



The Three Musketeers

Alexandre Dumas

READERS FOR UZBEKISTAN

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INTRODUCTION

Alexandre Dumas was born in France in 1802. His grandparents on his father's side were a French ~~problem~~ and an Afro-Caribbean slave. His father was a soldier in Napoleon Bonaparte's army, rising eventually to the rank of general. His father fell out of favour and died in 1806, and the family was left penniless. Dumas had to educate himself, and he eventually found work as a clerk. He moved to Paris in 1823 and, because he had beautiful handwriting, was employed by the Duke of Orléans. In 1830 Dumas was a captain of artillery in the National Guard and took part in the popular ~~revolution~~ that saw King Charles X replaced by Louis-Philippe, formerly the Duke of Orléans.

Dumas's first love, though, was writing. He wrote pieces for the theatre, magazines and – following the new press freedom that was a result of the 1830 revolution – newspapers. He wrote over 250 books with the help of 73 assistants, including travelogues, histories, memoirs, plays, novels, children's stories and a ~~reference~~ dictionary. His most famous works are *The Three Musketeers* (1844) and *The Count of Monte Cristo* (1845), both of which were inspired by his own ~~involvement~~ in French politics and events in his father's life – as well as taking part in many battles his father had at various times been ~~poisoned~~ and imprisoned.

Despite his fame, Dumas had ~~passive~~ debts and had to ~~see~~ France to escape his creditors. During his ~~exile~~ he visited Russia and helped in the Italian ~~struggle~~ for independence under Garibaldi. For four years he was keeper of museums in Naples. He returned to France and eventually died in 1870. His final words are believed to ~~refer~~ to the book he was writing at the time: 'I shall never know how it all comes out now'.

INTRODUCTION

One of his sons became a well-known writer – he was also called Alexandre Dumas. They are known as Dumas père and Dumas fils (the French words for father and son).

CHAPTER 1

D'ARTAGNAN GOES TO PARIS

ON the first Monday of the month of April, 1626, a young man arrived in the French market-town of Meung. We can **sketch** his portrait in a few words. Imagine a Don Quixote* of eighteen, dressed in a **rusty** woollen jacket; his face long and brown, with high **forehead**, intelligent eyes, and a **determined** chin. He **wore** a cap set off with a feather, such as all Gascons* wear. Too big for a boy, too small for a grown man, he might have been a farmer's son, except for the long **sword** which hit against his legs as he walked, and against the rough side of his horse when he rode. This horse was a Béarn* pony, from twelve to fourteen years old, yellow-skinned, and without a hair in its tail. It had been given to D'Artagnan (for so the young man was named) by his father, and the youth did not like to refuse the pony; but he knew how foolish such a horse made him seem, even though he was an excellent horseman.

'My son,' said the old Gascon gentleman, D'Artagnan the elder, 'I have nothing to give you except fifteen **écus**, my horse, and some good advice, but I want you to go to Paris and offer to serve our king, Louis XIII. Be proud and **brave** in all things. Take no orders **not** from anyone except Monsieur* the cardinal* and the king. You are young. You ought to be **brave** for two reasons: first, because you are a Gascon; and secondly, because you are my son. **Never fear** **quarrels**, but seek adventures. I have taught you how to handle a **sword**; you have muscles of iron and a **will of steel**. Fight on all **occasions**. Fight all the more

because duels* are forbidden; because there is, for this reason, twice as much courage in fighting. I have only one thing to add, and that is to hold up an example for you. I am speaking of M. de Tréville, who was formerly my neighbour, and who had the honour to be, as a child, the playfellow of our king. He is now captain of the king's musketeers*. Go to him with this letter, and follow his example in all things.'

And this is why the young D'Artagnan, on that April day in 1626, came to the city of Meung. He had decided to spend the night there on his way to Paris.

As he dismounted from his horse at the gate of an inn called the Jolly Miller, the young man saw—through an open window on the ground floor—a gentleman talking with two people who were listening to him with respect. D'Artagnan could clearly hear their conversation, and as he listened, the gentleman made some witty and amusing remarks about the Béarnese pony. His two listeners laughed, but D'Artagnan was insulted. He pulled his cap down over his eyes and walked forward angrily, with one hand on the hilt of his sword. His anger increased at every step, and at last he shouted,

'I say, sir, you, sir, who are hiding behind that window, tell me what you are laughing at, and we will laugh together!'

The gentleman raised his eyes slowly from the horse to its owner, and replied coldly, 'I was not speaking to you, sir.'

'But I am speaking to you!' replied the young man, more angry than ever at this mixture of politeness and scorn.

The unknown man looked at him again with a slight smile, and, leaving the window, came out of the inn and stood close to the horse and D'Artagnan.

'This horse must, in its youth, have been a buttercup*,'

he said, still speaking to his listeners at the window and not paying the least attention to D'Artagnan. 'It is a colour very well known in botany*, but, until now, very rare among horses.' He turned to re-enter the inn, but D'Artagnan drew his sword and followed him, crying,

'Turn, turn, sir, or I shall strike you from behind!'

'Strike me?' said the other, turning round in astonishment. 'Why, my good fellow, you must be mad!'

But D'Artagnan attacked him so fiercely that, if he had not jumped quickly backwards, he might never have spoken again. Seeing that the young Gascon was deadly serious, the stranger drew his sword and prepared to fight. But at the same moment his two listeners, accompanied by the inn-keeper, attacked D'Artagnan with sticks and stones, and the stranger became a spectator of the fight. D'Artagnan fought bravely, but at last his sword was broken in two pieces, and a blow on his forehead brought him to the ground, covered with blood and almost fainting.

The inn-keeper and his servants carried the wounded man into his kitchen, where his wounds were attended to. The unknown stranger returned to his place at the window, where the inn-keeper joined him a few minutes later. 'I hope your Excellency is safe and unhurt?' he said.

'Oh, yes, perfectly safe, my good man,' the stranger replied. 'And now tell me, what has happened to the young man?'

'He is better, sir. He fainted, and during his fainting fit we examined his luggage and found nothing but a clean shirt and twelve crowns. A letter addressed to M. de Tréville, captain of the musketeers, was in his pocket.'

'Indeed!' said the stranger to himself. 'Can Tréville have sent this Gascon to attack me?' He turned to the

inn-keeper. 'Where is he now?' he asked. 'Is his luggage with him? Has he taken off his coat?'

'No, everything is in the kitchen, sir,' replied the other. 'And my wife has taken the young man up to our room.'

'Well, give me my bill and call my servant,' said the stranger. 'It is not necessary for Milady to be seen by this fellow,' he continued to himself as the inn-keeper left the room. 'She will be here soon. I had better go and meet her. I should like, however, to know what is in this letter to Tréville.' And he went quietly towards the kitchen.

Meanwhile the inn-keeper returned to his private room and found D'Artagnan, with his head tied up with a bandage, just beginning to descend the stairs. On arriving at the kitchen, the first thing D'Artagnan saw was his enemy talking calmly at the step of a carriage to a



D'Artagnan saw his enemy talking at the step of a carriage

young woman of about twenty years of age. As she leaned out of the carriage window, D'Artagnan saw that she was very beautiful: pale and fair, with long curls falling over her shoulders, and large blue eyes.

'His Eminence*, then, orders me to return at once to England,' she said. 'What about my other instructions?'

'They are in this box, Milady,' replied the stranger.

'Very well. And what will you do?'

'I shall return to Paris.'

At that moment D'Artagnan, who had heard everything, rushed out of the inn. The stranger turned towards him, but Milady cried, 'Remember that the least delay may ruin everything.'

'You are right,' cried the gentleman, and, bowing to the lady, he sprang to his saddle and rode off towards Paris. Milady's coachman* applied his whip to his horses, and set off in the opposite direction.

'Coward!' cried D'Artagnan, jumping forward; but his wound had left him weak and dizzy and he fainted for the second time.

On the following morning, however, D'Artagnan arose and went down to the kitchen without help. He asked for his bill, but when the time came for him to pay, he found nothing in his pocket except his old velvet purse containing the twelve crowns. The letter addressed to M. de Tréville had disappeared.

'My letter of recommendation!' cried D'Artagnan.

'My letter of recommendation! I warn you that that letter is for M. de Tréville, and it must be found!'

'That letter is not lost,' said the inn-keeper. 'It has been stolen from you.'

'Stolen! By whom?'

'By the gentleman who was here yesterday. He came down into the kitchen where your coat was. He remained there for some time, alone. I am sure he has stolen it.'

'Do you think so?' asked D'Artagnan doubtfully.

'I am sure of it,' continued the inn-keeper. 'When I told him that you were the *protégé** of M. de Tréville, and that you had a letter for him, he was very much disturbed. He asked me where that letter was, and came down at once to the kitchen.'

'Then that's my thief,' said D'Artagnan. 'I will complain to M. de Tréville, and he will complain to the king.' He took two crowns from his purse and gave them to the inn-keeper. Then he remounted his yellow horse, and rode without any more accidents to one of the gates of Paris. Here he sold the horse for three crowns, and entered Paris on foot.

He walked about until he found a cheap boarding-house where he booked a room for the night. Next he went to have a new blade put to his sword. After this, he went to bed and slept the sleep of the brave, full of hopes for the future.

CHAPTER 2

M. DE TRÉVILLE'S HOUSE

M. de Tréville was a great friend of the French king, Louis XIII. The king had made Tréville the captain of his musketeers, that band of soldiers who were Louis XIII's most devoted and loyal guards.

Now, the most powerful man in France at that time, after the king, was the cardinal, Richelieu. When Richelieu saw the strong and chosen body of soldiers by which Louis XIII surrounded himself, he decided that he, too, must have his guard. He had his musketeers, therefore, just as the king had his, and these two powerful rivals competed with each other in obtaining the most

famous swordsmen. It was not uncommon for Richelieu and Louis XIII to argue over their evening game of chess upon the merits of their servants. Each boasted about the strength and courage of his own musketeers, and it was only natural that the soldiers themselves supported their own masters, and seized every chance to fight and quarrel with the other side.

The king's musketeers (or rather, M. de Tréville's) took great pleasure in annoying the guards of the cardinal whenever they met them, and there were frequent fights in the streets.

The day on which D'Artagnan called at the house of M. de Tréville, he found the staircase and entrance hall crowded with noisy soldiers. The centre of the most lively group was a musketeer of great height, and proud face, whose name appeared to be Porthos. With him was another musketeer, called Aramis, who was a complete contrast to him. Aramis was a stout man of about twenty-two, with an open, kindly face, gentle black eyes and rosy cheeks. He spoke little and slowly, and laughed without noise, showing his fine teeth.

As D'Artagnan stood watching these men and waiting his turn to be admitted to M. de Tréville's presence, the curtain at the end of the hall was pushed aside, and a noble and handsome head, frightfully pale, appeared.

'Athos!' cried the musketeers, and Aramis stepped forward, saying, 'Athos! Are you recovered from your wound?'

'M. de Tréville sent for me,' replied Athos in a weak but calm voice, 'and I have hurried to receive his orders.'

'And yesterday the cardinal's soldiers left you for dead!' exclaimed Porthos with a laugh. 'But it takes more than a fight with a handful of his Eminence's guards to kill so brave a man as Athos!'

At this moment a servant appeared and said, 'M. de Tréville awaits M. D'Artagnan.' The young man crossed the hall and entered the room of the captain of the musketeers. He was grateful to be seeing Tréville at last, but he was sorry to miss the further conversation of the waiting musketeers.

However, D'Artagnan was to meet the three musketeers again more suddenly than he expected. His interview with M. de Tréville ended in disappointment, for the captain of the musketeers told D'Artagnan that no one was admitted to his guards who had not proved his courage in battle.

'You are scarcely more than a boy,' Tréville said. 'But I respected your father very much, D'Artagnan, and I should like to help his son. You must learn to become perfect in all the arts of war. I will write a letter to the director of the Royal Academy*, and tomorrow he will admit you without any expense to yourself. You will learn horsemanship, dancing, and all kinds of sword-fighting. From time to time you can call upon me, to tell me how you are getting on, and later I will see if I can help you further.'

And D'Artagnan had to be content with this for the time being. While M. de Tréville was writing the letter to the director, D'Artagnan amused himself with looking out of the window at the musketeers, who went away one after the other, disappearing at the corner of the street.

M. de Tréville finished the letter, sealed it, and approached the young man in order to give it to him. But at that very moment D'Artagnan leaned forward suddenly, and then, his face red with anger, rushed from the room, crying, 'By God, he shall not escape me this time!'

D'Artagnan had seen his enemy, the mysterious man

from Meung, walking down the street! In a state of fury, he crossed the hall in three strides and was rushing towards the stairs when he ran head foremost against a musketeer.

'Excuse me,' he said, 'but I am in a hurry.'

A strong hand seized him by the belt and stopped him.

'You are in a hurry?' said the musketeer, as white as a sheet. 'You bump into a wounded man. You say,

"Excuse me!" and you believe that is enough? Not at all, my young man!'

'Upon my word!' said D'Artagnan, recognising Athos. 'I did not do it on purpose, and therefore I think it is quite enough to say "Excuse me!" I repeat to you that I am in great haste. I therefore beg of you to let me go about my business.'

'Monsieur,' said Athos, letting him go. 'If you are in such a hurry now, you can find me without haste, later. Do you understand?'

D'Artagnan understood at once that Athos was challenging* him to a duel. 'I understand,' he said proudly. 'Where? And at what time?'

'Near the Carmes-Deschaux, about noon,' replied Athos. 'Don't keep me waiting, for at a quarter past twelve I will cut off your ears as you run.'

'Good!' cried D'Artagnan, 'I will be there at ten minutes to twelve.' And he set off running, hoping that he might yet find the stranger from Meung.

But at the street-gate Porthos was talking to the soldier on guard. There was just enough room for a man to pass between the two talkers, and D'Artagnan sprang forward. But he had reckoned without the wind, which at that moment blew out Porthos's long cloak, and D'Artagnan rushed straight into the middle of it. Naturally wishing to escape from the cloak, which blinded him, he tried to find his way from under its folds.

'Bless me,' cried Porthos, making equally strong efforts to get rid of D'Artagnan; 'you must be mad to run into people in this way.'

'Excuse me,' said D'Artagnan, reappearing at last, 'but I am in such a hurry—I was running after someone and—'

'Well,' said Porthos angrily, 'you are in danger of getting punished if you annoy musketeers in this fashion.'

'Punished, Monsieur?' said D'Artagnan. 'The expression is a strong one. May I suggest that we meet again—when you haven't your cloak on?'

'At one o'clock then, behind the Luxembourg,' replied Porthos coldly.

One duel at noon and another at one o'clock! D'Artagnan was in for a busy day. 'Very well—at one o'clock,' he replied, and turned the corner of the street.

But there was no stranger, either in the street he had passed through or in the one which he now entered. The unknown enemy had gone on his way, or perhaps had entered some house. No one had seen him.

So D'Artagnan returned slowly to his lodgings, to cool his head and his anger, and to wait until twelve o'clock.

CHAPTER 3

THE KING'S MUSKETEERS AND THE CARDINAL'S GUARDS

D'ARTAGNAN knew nobody in Paris, so he went to his appointment with Athos without a second*, ready to be satisfied with someone of Athos's choice. When D'Artagnan arrived at the bare field outside the monastery, Athos had been waiting about five minutes and twelve o'clock was just striking.

