKINGHAM  
I'm so glad you could join us.

MILADY  
Us?

BUCKINGHAM  
I have the good fortune to be  
hosting a friend from France. I'm  
sure you'll love her.

At that moment the door opens and Constance Bonacieux steps  
in.

CONSTANCE  
Please excuse me...

She freezes when she sees Milady.

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)  
Milady?!

BUCKINGHAM  
(surprised)  
You know each other?

An exchange of glances. Constance hesitates, then...

CONSTANCE  
We met under circumstances which  
were...

Before Constance can finish her sentence, Milady appears  
suddenly stricken. She holds on to the table. The Duke  
reaches over to keep her from falling.

BUCKINGHAM  
Lady Clarick?!

Milady grabs a knife from the table and attempts to stab  
Buckingham - he barely avoids the blow. He grabs her arm,  
neutralizes her.

BUCKINGHAM (CONT'D)  
Guards!

**INT. LA ROCHELLE - FIELD HOSPITAL - NIGHT**

Tréville, in his bed, is fast asleep. Whispers are heard nearby.

Mathilde, leaning over Porthos, is changing his bandages.

PORTHOS

It seems to me you enjoy your work.

MATHILDE

Stop moving.

PORTHOS

I can see you're terribly drawn to me.

Mathilde can't help but smile. Porthos sits up straight.

PORTHOS (CONT'D)

(seriously:)

Hear that?

MATHILDE

What?

PORTHOS

The drum rolls...

Mathilde listens. She hears nothing. Porthos comes closer.

PORTHOS (CONT'D)

So it's not a drum roll, it's your heart beating wildly.

Mathilde pushes him away, amused.

MATHILDE

You're incorrigible.

PORTHOS

That's true. Though I don't mind a little correction now and then, if you get my drift.

At that moment, a group of armed soldiers enters. Mathilde and Porthos turn around. The soldiers stop at Tréville's bedside.

OFFICER

Captain, following acts of treason by your men, and by order of the King, you are under arrest.

**EXT. HUGUENOT SHIP - NIGHT**

The Huguenot ship on the high seas.

D'Artagnan and Aramis are at the bow, silent. Athos is watching over his sleeping brother.

**INT. BUCKINGHAM'S MANOR - DINING ROOM - NIGHT**

Buckingham and Constance are having dinner. Constance has lost her appetite, but the Duke is ravenous. He looks at his knife.

BUCKINGHAM

Without you, my child, this would have been the instrument of my demise.

CONSTANCE

I can only imagine what sorrow the Queen would know.

BUCKINGHAM

Then my death wouldn't be that of a stranger for her?

CONSTANCE

You know that.

The Duke smiles.

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)

Your Grace, may I ask what is to become of Milady de Winter?

BUCKINGHAM

Tomorrow at this hour, England will be done with her.

CONSTANCE

And you'll sign that order without regret?

The Duke wipes his mouth.

BUCKINGHAM

Not the slightest one. Among her things, we found an order signed by Richelieu himself. What man would forgive his assassin?

Constance looks down.

BUCKINGHAM (CONT'D)  
If you pity her, bring her a bible.  
I would never prevent a creature  
from kneeling before his creator.

**INT. DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM'S MANOR - CORRIDOR - NIGHT**

Constance walks down a corridor, clutching a bible to her breast.

**INT. DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM'S MANOR - TOWER - NIGHT**

A door guarded by two soldiers. One of them opens the lock for Constance. She goes inside.

**INT. DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM'S MANOR - CELL - NIGHT**

Milady, who had been laying on a bed, rises.

CONSTANCE  
Excuse me. I've come at a bad time.  
You were sleeping.

MILADY  
What better could a sleeping woman  
wish than a gentle awakening?

CONSTANCE  
So you don't blame me?

MILADY  
In all of this I think you're the  
only blameless one.

The two women smile. Constance approaches.

CONSTANCE  
The Duke allowed me to bring you my  
bible.

MILADY  
Is he concerned with my salvation  
or his own?