Athos was still suffering from his wound, and was seated on a post, waiting, with his usual calm expression and noble air. At sight of D'Artagnan, he arose and came forward politely, and D'Artagnan greeted him with hat in hand, his feather even touching the ground as he bowed.

'Monsieur,' said Athos, 'I have arranged for two of my friends to act as seconds, but they have not yet arrived.'

'For my part I have no seconds, Monsieur,' said D'Artagnan. 'I only arrived in Paris yesterday, and I know no one except M. de Tréville.'

'I am sure one of my friends will be honoured to act for you,' said Athos politely. 'Ah! here they come!'

In fact, the gigantic Porthos appeared round the corner at that moment, closely followed by Aramis.

'What!' cried D'Artagnan, 'is your first supporter M. Porthos?'

'Yes, and Aramis is the other one. Did you not know that we are always together, and that we are called the Three Inseparables?'

In the meantime Porthos had arrived. He waved his hand to Athos, and then looked at D'Artagnan in astonishment. (Let us say, in passing, that he had removed his cloak.)

'Why, what does this mean?' he asked.

'This is the gentleman I am going to fight with,' said Athos.

'But I am also going to fight with him!' exclaimed Porthos.

'But not until one o'clock,' replied D'Artagnan. He turned to Athos. 'And now, Monsieur, I am ready when you are,' he said.

'When you please, Monsieur,' said Athos, putting himself on guard*.

But at this moment a company of the cardinal's guards, commanded by a M. de Jussac, turned the corner of the convent.

'The cardinal's guards!' cried Aramis and Porthos at the same time. 'Sheathe* your swords, gentlemen, sheathe your swords!'

But it was too late. The two men had been seen with drawn swords, and there was no doubt of their intentions.

'Hallo!' cried Jussac, coming towards them. 'You're fighting here, are you? And what about the laws against duelling?'

'You are very generous, gentlemen of the guards,' said Athos, full of anger. 'If we were to see you fighting, I can assure you we should make no effort to stop you. Leave us alone, then.'

'Gentlemen, I am afraid that is impossible,' said Jussac. 'It is my duty to stop you. Sheathe your swords, if you please, and follow us.'

'There are five of them,' said Athos quietly, 'and we are only three. We shall be beaten! But, for my part, I declare I shall never be taken alive by one of the cardinal's men!'

Athos, Porthos, and Aramis at once drew near one another, while Jussac collected his soldiers closer together. D'Artagnan did not hesitate a moment. Turning towards Athos and his friends, he said, 'Gentlemen, allow me to correct your words. You said you were only three, but it seems to me that we are four.'

'But you are not one of us,' said Porthos.

'That's true,' replied D'Artagnan. 'I do not wear your uniform, but my heart is that of a musketeer.'

'Leave us, young man!' said Jussac. 'You may go; we agree to that. Save yourself, and go quickly.'

D'Artagnan did not move.

'You are a brave fellow,' said Athos. 'What is your name?'

'D'Artagnan, Monsieur.'

'Well then, Athos, Porthos, Aramis, and D'Artagnan, forward!' cried Athos.

And the nine men attacked each other fiercely. Athos began to fight a certain Cahusac, a favourite of the cardinal's. Porthos had Bicarar, and Aramis was attacked by two enemies. As for D'Artagnan, he found himself fighting Jussac himself.

The heart of the young Gascon beat as if it would burst. He fought like a tiger. Jussac was a fine swordsman and had had much practice; nevertheless, it needed all his skill to defend himself against the fury of the



The nine men attacked each other fiercely

young man's attack. At last he grew angry, and began to make mistakes. D'Artagnan redoubled his attack, glided like a snake beneath Jussac's blade, and passed his sword through his body. Jussac fell like a dead man.

D'Artagnan then threw a quick glance over the field of battle. Aramis had killed one of his enemies and was well able to defend himself against the other. Both Bicarot and Porthos were wounded, but neither wound was serious and they only fought the more earnestly. Athos, wounded anew by Cahusac, was deathly pale, but did not give way a foot. He only changed his sword, and fought with his left hand.

According to the laws of duelling, D'Artagnan was free to help any of them. While he was trying to decide which of his companions needed him most, he caught a glance from Athos. This glance was full of meaning. Athos would have died rather than ask for help; but he could look! D'Artagnan at once ran to the side of Cahusac, crying, 'To me, Monsieur guardsman; I will kill you!'

Cahusac turned. It was time; for Athos, whose great courage alone supported him, sank upon his knee.

'Don't kill him!' he cried to D'Artagnan. 'I have an old affair to settle with him when I am recovered. Disarm * him only. That's it! Well done!' he exclaimed, as Cahusac's sword flew out of his hand across the field. D'Artagnan and Cahusac both ran to get it, but D'Artagnan reached it first and placed his foot upon it.

Cahusac immediately ran to the guardsman whom Aramis had killed, and seized his sword. He returned towards D'Artagnan, but on his way he met Athos, who had now recovered a little, and who, for fear that D'Artagnan would kill his enemy, wanted to continue the fight. He did so, and in a few minutes Cahusac fell, with

a sword-thrust through his throat. At the same moment, Aramis placed his sword-point on the breast of his fallen enemy, and forced him to ask for mercy; and a few minutes later Bicarot was also forced to surrender to Porthos.

Leaving the wounded men at the doorway of the convent, the three musketeers and D'Artagnan returned joyfully to the town. The heart of D'Artagnan swam with joy. 'I am not yet a musketeer,' he said to his new friends, 'but at least I am learning fast, aren't I?'

CHAPTER 4

HIS MAJESTY KING LOUIS XIII

The fight was discussed everywhere. M. de Tréville scolded his musketeers in public, and congratulated them in private; and the king himself was amused, and interested to meet these four young men who had deca five of the cardinal's bravest guardsmen. He was particularly astonished that the young D'Artagnan should have conquered M. de Jussac.

'He wounded Jussac!' he exclaimed. 'Tréville, that's impossible! Jussac is one of the finest swordsmen in the kingdom.'

'Well, sire *, for once he found his master,' replied Tréville.

'I will see this young man, Tréville,' said the king. 'Bring him and the other three to the palace at midday tomorrow, and I will see them all.'

The next day at noon M. de Tréville placed himself with the four young men in the great hall of the palace. The king had not yet returned from hunting. Our young men had been waiting about half an hour, amid

a crowd of courtiers, when all the doors were thrown open and his Majesty was announced. He moved at once towards Tréville's group.

'Come in, my fine fellows,' he said, waving his hand towards his private rooms. 'Come in. I am going to scold you.'

The musketeers followed him, D'Artagnan closely behind them.

'What's all this?' continued the king. 'Four of his Eminence's guards seriously wounded by you four! If you go on like this, the cardinal will be forced to renew his company in three weeks!'

'Your Majesty sees that they are humble and repentant,' said Tréville with a slight smile at the four men.

'Humble and repentant, indeed!' said the king. 'I can see no sign of sorrow on their faces. In particular, one of them has a very Gascon look. Come here, Monsieur,' he said to D'Artagnan, and the young man stepped forward. 'Why, this is a boy, Tréville, a mere boy!' exclaimed the king. 'Do you mean to say that it was he who wounded Jussac?'

'Not only that,' said Athos, 'but if he had not rescued me from the hands of Cahusac, I should not now be here.'

'Why, he is a very devil, this Gascon!' laughed his Majesty. 'Now—Gascons are always poor, are they not?' He turned to his secretary. 'La Chesnaye, go and see if you can find forty pistoles* in my pockets, and bring them to me. And now tell us, young men, how all this happened.'

D'Artagnan told the adventure of the preceding day in all its details; and a few minutes later La Chesnaye returned with a handful of gold which the king gave to D'Artagnan. 'Here,' he said, 'is proof of my satisfaction.'

D'Artagnan put his forty pistoles into his pocket and thanked his Majesty greatly.

'And now you may go,' said the king, looking at the clock. 'Thank you for your devotion, gentlemen. I hope I may continue to depend on it.'

'Oh, sire!' cried the four companions with one voice. 'We would allow ourselves to be cut into pieces in your Majesty's service.'

'Well, well, but keep yourselves whole, and then you will be more useful to me!' Tréville, added the king in a low voice, as the others were leaving the room, 'as you have no room in the musketeers, place this young man in the guards of your brother-in-law, M. d'Essart.' He waved his hand to Tréville, who thanked him and re-joined the musketeers, whom he found sharing the forty pistoles with D'Artagnan.

CHAPTER 5

A COURT PLOT

D'ARTAGNAN joined M. d'Essart's guards the following day. He rented a couple of rooms, and took on a servant called Planchet; and he spent much of his time in training and sword-practice at the Academy.

One afternoon a few days later, there was a knock on his door and a man entered and introduced himself as his landlord, Bonacieux.

D'Artagnan offered his visitor a chair, and then waited politely to hear what he had to say.

'I have heard that you are a very brave young man,' began the landlord. 'For this reason I have decided to tell you a secret and ask for your help.'

'Speak, Monsieur, speak,' said D'Artagnan, at once sensing an adventure.

'My wife is a seamstress* to the queen, Monsieur,' the landlord said, 'and yesterday morning she was seized and carried away, just as she came out of her workroom.'

'Who seized her?'

'I know nothing for certain, Monsieur, but I suspect a man who has been following her for a long time.'

'Indeed?' said D'Artagnan. 'And what do you suspect, Monsieur?'

'I suspect,' said the landlord slowly, 'that she has been taken prisoner for political reasons, Monsieur. It is well known that my wife is devoted to the queen, and she was given this job near her so that the poor queen might at least have someone whom she could trust. We all know how much the king neglects her and the cardinal dislikes her.'

'Ah! I am beginning to understand,' said D'Artagnan.

'Now, my wife came home four days ago, Monsieur, and told me that the queen was filled with anxiety. She believes that someone has written to the Duke of Buckingham* in her name.'

'The duke! In the queen's name*?'

'Yes, to make him come to Paris. And when he is here, they will find some way of killing him.'

'But your wife, Monsieur. What has she to do with all this?' asked D'Artagnan.

'It is known how much she loves the queen,' replied Bonacieux. 'They wish to frighten her, in order to obtain the queen's secrets, or to make use of her as a spy.'

'Yes, that is quite possible,' said D'Artagnan. 'But do you know this man who has kidnapped* her?'

'I do not know his name, but I know that he is the cardinal's spy. And I know what he looks like. My wife pointed him out to me one day.'

'Is he easy to recognise?'

'Oh, certainly; he has black hair, a dark complexion, and a scar on his cheek.'

'A scar on his cheek!' exclaimed D'Artagnan. 'Why, that must be my man from Meung.'

'He is your man, do you say? Do you know him?' cried the landlord.

'Yes, yes! But where can we find him?' D'Artagnan said. 'Do you know where he lives?'

'No. But I have received a letter.' Bonacieux took a paper from his pocket and gave it to D'Artagnan. 'I received it this morning,' he explained.

D'Artagnan opened it and read, "Do not seek your wife. She will be returned to you when we no longer need her. If you make a single step to find her you are lost."

Well, that's fairly positive, Monsieur. But after all, it is only a threat.'

'Yes, but the threat terrifies me. I am not a fighting man at all, and I am hoping you will help me,' said the frightened landlord.

'Yes?' said D'Artagnan.

'You are constantly seen with a group of M. de Tréville's musketeers,' Bonacieux explained. 'You must, therefore, be enemies of the cardinal, and I thought that you and your friends would enjoy helping our poor queen—and at the same time you would be annoying his Eminence!' The poor man looked at D'Artagnan hopefully. 'I will give you fifty pistoles, Monsieur, if you will help me in this matter. You may also continue to live here without paying any rent.' He moved towards D'Artagnan, who was standing by the window, and happened to look down into the street. 'Look—!' he cried.

'Where?' said D'Artagnan.

'In the street, facing your window—in that doorway opposite. A man wrapped in a cloak.'

'It is he!' cried D'Artagnan, seizing his sword. 'This time he shall not escape me!'

He rushed out of the room, and on the staircase he met the three musketeers who were coming to see him. They separated, and D'Artagnan rushed between them like an arrow.

'Hey! Where are you going?' they cried.

'The man of Meung!' replied D'Artagnan, and disappeared.

D'Artagnan had often told his friends about his adventure in Meung, so they understood what was happening. They thought that, after catching his man, or losing sight of him, D'Artagnan would return to his rooms, so they kept on their way.

CHAPTER 6

D'ARTAGNAN REVEALS HIS AIMS

As the musketeers had foreseen, at the end of a half-hour D'Artagnan returned. He had again missed his man, who had disappeared as if by magic. D'Artagnan had run, sword in hand, through all the neighbouring streets, but without success. At last he went back to his room, his face red with heat and anger.

'Well?' cried the three musketeers.

'Well!' cried D'Artagnan, throwing his sword upon the bed. 'The man must be the devil himself; he has disappeared like a ghost. And his disappearance has cost us fifty pistoles, gentlemen.'

'How is that?' cried Porthos and Aramis in one breath. Athos remained silent, as usual, but his face was alive with interest.

D'Artagnan told his friends the conversation he had

had with his landlord. 'And think!' he ended. 'There is a helpless woman in the affair!—a woman who may be cruelly treated, just because she is faithful to her masters.'

'Be careful, D'Artagnan!' said Aramis. 'I think you grow a little too warm about the fate of Madame Bonacieux!'

'I am not anxious about Madame Bonacieux,' said D'Artagnan, 'but about the queen, whom the king neglects, and the cardinal persecutes, and who sees the heads* of all her friends fall, one after another.'

'Why does she love our enemies, the Spaniards and the English?' said Porthos.

'Spain* is her country,' replied D'Artagnan, 'and it is natural she should love the Spanish. As to the second reproach, I have heard it said that she does not love the English, but an Englishman.'

'And indeed, I think this Englishman is worthy of her love,' said Athos. 'The duke is a very noble and handsome man.'

D'Artagnan agreed, adding, 'If I knew where the Duke of Buckingham was, I would lead him to the queen, just to make the cardinal angry! For our true enemy, gentlemen, is the cardinal.'

'Did your landlord tell you, D'Artagnan, that the queen thought that Buckingham had been brought over by a forged* letter?' asked Athos.

'Yes. And now I am certain,' replied D'Artagnan, 'that this kidnapping of the queen's woman is connected with it all.'

'The Gascon is full of ideas,' said Porthos, with admiration.

'I like to hear him talk,' said Athos. 'His accent amuses me.'

'Gentlemen, gentlemen, do not let us waste time in

joking,' said D'Artagnan. 'Let us seek Bonacieux's wife—I am sure she is the key to the mystery.'

At this moment a sudden noise of footsteps was heard on the stairs. The door was thrown open, and the unfortunate landlord rushed into the room.

'Save me, gentlemen, save me!' he cried. 'There are four men come to arrest me. Save me! Save me!'

Porthos and Aramis rose to their feet.

'Wait!' cried D'Artagnan. 'It is not courage that is needed; it is caution.'

At this moment four guards appeared at the door of the room, but seeing four musketeers there, they paused.

'Come in, gentlemen, come in!' said D'Artagnan politely. 'We are all faithful servants to the king and cardinal.'

'Then you will not prevent us from carrying out our orders?' said the leader of the guards.

'On the contrary, we will help you if necessary,' said D'Artagnan.

'But you promised me—' whispered the poor Bonacieux.

'We can only save you if we are free ourselves,' replied D'Artagnan quickly, in a low voice. 'And if we defend you now, they will arrest us with you.' He turned to the guards and went on, 'Come, gentlemen, come! I have no reason for defending Monsieur. I saw him today for the first time, when he came to ask me for the rent. Come, come, gentlemen, remove the fellow!' D'Artagnan pushed the unhappy man towards the guards, and the officers, full of thanks, took away their prisoner.

'What a wicked thing you have done!' said Porthos, when the four friends were alone again. 'It is shameful for four musketeers to allow an unfortunate fellow to be arrested like that!'

'Porthos,' said Aramis, 'Athos has often told you that

you are a fool, and I agree with him. D'Artagnan, you are a great man!'

'What!' said Porthos, completely puzzled. 'Do you approve of what he has done?'

'Indeed I do,' said Athos. 'I not only approve, but I congratulate him.'

'And now, gentlemen,' said D'Artagnan, without bothering to explain his action to Porthos; 'All for one, one for all,—that is our motto*, is it not?'

'And yet—' said Porthos.

'Hold out your hand and swear!' cried Athos and Aramis at once.

Overcome by their example, but grumbling to himself, nevertheless, Porthos stretched out his hand, and the four friends repeated with one voice the words spoken by D'Artagnan:—

'All for one, one for all!'

'Good!' said D'Artagnan. 'Now, let every one return to his home, and remember, that from now on, the cardinal is our most bitter enemy!'

CHAPTER 7

D'ARTAGNAN MEETS THE DUKE

LATER that day D'Artagnan set off to call on M. de Treville. As he reached the end of his street he saw two people walking away from him: they were a man and a woman, and he was almost certain that the man was Aramis. The woman had a cloak about her head and the man held a handkerchief to his face. Obviously they did not want to be recognised. They went across the bridge, and D'Artagnan followed them. He was by now quite sure that the man was Aramis, for he was dressed in the uniform of a musketeer. They saw that they were



D'Artagnan saw two people walking away from him

being followed, and increased their speed. D'Artagnan passed them, and then returned so as to meet them exactly by a lamp which threw its light on to the bridge. They stopped and looked at each other.

'What do you want, Monsieur?' demanded the tall musketeer with a foreign accent, and D'Artagnan realised that he had made a mistake.

'It is not Aramis!' he cried.

'No, Monsieur, it is not Aramis,' replied the stranger. 'Allow me, then, to pass on, since it is not me whom you wish to see. Take my arm, Madame Bonacieux,' he added in a low voice, 'and let us continue on our way.'

'Madame Bonacieux!' (exclaimed D'Artagnan in astonishment. 'But I thought you were being held prisoner by—'

'Hush, Monsieur!' whispered the woman. 'Please don't speak my name so loudly! I managed to escape from my captor, and now I am taking my lord on an important mission.'

'My lord!' cried D'Artagnan, understanding at last.

'My lord! Pardon me, Monsieur, but are you—'

'My lord the Duke of Buckingham,' said Madame Bonacieux, in a low voice. 'And now you may run, us all.'

'My lord—Madame—I ask your forgiveness! Pardon me, and tell me how I can risk my life to serve your Grace*?'

'You are a brave young man,' said Buckingham, holding out his hand to D'Artagnan. 'You offer me your services, and I gladly accept them. Follow us at a distance of twenty yards, as far as the Louvre*, and if anyone watches us, kill him!'

D'Artagnan placed his sword under his arm, allowed the duke and Madame Bonacieux to take twenty steps ahead, and then followed them, ready to obey the instructions of the noble and handsome Prime Minister of Charles I of England.

Fortunately, he had no opportunity to give the duke this proof of his loyalty, and the young woman and the tall musketeer entered the Louvre without any interference. Madame Bonacieux was known to belong to the queen; and the duke wore the uniform of the musketeers of M. de Tréville, who were, that evening, on guard at the palace. Nobody challenged their right to be there.

Inside the palace courtyard, the duke and the young woman hurried to a little servants' door, which Madame Bonacieux pushed open silently. They entered, and she led the duke up two flights of stairs and then along a dark passage to another door, which she opened with a

key. She pushed him into a room lighted only by a lamp, and said, 'Wait here, my lord duke; someone will come.' She then went out, locking the door behind her.

The duke waited impatiently. He had learned that the message calling him to Paris had not been from the queen, Anne of Austria, at all; it was merely a trick to get him into France. But instead of returning at once to England he had sworn that he would not go without seeing the queen. At first she had positively refused; but at last, afraid that the fearless duke might do something risky and foolish, she had agreed to see him. On the very evening, however, that Madame Bonacieux was supposed to bring the duke to the Louvre, the young woman had been kidnapped, and she did not succeed in her mission until after her escape, three days later.

And so George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham and Prime Minister of England, had reason to be impatient as he waited, alone, for this longed-for meeting with his adored Queen of France.

After fifteen minutes, a hidden door opened and a woman appeared. Buckingham gave a cry. It was the queen!

Anne of Austria was, at that time, twenty-six or twenty-seven years of age, and she was very beautiful. Buckingham gazed at her silently for a minute, and then he threw himself at her feet and kissed the hem of her dress.

'Duke,' she said in a low voice, 'you know that I did not send you that message to come to France?'

'Yes, Madame, I know!' he cried. 'But I have lost nothing by the journey, because I am being allowed to see you after all.'

'Yes,' replied Anne. 'But you know why I have agreed to see you: it is because you insisted on staying in Paris until I did. And you take a double risk by remaining here—you risk your life and my honour. In short, I see

you tonight in order to tell you that we must never see each other again.'

'Sweet Madame, beloved queen,' said Buckingham, 'how can you ask such an impossible thing? Tell me—where will you ever find such a love as mine? Neither time, nor absence, nor despair can kill it. And you love me, Madame, just as I love you. I am sure of it.'

'I love you?'

'Yes, yes. You love me, my beautiful queen, and you will weep for me.'

'Oh, my God, my God!' cried Anne of Austria. 'This is more than I can bear! In the name of Heaven, duke, leave me! I do not know whether I love you or not, but take pity on me, and go! If you were murdered in France, if I thought that your love for me was the cause of your death, I could never forgive myself. I should go mad. Go then, go, I beg you!'

'Oh, how beautiful you are! Oh, how I love you!' said Buckingham. 'But before I go, give me some small thing to remind me of you. Something you have worn, which I can wear in my turn,—a ring, a necklace, a chain.'

'Will you go—will you really go, if I give you something?'

'Yes, I promise.'

'You will leave France and return to England?'

'I will, I swear to you.'

'Wait, then. Wait.' Anne of Austria went back to her own rooms, and returned almost at once, holding a rosewood box in her hand. 'Here, my lord, here,' she said. 'Keep this in memory of me.'

Buckingham took the box and opened it. It contained twelve diamond studs. He fell on his knees for a second time.

'You have promised me to go,' said the queen.

'And I keep my word.'



Anne of Austria held out her hand, and Buckingham kissed it

Anne of Austria held out her hand, and Buckingham kissed it. Then, faithful to his promise, he rushed out of the room.

In the passage he met Madame Bonacieux, who waited for him, and who led him quickly and silently out of the Louvre.

CHAPTER 8

THE QUEEN IS IN DESPAIR

You may imagine the queen's shock and terror a few days later when the king came to her rooms and mentioned the diamond studs. The cardinal had spies every-

where, and they told him the queen had given the little rosewood box and its contents to the Duke of Buckingham, and the cardinal at once realised how he could make use of the knowledge. He sent a message to his chief spy in London, the beautiful Milady, whom D'Artagnan had seen talking to the man from Meung outside the Jolly Miller inn. Milady was told that she must somehow steal two of the studs from the Duke of Buckingham.

Then the cardinal began to poison the king's mind: he mentioned the studs to his Majesty on several occasions, and Louis XIII, noticing this, began to suspect there must be some mystery surrounding the diamonds. He went to the queen and said coldly,

'Madame, next week there is a ball* at the Hôtel de Ville.* We shall attend it, and I wish you to wear those diamond studs which I gave you for your birthday.'

The queen turned deathly pale, rested her beautiful hand on a table, and looked at the king with terror in her eyes.

'You hear, Madame?' said the king, enjoying her embarrassment.

'Yes, sire, I hear,' whispered the queen.

'Then that is agreed,' said the king, 'and that is all I wanted to say to you.'

'What day is this ball?' asked Anne of Austria faintly.

'Oh, some time soon, Madame,' he replied. 'I do not exactly remember the date. I'll ask the cardinal.'

'It was the cardinal who told you about this ball?'

'Yes, Madame,' replied the astonished king. 'But why do you ask that?'

'And did he suggest that I should wear the diamond studs?'

'What does it matter who thought of it? Is there any crime in this request?'

'No, no, sire.'

'That is good,' said the king, and he went out of the room.

'I am lost,' murmured the queen, 'lost! The cardinal knows everything. Oh, my God, my God!' She knelt upon a cushion and prayed, with her head buried in her arms. Soon she began to cry bitterly.

'Can I do anything for your Majesty?' said a gentle voice, and the queen looked up to see pretty Madame Bonacieux standing at the door of a large cupboard in a corner of the room. The young woman had been arranging dresses and linen in there when the king entered; she could not get out, and heard the whole conversation.

The queen gave an unhappy cry. 'I am betrayed on all sides,' she said. 'Can I trust even you?'

'Oh, Madame, cried the young woman, falling on her knees. 'I am ready to die for your Majesty!' She went on more quietly, 'You gave those studs to the Duke of Buckingham, did you not? They were in a little rose-wood box which he held under his arm. Is it not so, Madame?'

'Oh, my God, my God!' murmured the queen, who was shaking with fright.

'Well,' continued Madame Bonacieux, 'we must get them back again.'

'Yes, but how?' cried the queen.

'Someone must be sent to the Duke of Buckingham.'

'But who, who? Whom can I trust?'

Madame Bonacieux thought of the young musketeer called D'Artagnan, who had been so anxious to fight for the duke.

'I will find a messenger,' she said.

The queen took the two hands of the young woman into hers. 'Do that,' cried she, 'and you will have saved both my life and my honour!' She went to a writing table, quickly wrote two lines, sealed the letter with her

private seal, and gave it to Madame Bonacieux. 'And now,' she continued, 'we are forgetting one very necessary thing.'

'What is that, Madame?'

'Money.' She paused. 'I have none here,' she went on, 'but wait a minute.' She ran to her jewel-case and took out a ring. 'Here is a ring of great value. Take it and sell it, and your messenger shall use the money.'

Madame Bonacieux kissed the hands of the queen, hid the paper down the front of her dress, and disappeared with the lightness of a bird.

CHAPTER 9

MADAME BONACIEUX SEEKS D'ARTAGNAN'S HELP

WHEN Madame Bonacieux returned home she found that her husband had been set free and was waiting for her in their house. At first she was filled with joy, as she thought she could now get him to help her instead of asking D'Artagnan, who was, after all, almost a stranger to her. In the course of conversation, however, she soon realised that her husband was no longer to be trusted: the cardinal had won him over to his side, and Bonacieux would betray her and the queen if she told him her secret. He had even received quite a large sum of money from the cardinal, and could give no satisfactory reason why he had been given this. 'He has been paid to spy upon me,' thought Madame Bonacieux sadly. 'I hope I have not already told him too much.'

She waited, therefore, until her husband went out the next morning, and then hurried upstairs to D'Artagnan's room.

D'Artagnan was thinking about her at that moment. His short meeting with her the previous evening had set his romantic heart on fire, and he was already half in love with her. He needed no persuasion to agree to help her, especially when she confided to him the queen's secret. Confidence and love made him a giant.

'I will go at once!' he cried.

'But how will you go, Monsieur?' said Madame Bonacieux. 'What about your regiment, and your captain?'

'Upon my soul*, you have made me forget all that!' he exclaimed. 'You are right; I shall have to ask for leave.' He stood in thought. 'I'll go at once to M. de Tréville,' he said, 'and request him to ask M. d'Essart for this favour.'

'There is another thing,' said Madame Bonacieux. 'Have you any money?'

'Alas, no!' replied the young man.

'Then come downstairs with me,' she said, and hurried out of the room. In her own room, she ran to a cupboard and took out her husband's bag of money. 'This is the cardinal's money,' she said, 'but I don't think you will mind using it?'

'The cardinal's?' cried D'Artagnan, with a laugh. 'It will be doubly amusing, to save the queen with the cardinal's money!'

'You are a kind and brave young man,' said Madame Bonacieux. 'You may be sure that the queen will not be ungrateful.'

'I hope I shall be worthy of her gratitude, and also—of yours,' said D'Artagnan, giving the pretty young woman a long, loving look.

Shortly afterwards, he went out, wearing a large cloak which did not quite conceal the shape of a long sword. Madame Bonacieux watched him until he turned the

corner of the street, and then she fell on her knees and cried, 'Oh, my God, protect the queen—and protect me!'

CHAPTER 10

THE MUSKETEERS MAKE A PLAN

D'ARTAGNAN went straight to M. de Tréville's. The young man's heart overflowed with joy. Here was an opportunity to gain both glory and money; and it also gave him the chance to help a woman he greatly admired. He was impatient to begin the adventure at once.

D'Artagnan found M. de Tréville in his office. Tréville had always been his friend; he was devoted to the king and queen, and hated the cardinal; and so D'Artagnan decided to tell him everything.

'I have come to ask your help in a very serious matter, sir,' he said. 'It concerns the honour, perhaps even the life, of the queen.'

'What do you say?' asked M. de Tréville, looking round quickly to make sure they were alone.

'Chance has made me master of a secret—' began D'Artagnan.

'And I hope you will guard it with your life, young man,' interrupted M. de Tréville. 'Is this secret your own?'

'No, Monsieur, it is her Majesty's.'

'In that case, why are you going to betray it to me?'

'Because I can do nothing without your help.'

'Keep your secret, D'Artagnan, and tell me what you want.'

'I want you to obtain for me, from M. d'Essart, a fortnight's leave.'

'When?'

'This very night, sir.'

'May I ask you where you want to go?'

'To London.'

'Will anyone try to prevent your getting there?' asked M. de Tréville.

'I think the cardinal would give the world to stop me,' replied D'Artagnan with a laugh.

'And you are going alone?'

'I am going alone.'

'In that case, you will be murdered before you have travelled ten miles,' continued Tréville. 'In adventures of this kind, four must set out in order that one may arrive.'

'You are right, Monsieur,' said D'Artagnan. 'Well, there are Athos, Porthos and Aramis. I can rely on their help.'

'All right. I will give each of them a fortnight's leave. Athos still suffers from his wound. He can go to the hospital at Forges. Porthos and Aramis may go with their friend, to help him on the journey.'

'Thank you, Monsieur. You are a hundred times too good.'

'Off you go, then, and find them at once, so that you can start tonight,' said M. de Tréville.

D'Artagnan thanked him again, and went first to Aramis. After the two friends had been talking for a few moments, a servant entered, bringing a sealed envelope.

'What is this?' asked Aramis.

'It is the leave of absence you asked for, Monsieur,' replied the servant.

'For me! I have asked for no leave of absence.'

'Stop talking and take it!' said D'Artagnan, and the servant left the room.

'What does all this mean?' asked Aramis.

'Pack up all you need for a fortnight's journey, and follow me,' replied his friend.

Aramis smiled. 'D'Artagnan, I am ready to follow you at once,' he said. 'You say we are going—?'

'To see Athos first.' They set off together, and soon arrived at Athos's house. They found him holding his leave of absence in one hand, and M. de Tréville's letter in the other.