CONSTANCE  
Whatever the crime, the guilty  
party is sacred before God.



MILADY

Guilty party? Me? God loves martyrs and sometimes allows the conviction of innocents.

CONSTANCE

Didn't you try to kill him?

MILADY

This war will bring catastrophe to France and England. What is one life in the face of hundreds it could save? But I'm not trying you to convert you to my cause. I wouldn't wish my life on you or any woman.

CONSTANCE

Is there anything I can do for you?

Milady takes the young woman's hands in her own.

MILADY

I have only one favor to ask, and if you grant it I shall bless you in this world and the next.

CONSTANCE

Tell me, I promise to do what I can.

MILADY

Fetch me a knife. For only a minute. I beg you.

Constance goes white.

MILADY (CONT'D)

It's not you I blame, but myself. Only a minute and you'll have saved my honor.

CONSTANCE

Kill yourself... But God abandons those who abandon themselves.

MILADY

If God wants to punish me, he will have all eternity to do so. I fear less divine cruelty than that of men, who have already taken everything from me. I have nothing left to lose.

CONSTANCE

But that would make me an  
accomplice in your damnation.

MILADY

Mine was consummated a long time ago. My parents, like yours, sold me off for a pittance. I was only a child and, to obtain a title, they gave me to a master. My body became his possession. When the husband is bored he strays to satisfy his appetite. But who will assuage our disgust? We must remain tethered. Condemned. Once I believed in liberty, but the man to whom I had given all my love, my own husband, became the worst of men. They say we lead a life without danger while they take up the sword. But our lives are a battlefield and our deaths are just as real, though we win no medals. We live our lives in enemy territory. In a world that belongs to men. Since I became a woman, their hands have groped me, soiled me, betrayed me. They shall not kill me as well. My death will be my own.

There are tears in Constance's eyes.

MILADY (CONT'D)

Grant me this favor. I'm counting on you. You're a woman, too.

Constance is about to say something.

MILADY (CONT'D)

Think it over tonight. In the morning, you'll do as your heart dictates.

**EXT. HUGUENOT SHIP - DAWN**

Daybreak. The English coast is in view.

Athos holds his wounded brother close.

ATHOS

We're almost there.

Benjamin grips his arm. He is very weak.

BENJAMIN

I don't have the strength to go on.  
You must speak to Buckingham.

ATHOS

You'll speak to him yourself.

BENJAMIN

If the Duke abandons us, our people  
will starve.

ATHOS

He is your ally. You'll see him,  
you'll persuade him. And when  
you've convinced him, we'll be  
adversaries once again.

Benjamin hands his brother a protestant bible.

BENJAMIN

Keep this with you. It has answers  
to your questions.

Athos hesitates.

BENJAMIN (CONT'D)

On Judgment Day, Gaston will answer  
for his acts of treason.

Athos takes the book.

**INT. DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM'S MANOR - BEDROOM - DAWN**

Kneeling at her bedside, Constance is in prayer.

**EXT. DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM'S MANOR - GROUNDS - DAWN**

Outside the manor. A gallows has been erected.

**EXT. ROADS IN ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE - DAY**

Athos, Aramis and D'Artagnan, escorted on horseback by a  
group of protestants, are galloping through the English  
countryside.

**INT. DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM'S MANOR - BEDROOM - DAY**

Constance slips her cloak on. She pulls the hood up over her  
hair pinned back.

Before exiting, she looks at the bible on her table. Next to it there is a knife.

**INT. DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM'S MANOR - TOWER - DAY**

Constance comes to Milady's cell, still guarded by two men.

**INT. DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM'S MANOR - CELL - DAY**

Milady has tied some material into a makeshift rope. She holds it behind her back, like a garrote.

The door opens then shuts again with Constance inside the cell, facing Milady.

CONSTANCE

You asked me for something I cannot give you.

Behind her back, Milady winds the rope around in her fists.

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)

But I can give you a chance to escape.

Constance removes her cloak and starts to open her dress.

Milady, astonished, hides the rope as she approaches.