'Can you explain to me what these mean?' asked the astonished Athos.

'It means that you must follow me, Athos,' replied D'Artagnan.

'In the king's service?'

'Either the king's or the queen's. We are their Majesties' servants.'

At that moment Porthos came in. 'Here's a strange thing,' he said. 'Since when did they give leave of absence to a man without his asking for it?'

'Since they have friends who ask for it for them,' replied D'Artagnan.

'Ah! said Porthos. 'And where are we going?'

'To London, gentlemen,' said D'Artagnan.

'To London?' cried Porthos. 'And what the devil are we going to do in London?'

'I am afraid I am not free to tell you, gentlemen. You must trust in me,' D'Artagnan answered quietly.

'But in order to go to London, we need money,' said Porthos. 'And I have none.'

'Nor have I,' said Aramis.

'Nor I,' said Athos.

'I have,' replied D'Artagnan, pulling his treasure from his pocket and putting it on the table. 'There are three hundred pistoles in this bag. Let us each take seventy-five; that is enough to take us to London and back. Besides, don't worry. We shall not all arrive in London.'

'Why not?'

'Because some of us will probably be left on the road,'
'Well, if we risk being killed,' said Porthos, 'at least I should like to know what for.'

'It is for the king, surely that's enough reason!' said Athos. 'We have our leaves of absence, and here are three hundred pistoles which came from I don't know where. So let us go and get killed where we are told to go. D'Artagnan, I am ready to follow you. When do we go?'

'Immediately,' replied D'Artagnan. 'We haven't a moment to lose.' He pointed to a pocket. 'I have a letter in here,' he explained. 'If I am killed, one of you must take it and continue on the journey. If he is killed, it will be another's turn, and so on. So long as one of us arrives, that is all that matters.'

'You are right!' shouted the three musketeers; and each one took his seventy-five pistoles and made his preparations for the journey.

CHAPTER II

THE JOURNEY

At two o'clock in the morning our four adventurers left Paris by the northern gate. All went well until they arrived at Chantilly, which they reached about eight o'clock in the morning. They needed breakfast, and stopped at an inn, where they went at once to the dining-room and sat down at a table. A gentleman was already sitting at the same table, and he spoke to them politely and the travellers replied.

But as they were getting up to leave, the stranger suggested to Porthos that he should drink the health* of the

cardinal. Porthos replied that he would certainly do so, if the stranger, in his turn, would drink the health of the king. The stranger cried that he knew of no other king but his Eminence. Porthos called him drunk, and the stranger drew his sword.

'You have behaved very foolishly,' Athos said to Porthos, 'but it can't be helped. Kill the fellow, and rejoin us as soon as you can.'

Athos, Aramis and D'Artagnan remounted their horses, and set out once more, while Porthos was promising his enemy to fill him with a dozen sword thrusts.

'There goes the first one!' said Athos.

'But why did the man attack Porthos instead of D'Artagnan?' asked Aramis.

'Because Porthos was talking louder than the rest of us, and the man thought he was the leader,' replied D'Artagnan with a laugh.

At the town of Beauvais they stopped to rest their horses a little, and to wait for Porthos. At the end of two hours he had not come, so they set off again. A few miles further on they met eight or ten men, who seemed to be digging holes in the road and filling up the holes with mud. Aramis, who did not want to get his boots muddy, spoke to them rather sharply. Athos tried to stop him, but it was too late. The workmen ran to the ditch at the side of the road and took out several muskets*, with which they began to fire at the travellers. Aramis was shot through the shoulder, and D'Artagnan shouted,

'It is an ambush*! Don't wait to attack! Ride on!' Aramis, although badly wounded, seized the mane* of his horse and rode on with them. 'They'll kill poor Porthos when he comes up,' he cried.

'If Porthos were on his legs he would have joined us by this time,' said Athos. 'My opinion is that that man was not as drunk as he seemed.'

They continued at their best speed for two hours, but at Crevecoeur Aramis said he could go no further. He grew paler every minute, and they had to support him on his horse. They lifted him off at the door of an inn and left him there. Then the other two set off again, hoping to reach Amiens that night.

Riding hard, they arrived at Amiens at midnight, and spent the night at an inn called the Golden Lily. The next morning they got up early, and Athos went down to pay the bill while D'Artagnan stood at the street-door. The innkeeper was in a back room, and Athos went in and took out two pistols to pay the bill. The man took the money, examined it carefully, and then cried out that it was bad, saying that he would have Athos and his companion arrested as forgers.

'You rogue!' cried Athos, going towards him. 'I'll cut your ears off!'

At the same moment, four men, carrying swords and pistols, entered by another door and attacked Athos.

'I am taken!' shouted Athos. 'Go on, D'Artagnan!' D'Artagnan did not need to be told twice. He leaped on to his horse and set off at full gallop. He rode on without stopping until he reached the gates of Calais*, where his horse collapsed, and could not get up again. D'Artagnan left the poor animal in the middle of the road, and ran towards the harbour. He saw a gentleman a few yards in front of him, who seemed to be in a great hurry. His boots were covered with dust, and D'Artagnan heard him ask if he could cross over to England at once.

'That would be quite easy,' said the captain of a ship which was all ready to sail. 'But we have received an order to let no one leave without the cardinal's permission.'

'I have that permission,' said the gentleman, taking a paper from his pocket. 'Here it is.'

'This permit must be examined by the governor of the

port,' said the captain.

'Where can I find him?'

'At his house, about a mile from the city. Look, you can see it from here,—at the foot of that little hill.'

'Very well,' said the gentleman, and he took the road to the governor's house.

D'Artagnan quietly followed him, and overtook him as he was entering a little wood just outside the city. 'Monsieur,' he said, 'you seem to be in a great hurry.'

The gentleman turned. 'I certainly am, Monsieur,' he replied.

'I am sorry about that,' said D'Artagnan, 'because I am in a hurry, too, and I want to ask you a favour.'

'What favour?'

'Will you let me sail first, and also give me the cardinal's permit which you possess.'

'I am sorry, Monsieur; but I was here first, and I will not sail second.'

'I am sorry, too, Monsieur,' replied D'Artagnan. 'I arrived second, but I must sail first.'

'Let me pass!'

'You shall not pass.'

'My brave young man, I will blow out your brains,' shouted the gentleman angrily. He drew his sword and sprang forward, but D'Artagnan was too strong for him. In three seconds the brave musketeer had wounded him three times, saying at each thrust, 'One for Athos; one for Porthos; and one for Aramis!'

At the third hit the gentleman fell to the ground. D'Artagnan believed him to be dead, and went towards him to get the permit. But the moment he put out his hand to search for it, the wounded man drove the point of his sword into D'Artagnan's breast, crying, 'One for you!'

'And one from me—the best for the last!' cried

D'Artagnan furiously, nailing him to the earth with a fourth thrust through his body.

This time the gentleman closed his eyes and fainted. D'Artagnan searched his pockets and took out the cardinal's permit. It was in the name of the Count de Wardes.

'And now to the governor's!' he said to himself.

D'Artagnan obtained the governor's written permission without any difficulty, and hurried back to the harbour. The ship was quite ready to sail, and the captain was waiting.

'Well?' he said.

'Here are my permits,' D'Artagnan replied.

'And that other gentleman?'

'He will not sail today,' said D'Artagnan.

'In that case, let us go,' said the captain, and the ship set sail for England at once.

CHAPTER 12

THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM

D'ARTAGNAN did not know London. He did not know a word of English. But, when at last he arrived in the English capital, he wrote the name of Buckingham on a piece of paper, and everyone pointed out the way to the duke's palace.

Buckingham remembered D'Artagnan, and at once feared that something had happened to the queen of France.

'Is her Majesty all right?' he asked anxiously.

'I believe so; but I am afraid she is in great danger, and only your Grace can save her,' replied D'Artagnan.

'I!' cried Buckingham. 'I shall always be happy to serve her. What is it? Speak! Speak!'

'Take this letter,' said D'Artagnan.

'This letter! Who is it from?'

'From her Majesty, I think.'

'From her Majesty!' said Buckingham, becoming so pale that D'Artagnan feared he would faint as he opened the letter.

'What is this hole?' he asked, showing D'Artagnan a place where it had been pierced through.

'Ah!' said the musketeer. 'I did not see that. The Count de Wardes made that hole with his sword, when he gave me a good thrust in the breast.'

'Are you wounded?' asked Buckingham, beginning to read the letter.

'Oh, it is only a scratch,' said D'Artagnan.

'Great heaven, what have I read?' cried the duke. 'Come with me at once, Monsieur.' He hurried into another room, and D'Artagnan followed him. They now stood in a small chapel, brilliantly lighted by a dozen candles. A full-length picture of Anne of Austria hung on the wall behind a kind of altar. On the altar was the box containing the diamond studs.

The duke went to the altar and opened the box. 'There,' he said, taking out a length of blue ribbon shining with diamonds. 'There are the studs. I swore I would never part with them. The queen gave them to me; but the queen needs them again, so she must have them.'

All at once he gave a terrible cry.

'What is the matter?' said D'Artagnan, anxiously.

'What has happened to you, my lord?'

'All is lost!' cried Buckingham, becoming as pale as death. 'Two of the studs are missing. There are only ten.'

'Can you have lost them, my lord, or do you think they have been stolen?'

'They have been stolen,' replied the duke, 'and it is

His servant came running, and the duke said, 'Send for my jeweller and my secretary.'

The secretary was the first to arrive. He found Buckingham seated at a table, writing orders with his own hand.

'Mr. Jackson,' said the duke, 'go immediately to the Lord Chancellor, and tell him to carry out these orders at once.'

The secretary bowed and went out.

'We are safe on that side,' said Buckingham, turning towards D'Artagnan. 'If those studs have not yet gone to Paris, they will not arrive till after you do.'

'How can you be sure of that?' asked D'Artagnan.

'I have just written an order that no ship must leave his Majesty's ports without special permission. No one will dare to lift an anchor.'

D'Artagnan looked with amazement at the man who made use of his great power in this way. Buckingham saw, by the expression on the young man's face, what he was thinking, and he smiled.

'Yes,' he said, 'Anne of Austria is my true queen. For her, I would betray my country, I would betray my king, I would betray my God! He said no more, for the goldsmith entered at this moment.'

'Mr. O'Reilly,' the duke said to him, 'look at these diamond studs, and tell me what they are worth.'

The goldsmith examined them carefully, and said without hesitation, 'Fifteen hundred pistoles each, my lord.'

'How many days would you need to make two studs exactly like them?'

'Eight days, my lord.'

'I will give you three thousands pistoles each, if I can have them by the day after tomorrow.'

'My lord, they shall be yours,' said the jeweller, and he kept his promise.



He gave a terrible cry

the cardinal who is behind this. Look! the ribbon has been cut with scissors.'

D'Artagnan started to speak, but Buckingham went on, 'Wait, wait! Let me think. The only time I have worn those studs was at a ball given by the king, eight days ago, at Windsor*. The Countess Winter was very friendly with me that night. The woman is one of the cardinal's spies.'

'Does he have spies everywhere?' asked D'Artagnan.

'Oh, yes,' said Buckingham, biting his lips with rage.

'Yes, he is a most dangerous enemy. But when is this Paris ball to take place?'

'Next Monday.'

'Next Monday. Then we still have five days. Patrick! called the duke, opening the door of the chapel, Patrick!'

On the day after the morrow the two diamond studs were finished, and they were such perfect copies that Buckingham could not tell the new ones from the old ones. He immediately called D'Artagnan.

'Here are the studs,' he said to him. 'You must take them back to France at once.' He looked earnestly at the young man. 'How shall I ever repay you for what you have done?'

D'Artagnan blushed to the roots of his hair. He saw that the duke was searching for a way to make him accept something, and he could not bear to think that the blood of his friends and himself should be paid for with English gold.

'Let us understand each other, my lord,' he replied. 'I am in the service of the king and queen of France. I have done this for the queen, and not for your Grace.'

'We say "Proud as a Scotchman,"' said Buckingham with a smile.

'And we say "Proud as a Gascon,"' replied D'Artagnan.

'Very well,' said the duke. 'Go to the river, ask for the ship *Sand*, and give this letter to the captain. He will take you to a little French port called St. Valery. When you arrive there, go to a small inn. It has no name, and is merely a fisherman's hut, but you can't be mistaken; there is only one. Ask for the innkeeper, and repeat to him the word, "Forward!" He will give you a horse, and will tell you which road to take. In the same way, you will find three other horses at different inns on your route. If you will give, at each inn, your address in Paris, the four horses will follow you there. However proud you may be, you will not refuse to accept one of them, and to ask your three friends to accept the others.'

'Yes, my lord, I accept them,' said D'Artagnan; 'and

I hope we shall make a good use of your presents.'

'Well, now, goodbye, young man. Perhaps we shall soon meet on the field of battle; but in the meantime we shall part good friends, I hope.'

D'Artagnan bowed to the duke, and made his way as quickly as possible to the riverside. Opposite the Tower of London he found the ship that had been named to him, delivered his letter to the captain, who made immediate preparations to sail.

The next day about nine o'clock in the morning, he landed at St. Valery. D'Artagnan went at once in search of the inn, and found it easily. Going to the innkeeper, he said the one word 'Forward!' The man led him to the stable where a saddled horse awaited him, and gave him full instructions for the journey. The same thing happened at three other towns on the way, and twelve hours later D'Artagnan galloped into the yard of Monsieur de Tréville's house in Paris.

Tréville received him as if he had seen him that same morning; he only pressed his hand a little more warmly than usual. Then he told D'Artagnan that D'Essart's musketeers were on duty at the Louvre, and that he might go at once to join them there. He would just have time to get the diamonds to the queen before the ball.

Half an hour later the king came out of his room, ready and dressed for the ball. The cardinal joined him, and placed a small box in his hand. The king opened it, and found two diamond studs.

'What does this mean?' he asked the cardinal.

'If the queen wears her studs tonight, count them, sire,' the cardinal replied. 'If you only find ten, ask her Majesty who can have stolen from her the two studs that are here.'

The king looked at the cardinal as if to question him, but he had no time. A cry of admiration burst from

everyone as the beautiful queen appeared, dressed in blue and silver. The diamond studs sparkled on her left shoulder, on a bow the same colour as her dress.

The king trembled with joy and the cardinal with rage; but at this distance they could not count the studs. The queen had them. The only question was, had she ten or twelve?

The king moved towards her and said, 'I thank you, Madame, for obeying my wishes, but I think you are short of two studs, and I bring them back to you.' With these words he held out to the queen the two studs the cardinal had given him.

'What is this, sire?' cried the young queen, pretending to be surprised. 'Are you giving me two more? I shall have fourteen now.'

The king counted them, and the twelve studs were all on her Majesty's shoulder. Smiling at the king and the cardinal, the queen continued on her way.

Late that night D'Artagnan received a beautiful ring. It was a gift from the queen, in her gratitude for the return of the studs.

CHAPTER 13

D'ARTAGNAN GOES IN SEARCH OF HIS FRIENDS

D'ARTAGNAN's next move was to find out what had happened to his three friends, and whether, indeed, they were still alive. He set off for Chantilly, and stopped at the same inn at which they had called on their first journey. There were no other visitors at the inn, and D'Artagnan was served with a drink at once.

'It seems to me,' said the innkeeper, 'that this is not the first time I have served Monsieur.'

'Oh, I often pass through Chantilly,' D'Artagnan said

alily. 'I was here only ten or twelve days ago. I was with three friends, and one of them had an argument with a stranger—a man who insisted on quarrelling with him.'

'I remember it perfectly,' said the innkeeper. 'You mean M. Porthos, of course?'

'Yes,' replied D'Artagnan quickly. 'My dear man, tell me at once if anything has happened to him?'

'He is still here, Monsieur.'

'Why? Was he wounded?'

'I cannot tell you, Monsieur.'

'What do you mean, you cannot tell me?' asked D'Artagnan. 'Surely you know whether he was hurt by the stranger or not?'

'Yes, sir. But M. Porthos warned us not to tell anyone. He is a very proud gentleman.'

D'Artagnan laughed. 'He is indeed,' he said. 'That's just what he would do. Well, take me to see him, my good man, and I will pretend to know nothing about his wound.'

The innkeeper showed him the way, and at the top of the stairs D'Artagnan knocked at the door of Porthos's room. Porthos was in bed, and, at the sight of his friend he gave a loud cry of joy.

'Ah, how welcome you are!' he said to D'Artagnan. 'Excuse my not coming to meet you, but,' added he, looking at D'Artagnan with a certain uneasiness, 'you know what has happened to me?'

'No.'

'Has the innkeeper told you nothing, then?'

'I asked about you, and came up as soon as I could,' replied D'Artagnan.

Porthos seemed to breathe more freely.

'And what has happened to you, my dear Porthos?' continued his friend.

'Why, on making a thrust at my enemy, whom I had already hit three times, I put my foot on a stone, slipped, and strained my knee.'

'Really?'

'On my honour! It was lucky for the rascal, for I should have left him dead on the spot, I assure you.'

'And what happened to him?'

'Oh, I don't know. He had had enough, and set off without waiting for the rest. But you, my dear D'Artagnan, what has happened to you?'

D'Artagnan then related how Aramis, being wounded, was obliged to stay at Crèvecoeur, how he had left Athos fighting at Amiens with four men who accused him of being a forger, and how he, D'Artagnan, had been forced to kill the Count de Wardes in order to reach England. But he said nothing about his time in England. He only added that on his return to France he had brought back four splendid horses—one for himself, and one for each of his companions.

D'Artagnan was now anxious to obtain news of his two other friends, so he held out his hand to the wounded man, and told him that he would return in seven or eight days, and, if Porthos was still at Chantilly, he would call for him on his way.

He kept his promise. He found his friends without difficulty, and as they were both almost recovered from their wounds, the four young men were able to return to Paris together. On arriving in the city, D'Artagnan found a letter from M. de Tréville, which informed him that, at his request, the king had promised that he should enter the company of the musketeers. As this was the height of D'Artagnan's ambition, he ran, full of joy, to tell his companions.

He found them very sad, and deeply worried. M. de Tréville had informed them that the king intended to

open an attack on rebel forces at La Rochelle on May 1st, and they must immediately prepare their outfits. It was an understood thing that the musketeers provided their own equipment for battle.

'And what do you reckon your outfit will cost?' asked D'Artagnan.

'It is hard to say,' replied Athos. 'We shall need between a thousand and two thousand *livres** each.'

'Four times two make eight,' said Aramis. 'Eight thousand *livres* to complete our outfits.'

'It seems to me that we can manage it somehow,' said D'Artagnan coolly, and he went to thank M. de Tréville for his letter.

'It seems to *me*,' said Athos, when D'Artagnan had gone, 'that the thought of belonging to our company has driven him out of his senses! However—there is that beautiful ring which sparkles on the finger of our friend. D'Artagnan is too faithful a companion to leave his brothers in need, when he wears a king's ransom* on his finger!'

CHAPTER 14

MILADY

FOR the first time since his return from England, D'Artagnan now had time to think of the pretty little Madame Bonacieux, but when he called to see her he was greeted by M. Bonacieux with disturbing news. She had once more been kidnapped, and had not been seen for nearly a fortnight. From the information M. Bonacieux gave him, and the description of her kidnappers, D'Artagnan was sure that the mysterious man from Meung was to blame—helped, almost certainly, by the beautiful Milady.

Greatly worried, D'Artagnan went into a nearby church where he could sit quietly in thought and try to work out a solution. The church was full, for there was a service in progress, and D'Artagnan glanced round at the people seated on all sides. Suddenly he noticed a beautiful lady sitting near the choir; she was not only a beautiful lady, but also, no doubt, a great one, for she had a little serving-boy who carried the red velvet cushion on which she knelt to pray. A pretty, dark-haired maid-servant also stood behind her. The sight of the lady had a great effect on D'Artagnan, for he recognised her at once as the lady of Meung, whom his enemy had called Milady.

When the service was over, D'Artagnan quickly followed her out of the church, without being seen by her. She got into a carriage, and D'Artagnan heard her order the coachman to drive to an address in St. Germain*. It was useless to try to keep up with the carriage on foot, so he returned home, ordered his servant to saddle two horses from M. de Tréville's stables, and come with them to Athos's house. D'Artagnan then went on to visit his friend. Athos was at home, emptying sadly a bottle of Spanish wine. He seemed very depressed, and was more than a little drunk.

'You look sad, Athos,' said D'Artagnan.

'Why, and so do you, D'Artagnan,' replied Athos, filling his glass and that of his friend. 'What is the matter with you?'

'Alas,' said D'Artagnan, 'it is because I am the unluckiest of men!'

'You, unlucky!' said Athos. 'Come, how are you unlucky? Tell me.'

D'Artagnan told him of the new disappearance of Madame Bonacieux. The more he thought about her, the more tender his feelings became. By the end of his recital, he was sure that he was quite desperately in love

with her. Athos listened to him without a frown; and when he had finished, said, 'Trifles*, only trifles!' It was his favourite word.

'You always say trifles, my dear Athos!' said D'Artagnan indignantly. 'It is because you have never been in love.'

Athos's eyes flashed, but only for a moment. 'That's true,' he said quietly. 'For my part, I have never been in love.' He paused, and added, 'But surely you cannot love this young woman, D'Artagnan. You hardly know her.'

'Yet I found her very lovable,' said D'Artagnan sadly.

'I say that love is a gamble, and the winner wins death! You are very fortunate to have lost, believe me, my dear D'Artagnan.'

'How do you know? You've never loved anyone,' cried D'Artagnan hotly.

'That's true,' said Athos, after a moment's silence. 'That's true! I never loved anyone. Let us drink!' He poured out more wine, and then continued slowly, 'But I should like to know what you would say if I were to tell you a real tale of love.'

'Which has happened to you, perhaps?'

'Or to one of my friends. What does it matter?'

'Tell it, Athos, tell it.'

Athos still hesitated. 'Do you really want to know?' he asked.

'Indeed I do,' replied D'Artagnan.

'Very well, then. One of my friends—one of my friends, not myself,' Athos repeated, with a sad smile, 'one of the noblemen of my district, when he was twenty-five, fell in love with a beautiful girl of sixteen. She lived in a small cottage on his estate, with her brother, who was a priest. Nobody knew where they had come from, but my friend was so much in love with her that he never

thought of asking any questions. He married her. The fool! The ass! The idiot!

'Why? He loved her,' said D'Artagnan.

'Wait!' said Athos. 'One day, when she was out hunting with her husband, she fell from her horse and fainted. The count ran to her help, and in order to help her to breathe more freely, he cut open her clothes with his dagger. In so doing, he laid bare her shoulder. D'Artagnan,' said Athos, with a mad burst of laughter, 'guess what she had on her shoulder.'

'How can I tell?' said D'Artagnan.

'A *fleur-de-lys**, said Athos. 'She was branded*!'

'Horror! What a terrible thing!' cried D'Artagnan.

'Yes. The angel was a devil. The poor young girl had stolen the holy cups from a church.'

'And what did the count do?'

'The count was a great nobleman and the lord of the district. He had the right to pass judgment on her. He tore the dress of the countess to pieces; he tied her hands behind her, and hanged her on a tree.'

'Then she is dead,' whispered D'Artagnan. 'And what happened to her brother?'

'Her brother?' replied Athos.

'Yes, the priest.'

'Oh, he ran away before I could hang him, too. It has cured me for ever of beautiful women,' Athos said bitterly, forgetting that the story was supposed to be about a friend of his.

'My God, my God!' cried D'Artagnan, quite stunned by this horrible story. He looked at his friend in pity and horror. Athos was now quite drunk, and his head sank forward on the table as he fell into a deep sleep. By this time D'Artagnan's servant had arrived with the two horses, and, leaving Athos asleep, D'Artagnan mounted his horse and took the road to St. Germain.

ENGLISH AND FRENCH

ALL along the road, D'Artagnan kept thinking of the story Athos had told him. It was a terrible tale of betrayal and revenge; but, after all, it need not affect D'Artagnan's feelings for Madame Bonacieux. His landlord's pretty wife had made a real impression upon D'Artagnan's heart. He was ready to go to the end of the world to find her; but the world, being round, has many ends, so that he did not know which way to turn. Meantime, he must try to find Miliady. Miliady had spoken to the man of Meung, therefore she knew him. Now, in D'Artagnan's opinion, it was certainly the man of Meung who had carried off Madame Bonacieux the second time, as he had carried her off the first. Thus, if he went in search of Miliady, he might in the end find Madame Bonacieux as well.

Thinking of all this, D'Artagnan completed his short journey, and arrived at St. Germain. He rode up a quiet street, looking to the right and the left to see if he could catch sight of the beautiful Englishwoman. Suddenly at the window of a pretty house he saw a face which he thought he recognised.

'Look!' he said to Planchet, his servant. 'Isn't that the servant of the Count de Wardes—the nobleman with whom I fought at Calais a month ago?'

'So it is!' said Planchet.

'Well, go and talk with the boy,' said D'Artagnan, 'and try to find out whether his master is really dead. Perhaps I didn't kill him after all.'

Planchet got off his horse and moved across to the house. The boy had just come out of the front door, and the two servants began to chat while D'Artagnan turned the two horses into a lane and watched the meeting from behind a hedge.

Almost immediately he heard the noise of a carriage, which stopped opposite him. Milady was inside. She put her charming head out of the carriage window, and gave some orders to her maid.

The latter—a pretty girl of about twenty years of age—jumped down from the carriage and went towards the house. D'Artagnan watched her.

Now, it happened that someone in the house had just called the boy, and he had gone inside, leaving Planchet standing there, alone. The maid went up to Planchet, and, holding out a letter to him, said, 'For your master.'

'For my master?' said Planchet, astonished.

'Yes, and important. Take it quickly.' She then ran back to the carriage, which had turned round towards the way it came, jumped upon the step, and the carriage drove off.

Planchet was not very intelligent, and he did not realise that the letter was really intended for the boy he had been talking to. He ran towards the lane, and met D'Artagnan who, having seen it all, was coming towards him.

'For you, Monsieur,' said Planchet, giving the letter to his master.

'For me?' said D'Artagnan. 'Are you sure of that?'

'Indeed, Monsieur, I can't be more sure. The maid said, "For your master", and I have no other master but you.'

D'Artagnan opened the letter, and read these words:—

'A person who takes a great interest in you wishes to know when it will suit you to walk in the forest? Tomorrow, a servant in black and red will wait at the Hotel Field of the Cloth of Gold for your reply.'

'Oh!' said D'Artagnan. 'This indicates that Milady and I are anxious about the health of the same person! Well, Planchet, how is the good M. de Wardes? He is not dead, then?'

'No, Monsieur, he is as well as a man can be with four sword-wounds in his body. He is still very weak, having lost most of his blood.'

'Well done, Planchet! You are the king of servants. Now jump on your horse and let us overtake the carriage.'

This did not take long. At the end of five minutes they saw the carriage standing by the roadside; a richly-dressed nobleman was close to the door. The conversation between Milady and the nobleman was so earnest that D'Artagnan stopped on the other side of the carriage without anyone except the pretty maid noticing his presence.

The conversation took place in English—a language D'Artagnan could not understand—but the young man plainly saw that the beautiful Englishwoman was in a



D'Artagnan stopped on the other side of the carriage.

great rage. The nobleman was laughing, which appeared to annoy Milady still more.

D'Artagnan thought it was the moment to interfere. He approached the other door of the carriage, and taking off his hat respectfully, said, 'Madame, will you permit me to offer you my services? It seems to me that this gentleman has made you very angry. Speak one word, Madame, and I will undertake to punish him for his rudeness.'

At the first word Milady turned, looking at the young man with astonishment; and when he had finished she said in very good French, 'Monsieur, I should be glad of your protection, except that the person with whom I quarrel is my brother.'

'Ah, excuse me, then,' said D'Artagnan. 'I did not know that, Madame.'

'What is that stupid fellow talking about?' cried Milady's brother, from the other side of the carriage. 'Why doesn't he mind his own business?'

'Stupid fellow yourself!' said D'Artagnan angrily. 'I shall stay here until I am ready to go.'

It might be thought that Milady would have interfered at this moment in order to prevent the quarrel from going too far; but on the contrary, she sat back in the carriage and called coolly to the coachman, 'Go on—go home!'

The pretty maid threw an anxious glance at D'Artagnan, whose good looks seemed to have attracted her. The carriage went on, leaving the two men facing each other. D'Artagnan drew his sword.

'You see plainly that I have no sword,' said the Englishman. 'Do you wish to fight with an unarmed man?'

'I hope you have a sword at home, Monsieur. If not, I have two, and will gladly lend you one.'

'Indeed,' said the Englishman coldly, 'I am well-furnished with such playthings.'

'Very well, my worthy gentleman,' replied D'Artagnan. 'Choose your longest sword, and come and show it to me this evening.'

'Where, if you please?'

'Behind the Luxembourg; that's a quiet spot for such amusements.'

'I will be there at six o'clock. We shall each bring three friends with us to act as seconds,' said the Englishman. 'And now—who are you?'

'I am M. D'Artagnan, a Gascon gentleman serving in the king's musketeers. And you?'

'I am Lord Winter, Baron Sheffield.'

'Well, then, I will meet you this evening, Monsieur Baron,' said D'Artagnan, 'although your names are not easy for a Frenchman to remember.' And touching his horse with his spur, he rode back to Paris, where he called on his three friends to accompany him to the duelling ground that evening.

At six o'clock the four musketeers went to the arranged place behind the Luxembourg. Almost at once, a silent party drew near to the same place and joined them.

The Englishmen were all men of noble birth, and consequently, the strange names of their opponents were not only a matter of surprise, but of annoyance.

'But we do not know who you are,' said Lord Winter, when the three friends had been named. 'We cannot fight with such names; they are names of shepherds.'

'Therefore you may suppose they are not our real names,' said Athos.

'Which only gives us a greater desire to know the real ones,' replied the Englishman.

'Well, that is only fair,' said Athos, and he took his opponent to one side and told him his name in a low voice. Porton and Aramis did the same.

'Does that satisfy you?' said Athos to his opponent.

'Yes, Monsieur,' replied the Englishman, bowing.

'Well, now shall I tell you something?' said Athos coolly.

'What?' asked the other.

'Just this—that you would have acted more wisely if you had not made me tell you who I am.'

'Why?'

'Because I am believed to be dead, and I have reasons for wishing nobody to know I am living. Thus, I shall be obliged to kill you, to prevent my secret from being discovered.'

The Englishman looked at Athos, thinking that he was joking; but Athos was deadly serious.

'And now, gentlemen,' said Athos, speaking to the others. 'Are we ready?'