MILADY

You'll be accused of treason.

CONSTANCE

That's nothing compared to the fate that awaits you.

Constance hands her the cloak.

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)

Hurry, Milady. I may come to my senses before long.

Constance hides behind the door. Milady, with the cape around her shoulders and the hood over her head, comes out of the cell. She keeps her head lowered as she passes the two guards.

She pads silently into the stairway and disappears.

**EXT. ROAD IN ENGLAND - MANOR - DAY**

The Musketeers ride out of the woods; in the distance, the Duke of Buckingham's manor.

**INT. DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM'S MANOR - TOWER - DAY**

The executioner and two assistants pace up and down the corridor.

The three men arrive at the cell. The guards open the door.

**INT. DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM'S MANOR - CELL - DAY**

The executioner and his men enter. Constance awaits them, dressed as Milady had been dressed.

CONSTANCE

I must speak to the duke.

The two assistants tie her hands behind her back.

CONSTANCE (CONT'D)

I must speak to the Duke. Take me to him.

EXECUTIONER

The Duke ordered me not to listen to a single word out of your mouth.

One of the assistants puts a hood over her head. Constance struggles, in a panic.

CONSTANCE

I am Constance Bonacieux! I am...

The executioner covers her head with a hood.

**EXT. DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM'S MANOR - DAY**

The group of Musketeers rides up to the manor at a gallop.

**EXT. DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM'S MANOR - GROUNDS - DAY**

The executioners' men lead Constance Bonacieux away.

The executioner leads the way. Behind him, the assistants lead the hooded Constance toward the gallows.

The bell tolls.

**EXT. DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM'S MANOR - DAY**

Athos, Aramis and d'Artagnan walk up to the guards. They show a safe-conduct. The bell goes on tolling gloomily.

Athos looks inquiringly to the captain of the guard.

CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD  
(in English)  
They're hanging Richelieu's spy.

The Musketeers exchange a glance.

**INT. DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM'S MANOR - GROUNDS - DAY**

Buckingham calmly looks through on through the window, as the executioners' assistants lead the condemned woman to the gallows. From where he is, he cannot hear her cries.

The executioner puts the rope around her neck.

In one last gasp for survival, Constance lets out a spine-tingling cry of despair.

**INT. ENTRANCE HALL - DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM'S MANOR - DAY**

The cry rings out in the manor. Reaching Buckingham. Reaching the Musketeers. Reaching d'Artagnan - whom it strikes like lightning.

D'ARTAGNAN  
Constance!!!

D'Artagnan starts running, followed by his fellows.

**EXT. DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM'S MANOR - GROUNDS - DAY**

The executioner opens the trap. Constance's body falls. The rope snaps taut.

Constance is swinging in the air, her feet kicking.

D'ARTAGNAN  
NO!!!

Buckingham is stock still as he sees d'Artagnan and the Musketeers rushing up in front of the manor.

D'Artagnan runs to Constance and holds her legs up. He pushes her up, to keep her from suffocating. Aramis jumps up on the gallows platform and slashes the rope.

D'Artagnan falls to his knees, Constance's body falling with him. He rips the hood of her head.

D'ARTAGNAN (CONT'D)  
Constance...

Constance's beautiful face is ghostly white. Her eyes are closed and her whole body is convulsing.

D'ARTAGNAN (CONT'D)  
My friends, help me! Her hands are ice cold. Get a doctor, quick!

Constance slowly opens her eyes.

D'ARTAGNAN (CONT'D)  
She's coming around! Oh God, oh God! Thank you!

CONSTANCE  
D'Artagnan?

D'ARTAGNAN  
I'm here my love.

A weak smile appears in the young woman's face.

CONSTANCE  
You came...

She has a sudden, heart-wrenching coughing fit. A

D'ARTAGNAN  
Don't try to talk.

CONSTANCE  
I'm so happy.

D'Artagnan holds her tight.

D'ARTAGNAN  
Save your breath, I beg you.

CONSTANCE  
I wanted to write to you...