'Yes,' answered the Englishmen and the Frenchmen, with one voice.

Immediately eight swords glittered in the rays of the setting sun, and the fight began with a fierceness which was very natural between men who were twice enemies.

Athos killed his opponent first. He hit him only once, but as he had foretold, that hit was a deadly one; the sword pierced his heart.

Second, Porthos stretched his enemy upon the grass with a wound through his thigh. As the Englishman surrendered his sword without making any further resistance, Porthos took him up in his arms and carried him to his carriage.

Aramis fought his opponent so fiercely that the man ended by taking to his heels*, and disappeared amid the laughter of the servants.

As for D'Artagnan, he fought purely and simply on the defensive; and when he saw that Lord Winter was almost exhausted, he sent his sword flying with a strong thrust.

The baron took two or three steps back, but his foot slipped and he fell down. D'Artagnan was over him at once, and said, 'I could kill you, my lord, you are completely at my mercy; but I spare your life for the sake of your sister.'

The Englishman shook hands gratefully with D'Artagnan, and paid a thousand compliments to the three musketeers. 'And now, my young friend,' said Lord Winter to D'Artagnan, 'on this very evening I will introduce you to my sister, Milady Clarik.'

D'Artagnan bowed, and blushed with pleasure. 'That will be a great honour, Monsieur,' he said.

Lord Winter gave him his sister's address. She lived in the Place Royale, at Number 6, and he arranged to call for D'Artagnan at eight o'clock and take him there, in order to introduce him.

This introduction to Milady Clarik was just what D'Artagnan had hoped for. He remembered how strangely this woman was mixed up in his destiny. He was sure she was a spy of the cardinal's. His only fear was that Milady would remember having seen him at Meung, and that she would also know of his visit to the Duke of Buckingham in London. However, that was a risk he had to take. She also knew, of course, that he was a friend of M. de Tréville's, and therefore belonged body and soul to the king. However, this all added to the excitement of the meeting.

Lord Winter arrived at the appointed time, and as it was nearly eight o'clock, he took the young man with him at once. A fine carriage, drawn by two excellent horses, waited for them, and they were soon at the Place Royale.

Milady Clarik received D'Artagnan politely. Her house was remarkably large and richly-furnished. She obviously had plenty of money and had no fears about spend-

ing it upon her house; which proved that the war between England and France did not affect her.

'You see,' said Lord Winter, introducing D'Artagnan to his sister, 'a young gentleman who has held my life in his hands, and yet has spared it, although I insulted him, and although I am an Englishman. Thank him, then, Madame, if you have any affection for me.'

Milady frowned slightly, and a strange smile appeared upon her lips. 'You are welcome here, Monsieur,' she said, but D'Artagnan noticed that she had turned an angry red, and her little foot tapped with annoyance beneath her dress.

Lord Winter saw nothing of this. He went to a table upon which was a tray with Spanish wine and glasses. He filled two glasses and invited D'Artagnan to drink.

That pretty little maid, whom D'Artagnan had already seen, then came in. She spoke to Lord Winter in English, and he asked D'Artagnan's permission to leave, explaining that he had some urgent business to attend to. The two men shook hands, and Lord Winter left the room.

Milady had now recovered her temper, and the conversation became more cheerful. She told D'Artagnan that Lord Winter was her brother-in-law, not her brother. She had married a younger brother of the family, who had left her a widow with one child. This child was Lord Winter's heir, if the baron did not marry and have children of his own.

They continued to chat pleasantly, and D'Artagnan was soon convinced that Milady was French; she spoke the language with an ease and a purity that left no doubt in his mind. At last the time came for him to leave. He said goodbye and went out of the room, well-satisfied.

On the staircase he met the pretty maid, who brushed gently against him as she passed, and then asked his pardon for having touched him.

D'Artagnan came again on the following day, and was still better received than on the evening before. Lord Winter was not at home, and Milady was alone. She appeared to take a great interest in D'Artagnan, asking him where he lived, who were his friends, and whether he had not sometimes thought of joining the cardinal's guards. D'Artagnan, who was exceedingly wise for a young man of twenty, then remembered his suspicions about her. He began to praise the cardinal, and said he would not have failed to enter his Eminence's guards, if he had happened to know their captain instead of M. de Tréville.

Milady changed the conversation, and asked D'Artagnan in a careless manner whether he had ever been in England. D'Artagnan replied that he had been sent there by M. de Tréville to buy some horses, and that he had brought back four with him.

D'Artagnan left at the same hour as on the preceding evening. He again met the pretty Kitty (that was the name of the maid) upon the stairs. She looked at him with an expression of kindness which it was impossible to mistake; but D'Artagnan was so occupied by the mistress that he noticed absolutely nothing about the maid. He came again on the next two days. Each day Milady received him graciously, and every evening he met the pretty maid on the stairs. But, as we have said, D'Artagnan paid no attention to this persistence of poor Kitty.

CHAPTER 16

MAID AND MISTRESS

As the days went on, D'Artagnan felt more and more in love with Milady, in spite of the cries of his conscience and the wise advice of Athos.

One day, when he arrived with his head in the air, and as light at heart as a man who awaits a shower of gold, he found the maid waiting outside the mistress's house; but this time the pretty Kitty was not contented with smiling at him as he passed. She took him gently by the hand.

'I must speak to you, Monsieur,' she said.

'Speak, my child, speak,' said D'Artagnan kindly. 'I am listening.'

'We cannot talk here, Monsieur,' said Kitty timidly. 'What I have to say is too long, and, above all, too secret. Will you follow me?'

'Certainly, my dear child.'

'Come, then.' And Kitty, still holding D'Artagnan's hand, led him up a little dark staircase to an open door.



She took him gently by the hand

'Come in here, Monsieur,' she said. 'We shall be alone here, and can talk.'

'And whose room is this, my dear child?'

'It is mine, Monsieur; it communicates with my mistress's by that door. But you need not fear. She will not hear what we say; she never goes to bed before midnight.' She gave a deep sigh, and went on, 'Do you love my mistress very dearly, Monsieur?'

'Oh, more than I can say, Kitty! I am mad about her!'

Kitty breathed a second sigh. 'Alas, Monsieur, that is too bad,' she said, 'because she does not love you at all.' D'Artagnan laughed, and Kitty went on, 'You don't believe me?'

'I confess that unless you can give me some proof of what you say—'

Kitty took a letter from her pocket. 'What do you think of this?' she said.

'For me?' said D'Artagnan, seizing the letter.

'No, for another.'

'His name, his name!' cried D'Artagnan.

'Read the address,' replied Kitty.

D'Artagnan saw that it was addressed to M. the Count de Wardes, and he at once remembered the scene at St. Germain. He tore open the letter, in spite of a cry from Kitty, and read:—

'You have not answered my first note. Are you ill, or have you forgotten the evening we spent together at the ball of Madame de Guise?'

D'Artagnan became very pale.

'Poor dear M. d'Artagnan,' said Kitty, in a voice full of pity.

'You are sorry for me?' said D'Artagnan. 'Well then, instead of pitying me, you must help me to avenge myself upon your mistress.' And he gave Kitty a kiss, at which the poor girl became as red as a cherry. Our Gascon

saw at a glance how he could take advantage of Kitty's admiration for him. He could persuade her to let him see all letters addressed to the Count de Wardes; perhaps even more important letters, to and from the Cardinal. 'Come here, my dear,' he said, sitting down in a chair. 'Come, and let me tell you that you are the prettiest little girl I ever saw!'

But it was getting late. The clock struck midnight, and almost at the same time the bell was rung in Milady's room.

'Oh, God!' cried Kitty. 'There is my mistress calling me! You must go at once.'

D'Artagnan rose, and took his hat; but instead of leaving, he quickly opened the door of a large cupboard and hid inside.

'Well,' called Milady in a sharp voice. 'Are you asleep, as you don't answer my ring?'

'I'm here, Milady, I'm here,' cried Kitty, running to her mistress. The door between the rooms remained open, and D'Artagnan could hear their conversation clearly.

'Well,' said Milady. 'I have not seen our Gascon this evening.' She laughed, and went on, 'But I have him safe! He has caused me plenty of trouble, and I shall have my revenge!'

'I thought you loved him,' said Kitty.

'I love him? I hate him! An idiot, who held the life of Lord Winter in his hands and did not kill him—and so my son and I missed a large income!'

D'Artagnan shivered at that sharp voice, blaming him for not having killed a man who had always loaded her with kindness. This woman was a monster! He listened for some time, but soon Milady was ready for bed.

'That will do now,' she said to Kitty. 'Go to your room.'

D'Artagnan heard Kitty come back, and close and lock her door. Then he stepped out of the cupboard.

'Oh!' said Kitty in a low voice. 'Are you still here? You must go at once. The walls are thin, and every word spoken in this room can be heard in the other.'

So D'Artagnan left, after making Kitty promise to bring him any other letters entrusted to her care. The poor girl promised to do all he asked; she was mad with love for him.

The next morning she brought him another letter addressed to the Count de Wardes from Milady. This time D'Artagnan answered it, signing it with the count's name. His plan was very simple. He would pretend to be the Count de Wardes, and visit Milady, through Kitty's room, that very night. In the darkness Milady would not know that she was being deceived.

'All cats are grey in the dark,' said D'Artagnan with a laugh. And how furious Milady would be when she discovered the truth!

The vengeance was easy. D'Artagnan arranged, through Kitty, that the 'Count de Wardes' should visit Milady at eleven o'clock that night, reaching her bedroom by way of Kitty's room. Milady, perhaps for the sake of romance and mystery, told Kitty to put out all the lights in her room; and when D'Artagnan arrived, and announced in a whisper that he was the count, Milady had no doubts or suspicions. She spoke to him in her softest voice and pressed his hand in her own. She kissed him, and then slipped a ring from her finger on to D'Artagnan's. His first movement was to return it, but Milady said, 'No, no! Keep that ring for love of me. Besides,' she added, in a voice full of emotion, 'by taking it from me you do me a much greater service than you imagine.'

'This woman is full of mysteries,' said D'Artagnan to

himself. At that moment he felt ready to confess everything. He even opened his mouth to tell Milady who he was; but she added, 'Poor angel, whom that monster of a Gascon almost killed.'

The monster was himself!

'Are your wounds still very painful?' she continued.

'Yes,' replied D'Artagnan, who did not know quite how to answer.

'Never mind,' whispered Milady. 'I will avenge you—have no fear!'

This was altogether too much for the young musketeer, and he pulled away from her so violently that, for the first time, Milady grew suspicious. Pulling aside the window curtain, so that the moonlight shone brightly into the room, she looked at D'Artagnan closely, and gave a cry of fury.

'You!' she screamed. 'You!' She ran to a little box that stood on the dressing-table, opened it with a trembling hand, and took out a small dagger with a sharp thin blade. She sprang, fierce as a tiger, at the young man, and D'Artagnan seized her by the shoulder in order to save himself. With a strong movement she tried to escape, and her dress was torn from her beautiful shoulders; and on one of those shoulders D'Artagnan recognised, with utter astonishment, the *fleur-de-lys*—that indelible mark of the branded criminal.

'Great God!' cried D'Artagnan, loosing his hold of her dress, and standing speechless, motionless, and frozen.

Milady realised that he had seen all. The young man now knew her secret, her terrible secret: the secret she hid with such care, even from her maid: the secret of which the whole world was ignorant.

'Ah, wretch!' she cried. 'You have tricked and betrayed me, and, still more, you know my secret! You



D'Artagnan recognised the *fleur-de-lys*

shall die.' With the dagger in her hand, she threw herself once more upon D'Artagnan.

The musketeer drew his sword to defend himself, and moved in the semi-darkness towards Kitty's door. Milady, screaming like a mad woman, knocked over a chair in her attempt to reach him, and Kitty, hearing the noise, opened the door. This was just what D'Artagnan had been hoping for; with one spring he flew from Milady's room to Kitty's, and quickly shut the door and locked it.

'Quick, Kitty, quick!' he cried, and they ran down the staircase together and out into the street.

The moment she lost sight of him, Milady fell in a faint in her room.

ATHOS LEARNS THE TRUTH

D'ARTAGNAN first took Kitty to Aramis's house and told him to guard her safely. Then he went straight to Athos.

First he showed him the ring Milady had given him, and Athos turned pale with shock. 'It reminds me of a family jewel,' he said faintly. He tried it on his left hand; it fitted his finger as if made for it. 'It is impossible,' he said. 'Do you say you got this ring from Milady Clarik?'

'Do you really know this ring?' asked D'Artagnan earnestly.

'I thought I did,' replied Athos, 'but I must be mistaken. It is very like a ring my mother gave me.'

'And—did you sell it?' asked D'Artagnan, hesitatingly.

'No,' replied Athos, with a bitter smile. 'I gave it away—to a woman I thought I loved.'

'Athos,' D'Artagnan said, 'Milady is marked with a *flair-de-l'ys* upon her shoulder.'

'Ah!' cried Athos, as if he had received a dagger in his heart. He let his head sink on his hands. 'How old is this woman?' he asked at last.

'About twenty-six or twenty-eight years old.'

'Is she fair, with blue eyes, with very black eyelashes and brows?'

'Yes.'

'But you say she is English?'

'She is called Milady, but she may be French. Lord Winter is only her brother-in-law.'

'I will see her, D'Artagnan!'

'Be careful, Athos, be careful! She will kill you if she recognises you. There is something horribly mysterious about this woman. I am sure she is one of the cardinal's spies.'

'In that case, we will keep together and never go out alone,' said Athos. 'We leave Paris for the wars, the day after tomorrow.' He looked again at the ring, and then at his friend. 'And this ring can buy our outfits for the war!' he added, with a laugh.

'An excellent idea!' said D'Artagnan. 'And now, Athos, we must visit Aramis. I have left Milady's maid in his care, and we must find somewhere safe for her to go. We can hardly take her with us to the wars!'

The two friends went at once to Aramis's house, and found him already making plans for Kitty. 'I have some friends who live in the country,' he explained, 'and I know they are looking for a reliable maid. I will write to them at once, and you shall leave tonight, Kitty, taking the letter with you.'

He sat down at his table and wrote a little note which he sealed with a ring, and gave the letter to Kitty.

'And now, my dear girl,' said D'Artagnan, 'it is dangerous for us to be seen together. Let us separate now, but we shall meet again in better days.'

'And whenever we find each other, in whatever place it may be,' said Kitty, 'you will find me loving you as I love you today.'

D'Artagnan gave her some money for her journey and led her out into the street. Immediately afterwards the three young men separated, arranging to meet again at four o'clock with Athos. Meanwhile, Athos went to sell his ring, and received such a good price for it that he was able to finance his friends as well as himself. Thus, all their anxiety over money had disappeared, and only the anxiety about Milady and her dangerous revenge remained.

Two days later the king's troops left for Rochelle, to besiege the English enemy and drive them out of the area. As it is not our intention to give a history of the

siege of Rochelle, we will content ourselves with saying in two words that the expedition succeeded, to the great astonishment of the French king and the great glory of the cardinal. The English, driven back foot by foot, beaten on all sides, were obliged to re-embark on their ships, leaving two thousand men on the field of battle.

The musketeers, who had not much to do with the siege, were not under very strict orders, and led a joyous life. This was particularly easy for our four friends; for, being friends of M. de Tréville, they were able to obtain special leave of absence after the closing of the camp.

Now, one evening when D'Artagnan, who was on duty, was not able to go with them, Athos, Porthos and Aramis were returning on horseback from an inn called the Red Dovecot, which Athos had discovered two days before. About a mile from the village, they heard the sound of horses approaching them. They stopped at once, drew close together and waited, occupying the middle of the road. As the moon broke from behind a cloud, they saw two horsemen, who had also stopped, and seemed to be doubtful whether to continue on their way or go back. This made the three friends suspicious, and Athos called out in a loud voice, 'Who goes there?'

'Who goes there, yourselves?' replied one of the horsemen.

'That is not an answer,' replied Athos. 'Answer our question, or we shall attack.'

The second stranger now spoke in a commanding tone. His face was partly covered by his cloak, but now he let the cloak fall.

'Monsieur the cardinal!' exclaimed the astonished musketeers.

It was indeed his Eminence, Cardinal Richelieu. 'You will have to come with me, gentlemen,' he said. 'I do not wish anyone to know that I have left the camp.'

'We are gentlemen, sir,' said Athos. 'We can keep a secret, and we give you our promise to tell no one.'

'What is your name?' asked the cardinal.

'Athos,' replied the musketeer.

'Then your companions are no doubt Porthos and Aramis,' remarked his Eminence. 'I know you, gentlemen. I know you are not quite my friends, and I am sorry you are not so; but I know you are brave and loyal gentlemen, and that I can trust you. I should be glad if you would come with me, for my own protection.'

The musketeers bowed low over their horses' necks. 'Your Eminence is right to take us with you,' said Athos. 'We have seen several villainous faces on the road, and we have even had a quarrel at the Red Dovecot with four of them.'

'A quarrel? At the Red Dovecot?' said the cardinal sharply. 'And what was this quarrel about?'

'These fellows were drunk,' said Athos. 'They knew there was a lady in one of the rooms, and they wanted to force open her door.'

'And was this lady young and beautiful?' asked the cardinal, with a certain degree of anxiety.

'We did not see her, sir,' said Athos.

'You did not see her?' said the cardinal. 'Ah, well—you were right to defend the honour of a woman. I am going to the Red Dovecot myself, and I should be glad if you would accompany me.'

They soon arrived at the silent, lonely inn. The cardinal told his servant to guard the horses, and entered the inn door with the three musketeers close behind him. The innkeeper welcomed them politely. To him, the cardinal was only an officer come to visit a lady.

'Have you a room where these gentlemen can wait near a good fire?' said the cardinal, and the man opened the door of a large room on the ground floor. An old

stove had recently been replaced there by a large open fireplace, where a fire burned warmly.

'I have this,' he said.

'That will do,' replied the cardinal. 'Enter, gentlemen, and be kind enough to wait for me. I shall not be more than half an hour.'

The three musketeers entered the room, and the cardinal went up the staircase like a man who knows his way.

CHAPTER 18

THE USEFULNESS OF OLD STOVE PIPES

THE musketeers realised that the cardinal was visiting the same lady whose honour they had defended earlier; but it was not their business to ask who she was. So, in order to pass the time of waiting, Porthos and Aramis sat down at a table and began to play cards. Athos walked about the room in deep thought. While doing this, he passed and repassed the pipe of the broken stove, the upper half of which went up the chimney into the room above; and every time he passed, he heard a murmur of voices. Athos went closer to the chimney and listened carefully. He heard the cardinal say,

'Listen, Milady—the affair is important. Sit down, and let us talk it over.'

'Milady?' murmured Athos.

'A small ship is waiting for you at Fort Point,' the cardinal went on. 'It is an English ship, but the captain is on my side, and he will set sail for England to-morrow morning.'

'So I must go there tonight?' said a female voice which Athos recognised with a start.

'Yes. But first you must receive your instructions.'

There was a moment of silence while the cardinal collected his thoughts, and Athos took advantage of this moment to tell his two companions to come and listen with him. The two musketeers, who loved their com-fort, brought a chair for each of themselves and one for Athos. All three then sat down near the stove pipe with their heads together.

'You will go to London,' continued the cardinal. 'And when you arrive there, you will go at once to the Duke of Buckingham.'

'Your Eminence must remember,' said Milady, 'that the duke does not trust me since the affair of the diamond studs.'

'Well, this time it is not necessary to win his confidence,' said the cardinal. 'You just have to show your-



All three sat down near the stove pipe

self as a loyal Frenchwoman. You will go to Buckingham on my behalf, and tell him that I know all his plans. But I am not worried by them, because I will ruin our queen at the first step he takes.'

'Will he believe that you are in a position to do this?' asked Milady.

'Yes, for I have the proof. You will tell him that I have witnesses to his visits to the queen. I also possess some of his letters to her.'

'But suppose the duke does not give way, in spite of all this,' persisted Milady. 'He may still continue to threaten France.'

'The duke is mad with love,' replied Richelieu, with great bitterness. 'He has only started this war for the sake of his lady-love. If he becomes certain that the war will cost the honour, and perhaps the liberty, of the queen, I am sure he will stop it at once.'

'But what if he does persist?'

'Then he must die,' said his Eminence coldly. 'You must find some miserable fellow, someone who hates Buckingham, to kill him.'

'He will be found,' Milady paused a moment, and then went on, 'And now that I have received your Eminence's instructions about your enemies, will you allow me to say a few words about mine?'

'Have you enemies, then?' asked Richelieu. 'Who are they?'

'I have one bitter enemy,' cried Milady, carried away by her anger. 'He is, in fact, the enemy of both of us. I mean that miserable D'Artagnan.'

'He is a brave fellow,' said the cardinal.

'And it is exactly because he is a brave fellow that he is so dangerous.'

'I must have a proof of his connection with Buckingham,' said Richelieu.

'A proof?' cried Milady. 'I will give you ten!'

'Well, then, it becomes the simplest thing in the world. Get me that proof, and I will send him to prison.'

'Your Eminence,' replied Milady; 'a fair exchange! Life for life, man for man. Give me one, and I will give you the other.'

'I don't know what you mean, nor do I even wish to know what you mean,' replied the cardinal; 'but I am willing to please you. Give me paper, a quill, and some ink.'

There was silence while the cardinal wrote a note. Athos took his companions by the hand, and led them to the other end of the room below.

'Well,' said Porthos, 'what do you want?'

'Hush!' said Athos, speaking in a low voice. 'I must go at once. I can save D'Artagnan, but this concerns me alone.'

'You must go!' said Porthos. 'And what can we tell the cardinal, when he finds you have gone?'

'Tell him that I have gone on the look-out, because the innkeeper has warned us that the road is not safe,' replied Athos.

He went out of the inn, took his horse, explained to the cardinal's servant that he was going as an advance guard for their return, and took the road to the camp.

He continued on the road until he was out of sight of the inn, and then he turned his horse to the right and waited behind a high hedge until he saw his friends and the cardinal ride past on their way back to the camp. Then he returned at a gallop to the inn, which was opened to him without hesitation.

The innkeeper recognised him at once.

'My officer has forgotten to give an important piece of information to the lady,' Athos explained, 'and he has sent me back with a message.'

'Go up,' said the innkeeper. 'She is still in her room.' Athos ran lightly upstairs and entered Milady's room, locking the door behind him. At the noise he made, Milady turned round and looked at him.

'The Count de la Fère!' she whispered, turning extremely pale, and drawing back till the curtained windows prevented her from going any further.

'Yes, Milady,' replied Athos, 'the Count de la Fère in person, who is no more dead than you are! Sit down, Madame, and let us talk.'

Milady, utterly terrified, sat down without saying a word.

'You certainly are a devil sent on earth!' said Athos. 'Your power is great, I know; but you also know that, with God's help, men have often conquered the most terrible demons. Hell has made you rich, hell has given you another name, hell has almost given you another face; but it cannot conceal the brand on your shoulder!'

Milady's eyes flashed angrily, but Athos continued, 'You believed I was dead, just as I believed you were. And the name of Athos has concealed the Count de la Fère just as cleverly as the name Milady Clarik has concealed Anne de Breuil. Wasn't that your name when your brother married us?'

'What brings you back to me, and what do you want with me?' asked Milady in a faint voice.

'I wish to give you a serious warning,' replied Athos. 'I know all that you have done.' A disbelieving smile passed over Milady's pale lips, but Athos continued, 'Listen! It was you who cut off the two diamond studs belonging to the Duke of Buckingham; it was you who arranged for Madame Bonacieux to be kidnapped. And now, you have promised Cardinal Richelieu that you will arrange for the Duke of Buckingham's murder, in exchange for D'Artagnan's life.'

Milady trembled. 'You must be the devil himself!' she cried.

'Perhaps,' said Athos. 'But at all events, listen to me. Murder the Duke of Buckingham, if you want—I care very little about that! I don't know him. Besides, he is an Englishman. But do not touch a single hair of D'Artagnan, who is my faithful friend.'

'D'Artagnan has cruelly insulted me,' said Milady, 'and D'Artagnan shall die!'

'Indeed? Is it possible to insult you, Madame?' said Athos. He stood up, and drew a pistol from his belt.

Milady, pale as a corpse, tried to cry out; but her swollen tongue could utter no more than a hoarse sound which had nothing human in it. Motionless against the dark curtains, with her hair in disorder, she appeared like a horrid image of terror.

Athos slowly raised his pistol until it almost touched Milady's head. 'Madame,' he said coldly, 'you will deliver to me the paper signed by the cardinal; or, upon my soul, I will blow your brains out.'

With another man, Milady might have tried to delay; but she knew Athos. Silently she drew out the letter and held it towards him.

'Take it!' she said. 'And be cursed for ever!' Athos took the paper, unfolded it, and read:—

'The bearer of this letter has acted according to my orders.

RICHELIEU.'

'And now,' said Athos, putting on his hat, 'now that I have drawn your teeth, my little snake, bite if you can!'

And he left the room without once looking behind him.

CONVERSATION OF A BROTHER WITH
A SISTER

As soon as D'Artagnan heard of Milady's departure for England and the plot against Buckingham, he said they should send some sort of warning at once. After some discussion, they decided to send a letter to Lord Winter in London, and that D'Artagnan's servant, Planchet, should take it. Planchet knew London: he had already visited the town, and spoke some English, so he would run less risk of being suspected and arrested as a French spy than any of the other servants.

The letter was written at once, and Planchet set off immediately. The journey was not an easy one, and he met with some danger, but he returned nine days later, triumphantly carrying a short note from Milady's brother-in-law. The note said only, 'Don't worry. She will be dealt with!' but the musketeers gave a sigh of relief and returned to their everyday affairs with lighter hearts.

Meanwhile Milady, furious with passion, roaring on the deck like a lioness, had been tempted to throw herself into the sea and swim back to France; for she could not get rid of the thought that she had been insulted by D'Artagnan, threatened by Athos, and that she had left the country without being revenged upon them. The weather was stormy, however, and the ship was delayed, and she eventually cooled down and resigned herself to continuing on her journey. After several delays, the little ship reached Portsmouth, and on the very day that Planchet (who had gone by a different route) embarked at Portsmouth to return to France, Milady entered that port in triumph.

But as they drew near, in order to cast anchor, a little

boat containing an officer in naval uniform approached the ship. The officer climbed on board and spoke for a few moments to the captain, giving him several papers. Then he walked over to Milady. He was a young man of twenty-five or twenty-six years of age. His face was pale, with clear blue eyes, rather deeply set; his mouth was fine and well-shaped. He bowed low to Milady, and she watched him in astonishment as he ordered her luggage to be placed in his boat and then invited her to descend by offering her his hand.

Milady hesitated. 'Who are you, sir?' she asked. 'Why are you going to so much trouble on my account?'

'You may see by my uniform, Madame, that I am an officer in the English navy,' replied the young man.

'But is it the custom for English naval officers to place themselves at the service of ladies when they land in a port of England?'

'Yes, Madame, it is the custom in time of war that foreigners should be taken to special hotels, so that the government can keep in touch with them.' These words were spoken with absolute politeness, but Milady began to feel alarmed.

'But I am not a foreigner, sir,' she said. 'My name is Lady Clarik, and this action—'

'This action is perfectly usual, Madame. You cannot escape it,' replied the young man firmly.

'Very well then, I will follow you,' said Milady coldly. Accepting his hand, she climbed down the ladder into the boat. The officer followed her, and the sailors at once began to row towards the shore. In five minutes they reached land.

The officer jumped on to the pier, and offered his hand to Milady. A carriage was waiting.

'Is this carriage for us?' asked Milady.

'Yes, Madame. We have some distance to go.'

'Very well,' said Milady, and she entered the carriage.

The officer saw that the luggage was fastened carefully behind the carriage; then he took his place beside Milady, and shut the door. The coachman set off at a rapid pace, and drove through the streets of the city. At last, after a journey of nearly an hour, the carriage passed under two arched gateways and stopped in a large, dark courtyard. The door of the carriage was opened, and the young man helped Milady to get down. With a polite word, he led the way into the house and up a stone staircase into a large room which had iron bars at the windows. Two servants followed with the luggage, which they put down, and then went out again without speaking.

By this time Milady was feeling thoroughly nervous, and at last she burst out: 'In the name of Heaven, sir, what does all this mean? Where am I, and why am I here? If I am free, why are these bars at the windows? If I am a prisoner, what crime have I committed?'

'I received orders to bring you to this castle, Madame,' replied the young man. 'That ends my duty; the rest concerns another person.'

'And who is that other person?' asked Milady angrily. 'Can you not tell me his name?'

At this moment, footsteps were heard on the stairs. 'That person is here, Madame,' said the officer, opening the door and standing respectfully beside it.

A man entered and came forward slowly. As he entered the circle of lamplight, Milady drew back. 'What, my brother! Is it you?' she cried in surprise.

'Yes, fair lady!' replied Lord Winter. 'It is I!'

'Is this castle yours?'

'It is.'

'Then I am your prisoner?'

'Yes,' replied Lord Winter coldly. 'Let us sit down and talk quietly, as a brother and sister ought to do.'

Then, turning towards the door, he said to the young officer, 'All is well, thank you. Now leave us alone, Mr. Felton.'

The young man went out, closing the door behind him, and Milady tried to speak calmly and cheerfully. 'Yes, let us talk, brother,' she said. She must somehow try to find out how much Lord Winter knew. Perhaps she was under suspicion because of the diamond studs she had stolen from the Duke of Buckingham; if so, she could soon deal with that story. But deep in her heart she was afraid that Lord Winter had somehow received a warning from Athos and D'Artagnan—in which case, he might know everything, and she was in deadly danger. 'First tell me, my dear sister, what makes you come to England?' asked Lord Winter.

'I came to see you,' replied Milady.

'Indeed?' he said, with a laugh. 'What tenderness, my dear!'

'But am I not your nearest relative?' said Milady.

'And my only heir, too, aren't you?' said Lord Winter, fixing his eyes coldly on her.

The words were as cold as his eyes. Milady remembered her furious and unwise words when D'Artagnan spared the life of her brother. But she raised her head and stared back at her brother-in-law.

'I do not understand,' she said. 'What do you mean? Is there any secret meaning hidden beneath your words?'

'Oh, good heavens, no!' said Lord Winter, with apparent good nature. 'I just wondered if perhaps you wanted to see Buckingham, too? You come from a country where he must be very much hated, and his fight against France must be of great interest to your friend the cardinal.'

'My friend the cardinal!' cried Milady. It seemed that Lord Winter was very well informed on several points.