Constance's voice trails off. Aramis looks away, sorrow clouding his eyes.

D'ARTAGNAN  
I know. It doesn't matter. I've found you. I'm here now. I'm going to take you far away from here.

Constance's body is racked with spasms.

CONSTANCE  
Where are you?

D'ARTAGNAN  
I'm right here.

CONSTANCE  
I can't see you anymore.

D'ARTAGNAN  
I'm right here, my love. Can you  
feel my hand? I'm right here.

Constance can barely keep her eyes open.

D'ARTAGNAN (CONT'D)  
I won't leave you. Ever again. Stay  
with me, my love. I'm here. I'll  
always be here.

Constance's eyes open. D'Artagnan gazes into them with an emotional smile, mingling with tears.

D'ARTAGNAN (CONT'D)  
You're going to have to put up with  
me for a long time.

Constance tries to smile. Her lips move but no sound comes out. D'Artagnan leans closer, as close as he can be.

Gathering all her strength, she takes d'Artagnan's face in both her hands and puts her lips on those of the young Musketeer.

All is silence around this kiss.

Constance's hand then slips very slowly down to the ground.

D'Artagnan is now holding only a corpse in his arms.

He has no strength to cry out. He looks every bit as dead as his beloved. He cannot tear his eyes away from her.

Everyone is stunned. Aramis climbs slowly down off the gallows. He walks to Athos, who crosses himself. They look at one another, eyes full of tears.

ARAMIS  
I tell you right now, there is no  
God in heaven.



The Duke of Buckingham comes outside, flanked by several guards.

BUCKINGHAM

My men have picked up her tracks.  
She's surrounded.

**EXT. MANOR OUTBUILDING - MILADY'S HIDEOUT - DAY**

One of the manor outbuildings is on fire. A great number of English guards surround the blazing, smoking building.

The Duke and the Musketeers arrive.

BUCKINGHAM

(in English:)

You'll burn the whole manor down!

CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD

(in English)

She's the one who set the fire, My Lord. To keep us from getting inside.

Buckingham is astonished.

BUCKINGHAM

That woman came from hell. She'll now return to it, perishing in flame.

ATHOS

The crime she committed will be her last.

D'ARTAGNAN

She's going to escape us.

ARAMIS

D'Artagnan...

D'ARTAGNAN

She will die by my hand.

D'Artagnan then rushes into the burning house. His two friends run after him.

ATHOS

NO!!!

**INT. MANOR OUTBUILDING - MILADY'S HIDEOUT - DAY**

D'Artagnan pushes the door open, then locks it behind him. Athos and Aramis can't get inside.

Sword drawn, d'Artagnan walks deeper into the burning building.

D'ARTAGNAN  
Show yourself! Have the courage to  
confront me for once!

MILADY (O.S.)  
Courage? How many of you virtuous  
gentlemen are there outside? 50?  
100?

Milady appears behind him. She is standing on a staircase. They are about thirty feet away, separated by flames.

MILADY (CONT'D)  
Who's the coward?

They look at one another.

D'ARTAGNAN  
You killed Constance.

The news hits Milady like a slap in the face. She seems truly saddened.

MILADY  
She's... dead?

The flames lick at the beams and the wooden staircase.

D'ARTAGNAN  
And it's your fault!

MILADY  
I told you to stay away from her. I  
warned you.

D'Artagnan starts walking toward her.

D'ARTAGNAN  
You are not a woman. You're a  
devil.

MILADY  
I'm like you.

D'Artagnan progresses faster. He screams and runs on, sword first... but just then a part of the roof gives way and collapses at his feet in a blaze.

D'ARTAGNAN  
(screaming:)  
Milady!!!

D'Artagnan looks all around. Through the smoke and flames he glimpses the staircase. He rushes toward it, climbs the steps, then the stairway itself gives way under his feet.

D'Artagnan is trapped. Fire all around him.

But a pair of hands reaches out and grabs him from behind. Athos and Aramis pull him out of the inferno.

**INT. LOUVRE - KING'S COUNCIL CHAMBER - DAY**

The King, the Queen, Cardinal de Richelieu and Gaston look on as Captain de Tréville faces his judges. In the first row of the onlookers at court are Hannibal and Porthos, jaw set tight.

JUDGE  
You are charged with crimes that  
have felled heads greater than your  
own.

DE TRÉVILLE  
Which heads, Your Honor?

JUDGE  
You don't know what you've done?

DE TRÉVILLE  
I know what I've done, but not what  
I'm accused of. I was arrested on  
an order I haven't been allowed to  
examine.

JUDGE  
Well sir...

DE TRÉVILLE  
Captain.

JUDGE  
You are no longer captain.

DE TRÉVILLE  
In your eyes, perhaps, but not in  
mine.

JUDGE

My eyes are the ones that matter here.

DE TRÉVILLE

Then go ahead, Mr. Blind Man.

JUDGE

You are charged with having corresponded with enemies of the realm. You are charged with stealing state secrets. You are charged with liberating spies. You are charged with treason!

DE TRÉVILLE

And who accuses me of these things? If it's not your own imagining?

GASTON

I do! I accuse you!

Gaston is on his feet.

GASTON (CONT'D)

I did not imagine your men. I saw them as I...

At that moment the chamber doors open and Aramis, Athos and d'Artagnan enter, followed by an officer of the Court. Porthos' face lights up.

GASTON (CONT'D)

Guards! Seize those men! They must be tried along with their ring leader!

COURT OFFICER

These gentlemen are in possession of a pardon.

GASTON

Is that right? Signed by whom? The King?

ARAMIS

No, your Grace. By His Eminence.

All eyes turn to the Cardinal. The King looks from Richelieu to the Musketeers.

LOUIS XIII

Musketeer. Show me this document.

Aramis walks to the King and hands him the letter. The whole council is silent as the King reads. He turns to Richelieu.

LOUIS XIII (CONT'D)

(coolly)

This is your handwriting.

ARAMIS

If you will allow me Eminence,  
Captain, I ask to be released from  
our secret so that I may tell the  
truth about our... pact.

Richelieu and Tréville have a hard time hiding their  
puzzlement.

LOUIS XIII

Speak, sir!

ARAMIS

Oh! This is not my secret Sire, I  
therefore cannot tell you without  
their approval.

LOUIS XIII

Well then, Eminence. I'm waiting!

RICHELIEU

You have my permission, Musketeer.

The King turns to Tréville.

DE TRÉVILLE

You have my permission, Aramis.

ARAMIS

Your Highness... the attack on  
Saint-Germain L'Auxerrois revealed  
the existence of a plot at the very  
highest level of the state. You've  
heard the soldier's adage,  
"recognize your friends from afar  
and your enemies from close up." We  
therefore had to infiltrate the  
Huguenot camp in order to expose  
the conspiracy. To see through the  
mask of traitors, one must  
sometimes pose as one. It was  
risky, of course. But a timid  
soldier - like the timid lover - is  
never gratified. Success in love is  
the prize of audacity.

LOUIS XIII

Get to the point. In love as well,  
one must know how to conclude.

Aramis turns to Athos, who hands him Benjamin's bible.

ARAMIS

Captain Tréville and Cardinal  
Richelieu have in their possession  
coded letters which were  
confiscated from terrorists.

Aramis steps forward and places the bible before the King. He  
opens it to the bookmarked page. The page contains the key to  
a code composed of letters and numbers.

ARAMIS (CONT'D)

This will allow you to decode them.  
It will give you the name of the  
traitor.

Aramis then turns to the captain.

ARAMIS (CONT'D)

Captain, you will cede your place  
to a head greater than your own.

Aramis looks at Gaston.

The King slowly turns his head toward his brother.

**EXT. MUSKETEER TOWNHOUSE - DAY**

Tréville and the Musketeers enter to the cheers of the  
company. Everyone exchanges congratulations. Hannibal and  
Porthos are both there. Further on, Mathilde. (*Camera passes  
from group to group.*)

- The captain throws his arms around Athos.

DE TRÉVILLE

Reasons of state sometimes reasons  
beyond my reason. I'm too old for  
all this.

ATHOS

You have more reason than the whole  
regiment, Captain.

DE TRÉVILLE

You've earned that rank now.

ATHOS

I can't accept. I've already made a promise I must honor.

- Porthos embraces Aramis, who quickly breaks free.

PORTHOS

My friend!

ARAMIS

Look at me! What joy to see you on your feet and fit! Keep this up and you'll soon be fatter than my sister.

PORTHOS

Hmm.... Speaking of Mathilde...

ARAMIS

What is it?

PORTHOS

I think I've found a father for her child.

They look at Mathilde, speaking with d'Artagnan.

ARAMIS

Ah! A nobleman?

PORTHOS

Naturally.

ARAMIS

A soldier?

Porthos nods.

ARAMIS (CONT'D)

Gentle and good-looking?

PORTHOS

Oh yes.

ARAMIS

Do you think I'll like him?

PORTHOS

I do indeed.

ARAMIS

And Mathilde? You know how she is. She's so...

PORTHOS

I believe he has rather made an impression on her.

ARAMIS

(confidential)

And is this man willing to marry her in her current condition?

PORTHOS

Yes.

ARAMIS

What a relief. I'll be eternally grateful. You are truly a brother to me.

PORTHOS

A brother-in-law. If your father accepts my proposal.

Aramis suddenly gets it. Mathilde joins them, smiling brightly. Porthos puts his arm around her waist.

MATHILDE

If you still intend to take your vows, we'd be delighted if you would perform the ceremony.

- Athos is joined by d'Artagnan.

D'ARTAGNAN

Athos!... The captain told me you refused to succeed him.

ATHOS

It's too much for me. And for Comte de la Fère, it's too late.

D'ARTAGNAN

You're leaving then?

ATHOS

Yes.

D'Artagnan is moved.

D'ARTAGNAN

You leave me with my bitter memories.

ATHOS

You're young. Your bitter memories have time to sweeten.



Athos gets on his horse.

ATHOS (CONT'D)  
Don't forget to cry, d'Artagnan.  
Cry with your heart full of love,  
youth and life. Believe me, I would  
love to cry like you can.

Athos kicks his horse and takes off at a gallop. D'Artagnan watches him go for a moment. Then he walks slowly toward Aramis, Porthos, Hannibal, Mathilde and the other Musketeers.

And he is swept up in a joyous saraband.

**EXT. ROADS OF FRANCE - NIGHT**

Athos gallops over country roads.

**EXT. CHÂTEAU DE LA FÈRE - NIGHT**

Athos rides out of the cold night, and enters his estate along the lane of willows.

**INT. CHÂTEAU DE LA FÈRE - ENTRANCE HALL - NIGHT**

Smiling, Athos enters. He puts his bag down. He thinks he's heard a sound.

ATHOS  
Marguerite?

Athos walks on. He opens a door and finds...

**INT. CHÂTEAU DE LA FÈRE - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Marguerite in tears in the kitchen. She looks up.

MARGUERITE  
I'm sorry, My Lord. I'm sorry.  
There was nothing I could do.

Athos goes white, turns around.

ATHOS  
(calling:)  
Joseph?!

**INT. CHÂTEAU DE LA FÈRE - ENTRANCE HALL - NIGHT**

Athos runs up the stairs as fast as he can and goes into...

ATHOS

Joseph!!!

**INT. CHÂTEAU DE LA FÈRE - JOSEPH'S ROOM - NIGHT**

...Joseph's empty bedroom, lit by a single candle.

Athos teeters as he walks to his son's bed. His face is twisted into a soundless cry of terror.

The bed is empty.

In plain sight, on the missing Joseph's pillow, there is only Milady's second white pearl earring (seen in sc. 105), left there like some kind of diabolical present.

THE END

To be continued:

THE THREE MUSKETEERS

Chapter 3

- THE MASK OF IRON -