'Isn't he your friend?' said Lord Winter carelessly. 'I beg your pardon—I thought he was. But let us return to your first words. You say you came to see me?'

'Yes.'

'Well, that is fortunate, for we shall see each other every day.'

'Am I to remain here indefinitely?' asked Milady, with a certain terror.

'Are you not comfortable, sister? Ask for anything you want, and you shall have it. Tell me what servants you had in your first husband's house, and I will try to make the same arrangements here.'

'My first husband!' cried Milady, looking at Lord Winter with eyes almost starting out of her head.

'Yes, your French husband. I am not speaking of my brother. If you have forgotten, I can write to your first husband and ask him, as he is still alive.'

A cold sweat broke out on Milady's forehead. 'You are joking!' she whispered.

'Do I look as if I am joking?' said Lord Winter. He pointed to her right shoulder. 'Do you want me to seek further proof of my suspicions by revealing the *fleur-de-lys* you carry there?'

Milady gave a scream and retreated to a corner of the room. So he knew everything! Athos and D'Artagnan must be his informants.

'You may scream as much as you please,' said Lord Winter. 'But don't try to bite, Milady—and don't try to get away from here. My servants have their orders not to let you escape, and, when I am away, the young naval officer, Mr. Felton, will be in charge. You already know him: he is as cold and inflexible as marble. You

have charmed and deceived many men in your time, and so far you have usually succeeded. But I give you permission to try your charms on this one. If you succeed with him, I shall declare you the devil himself!'

He went to the door and opened it. 'Call Mr. Felton,' he said to the servant on duty outside.

They waited in absolute silence until the young naval lieutenant arrived. 'Come in, my dear John,' Lord Winter said to him. 'Come in, and shut the door.'

The young officer entered.

'Now,' said Lord Winter, 'look at this woman. She is young; she is beautiful; she possesses all earthly charms. But she is a monster, and has been guilty of many horrible crimes. She will try to charm you, to win you over to her side; perhaps she will try to kill you. I am your friend and your protector, Felton; I have rescued you from poverty and misery—I once saved your life. Now I call you, and say to you, John Felton, guard me, and guard yourself, against this woman. John Felton, I put faith in your loyalty!'

'My lord,' said the young officer, looking at Milady with cold hatred, 'I promise to guard you with my life.'

Milady lowered her head, as if crushed by this sentence. But as soon as they had left the room she ran to look out of the window, and then sat down in a chair, thinking, and making plans already to make this young man betray his trust and break his promise.

CHAPTER 20

DAYS OF IMPRISONMENT

On the days that followed, Milady saw John Felton three or four times a day. At first he never even looked at her. He stood silently at the door each time the servants came

in with her meals. But Milady remained quiet and gentle. Often she was weeping when they entered, and Felton began to feel sorry for her against his will. This was just what Milady was hoping for. 'That man has a spark of pity in his soul,' she thought. 'I will make a flame of the spark which will burn him up.'

And on the third night of her imprisonment he gave her such a long and anxious look that Milady went to bed and fell asleep with a smile upon her lips. Anyone who had seen her sleeping might have said she was a young girl dreaming of the crown of flowers she would wear at her wedding. In fact, however, Milady dreamed that night that she had D'Artagnan in her power at last, and that she was present at his death. It was this which spread the charming smile upon her lips. She slept as a prisoner sleeps who has seen his first hope of escape.

In the morning when they entered her room she was still in bed. Felton remained in the passage, and only the maidservant came up to her bed.

'I have a fever,' Milady said in a weak voice. 'I have not slept a single moment during all this long night. I suffer horribly. All I ask is permission to stay in bed.'

'Would you like to have a doctor?' asked the woman. Felton listened to the conversation without speaking a word.

Milady decided that a doctor might quickly see that she was not ill at all, and she cried, 'A doctor? What use would that be? He would probably say that I am only pretending illness.'

'Then,' said Felton from the door, 'tell us what you want us to do, Madame.'

'How can I tell? My God! I know that I suffer, that's all. Give me anything you like, it doesn't really matter.'

'Go and fetch Lord Winter,' Felton said to the maid.

'Oh, no, no!' cried Milady. 'No, sir, don't call him, I beg you. I am well, I don't want anything; do not call him.'

She sounded so unhappy, so frightened, that Felton, in spite of himself, stepped forward into the room.

'He has come!' thought Milady.

'If you are really ill, Madame, a doctor shall be sent for,' said Felton; 'and if you are deceiving us—well, it will be the worse for you.'

Milady made no reply, but, turning her beautiful head round upon her pillow, she burst into tears.

Felton stood looking down at her in silence for a moment; then he turned quickly and went out of the room. The woman followed him, but Lord Winter did not appear.

'I think I begin to have some success!' murmured Milady with a savage joy. And she lay smiling up at the ceiling.

Yes, Felton had fallen; but there was still much to be done. He must be won over completely; and he must be made to speak, in order that he might be spoken to. Milady knew very well that her voice was her greatest charm; she could win him with words if only she could persuade him to listen. It took time, but each day Felton remained a little longer in her room, listening to her voice; each day he fell more deeply in love with her beauty. He stayed to talk to her after the servants had finished their work in the room, and it was at these times that Milady really set to work to poison his mind against Lord Winter. With many lies and terrible stories, she finally made the young officer think that Lord Winter was a monster and Milady an innocent and ill-treated girl in need of help and comfort.

By the end of a week Felton no longer loved her; he adored her.

His mind now had to be poisoned against the Duke of Buckingham, for this was the final plan in Milady's wicked mind. It was easy to convince the poor adoring young man that Buckingham had betrayed Milady; that he had used her for his own ends, and then ill-treated her cruelly.

'Buckingham!' cried Felton, in a high state of excitement.

Milady hid her face in her hands, as if she could not bear the shame which this name recalled to her.

'Buckingham!' Felton cried again. 'He has done all this, and God has not punished him!'

'He is too rich and powerful,' said Milady. 'All men fear him and do not dare to harm him.'

'I do not fear him,' Felton said. 'I shall dare to harm him! You shall live, Madame, to triumph over your enemy. You shall be avenged!'

'Felton,' she cried, 'I bring bad luck to all who are near me. Leave me—let me die!'

'Then we will live and die together!' cried the officer, taking her hands in his.

At this moment there were footsteps outside the door. 'Listen!' cried Milady. 'We have been overheard!'

Someone is coming.

'No,' said Felton. 'It is only the changing of the guard.' He ran to the door, opened it, and found himself face to face with Lord Winter.

'Thank you, Felton, you may go,' said Lord Winter coldly. 'I will see you in my room.'

He turned and walked down the passage without another word.

CHAPTER 21

ESCAPE

FELTON was Milady's only hope: but now it seemed as if Lord Winter suspected him. Felton himself might now be watched!

Milady spent the rest of the day in great anxiety. Felton did not visit her again, and the maidservant told her he had left the castle on horseback at midday. Lord Winter paid her a short visit, and told her that he was arranging for her immediate return to France.

'Get your clothes together. You will go tomorrow, as soon as I have received orders for your exile*, signed by Buckingham,' he said.

Evening came, and supper was served. Milady ate it all, feeling that she might need all her strength before the night ended. Large black clouds rolled over the face of the sky, and distant lightning announced a storm. If Felton did return to help her to escape, their journey would be a dangerous and exhausting one. The thunder growled in the air like the hatred and anger in her thoughts.

At midnight, she heard a tap at her window, and by a flash of lightning she saw the face of a man through the bars. It was Felton. Milady ran to the window and opened it.

'Felton!' she cried. 'I am saved!'

'Yes,' whispered Felton. 'But keep quiet! I must have time to file through these bars.'

'But what shall I do?' asked Milady.

'Nothing, only shut the window. Go to bed, and lie down in your clothes. As soon as I am ready I will knock on the window again.'

Milady shut the window, put out the lamp, and lay

down on the bed. Through the noise of the storm she heard the grinding of the file upon the bars. At the end of an hour, Felton tapped again.

Milady jumped out of bed and opened the window. Felton had removed two bars, and she was just able to climb through.

'Will you trust my strength?' asked Felton. 'I shall have to carry you.'

It was a frightening journey. Milady felt sick and dizzy as Felton carried her down the rope ladder. When they were half-way down, they heard footsteps below and the voices of the guards, and they hung in mid-air, silent and terrified, until the men had passed.

An hour later they reached the sea-shore, where a little boat was waiting to carry them out to the waiting ship. As soon as they were on board the latter, Milady asked, 'Are we going straight to France?'

And Felton replied, 'No, I want you to take me to Portsmouth first, and wait for me there.'

'What are you going to do at Portsmouth?' she asked hopefully.

'I am going to see Buckingham,' Felton answered grimly.

'But you will never be allowed to do so.'

'Oh, yes, I shall. I have a letter to him from Lord Winter. It contains a request for a letter ordering your exile to France, but I am not supposed to know that.'

'And what will happen when you see him?' asked Milady.

'Buckingham will die!' replied the desperate young man.

Milady was overjoyed. It was agreed that, when they reached Portsmouth, she would wait in the ship outside the harbour until ten o'clock that morning. If Felton did not return by ten o'clock, she was to sail without him.

In that case, if he was still free, he was to rejoin her in France, at the convent of the Carmelites* at Bethune.

Felton entered Portsmouth about eight o'clock in the morning, and went straight to the palace of the Admiralty, where Buckingham was staying. The guard wanted to stop him from entering, but Felton showed him the letter and said, 'An important message from Lord Winter.'

At the name of Lord Winter, who was known to be one of the duke's greatest friends, Felton was admitted at once. He found Patrick, the duke's servant, and was led by him through a large hall into Buckingham's dressing-room.

'A messenger from Lord Winter,' said Patrick.

'From Lord Winter!' repeated Buckingham. 'Let him come in.'

Felton entered, and Buckingham went on, 'Why didn't Lord Winter come himself? I expected him this morning.'

'He asked me to tell you,' replied Felton, 'that he was prevented from coming because of the guard he has to keep at the castle.'

'Yes, I know that,' said Buckingham. 'He has a prisoner.'

'My lord,' said Felton, 'Lord Winter requests you to sign this order of exile for that prisoner.'

'Give me the letter,' said the duke. Taking it from Felton, he read it quickly and then took up a pen and prepared to sign it.

But Felton did not give him time to sign it. 'And now, my lord, you are in the hands of God!' he cried; and taking a dagger from his pocket he plunged it into Buckingham's side.

'Ah, traitor,' cried Buckingham, 'you have killed me! Help, Patrick, help!'

At his cry, the secretary came running into the room,

took one look at his dying master, and screamed 'Murder!' at the top of his voice.

Felton looked round for a means of escape, and, seeing the door open, he rushed into the next room and towards the staircase. But upon the first step he met Lord Winter, who, seeing him pale, confused, and stained with blood both on his hands and face, seized him by the throat, crying: 'I knew it! I guessed it! But I am too late by a minute. Ah, how unfortunate I am!'

Felton did not try to get away. Lord Winter placed him in the hands of the guards, who led him to a little terrace overlooking the sea. Then Lord Winter ran into the duke's room, only to be greeted with the news that Buckingham was dead. Running out again, angry and helpless, he told the soldiers to bind Felton's hands and take him to prison.

Felton was now quite calm, but suddenly he looked out to sea. With the sharp eyes of a sailor, he recognised the sail of a ship which was sailing away towards the coast of France. He grew deathly pale, placed his hand upon his heart, which was breaking, and at once understood Milady's treachery.

'What time is it?' he whispered.

Lord Winter looked at his watch. 'It is ten minutes to nine,' he said.

Milady had left an hour and a half before the arranged time. As soon as she heard the cannon which announced Buckingham's death, she ordered the captain to set sail. The ship was already quite a distance from the coast.

'It is God's will!' said Felton miserably.

Lord Winter followed his look, and understood what had happened. 'Be punished alone, now, you miserable man,' he said to Felton. 'But I swear to you, by the memory of my brother, that that woman will be punished, too.'

Felton lowered his head without saying a word. As for Lord Winter, he ran quickly downstairs and went straight to the port.

CHAPTER 22

THE CARMELITE CONVENT AT BÉTHUNE

LET us now return to our musketeers. Thinking that Milady was safely out of the way, as Lord Winter's prisoner in England, they next began to make enquiries about little Madame Bonacieux, who had disappeared so mysteriously. Aramis had friends in high royal circles, and at last he heard that Madame Bonacieux had been rescued by the queen's messengers, and taken to a convent in the country.

'She will be safe enough there,' Aramis said. But D'Artagnan, who had fallen a little in love with the pretty seamstress, persuaded his three friends to obtain leave of absence, and ride with him into the country to visit her.

'Where is this convent?' he asked Aramis.

'It is a Carmelite house at Béthune,' replied his friend.

They set off the next morning on a journey which would take them two or three days on horseback.

Milady arrived there before them. Her arrival spelt death for Madame Bonacieux.

The morning after Milady's arrival at the convent, she was awakened by a soft voice at the foot of her bed. She opened her eyes and saw a pretty, fair-haired young woman smiling down at her. The face of the young woman was entirely unknown to her, and she was dressed

Bonacieux's life in doing so. The seamstress would be her safeguard.

The next morning, however, Madame Bonacieux ran into Miliady's room in great excitement. She had received a message that D'Artagnan was on his way to Béthune to visit her, and to take care of her if necessary. Miliady realised that she would have to act quickly. She had friends in the neighbourhood who would lend her a carriage: that very day she would carry Madame Bonacieux off to a secret hiding-place—a small, lonely cottage which she knew of, some twenty miles away. It was near the village of Armentières, and was known only by Miliady and the Count of Rochefort, that mysterious man in the black cloak, D'Artagnan's 'man from Meung'.

Miliady's plans were soon made: the carriage would call for her that evening as soon as it was dark, and the coachman was instructed to wait in a little wood behind the convent, so that the nuns would not see their departure. Miliady also sent a note to the Count of Rochefort, on which was written the one word, *Armentières*. He would then know that she had gone to the cottage, and would find her there.

She then packed a small bag with her jewels and most valuable possessions, and sent for Madame Bonacieux. Perhaps the most difficult part of her plan would be to persuade the seamstress to come with her, now that the young woman knew D'Artagnan was near at hand. But Miliady was equal to the task. Pretending to be very upset and anxious, she told Madame Bonacieux that she had been warned that the message from D'Artagnan was a forgery: it had not been sent by the young man at all. 'How can that be?' cried the little seamstress.

'D'Artagnan and his friends are at the siege of Rochelle, many miles away,' said Miliady convincingly. 'They do not even know that you are here. Three of the cardinal's



She was awakened by a soft voice

in a novice's clothes—that is to say, she was not yet a nun, but was training to become one. Miliady was bored and lonely, and she was quite pleased to have someone to talk to. She behaved in her most charming manner, and soon the novice was telling her own story. Imagine Miliady's astonishment when she discovered that this young girl was that same Madame Bonacieux who had been a servant of the queen and a friend of D'Artagnan's! The wicked mind of Miliady was filled with joy. Fate had played straight into her hands! She began making plans at once to take Madame Bonacieux secretly away from the convent, and hide her somewhere, holding her as a hostage*. Miliady was in mortal fear of Athos and D'Artagnan, but she knew they would never dare to avenge themselves on her if they risked Madame

guards, disguised as the king's musketeers, will come for you. You will be kidnapped once more, and taken back to Paris.'

'Oh, my God! Is no one to be trusted in this wicked world?' cried Madame Bonacieux. 'I shall go mad!'

'The only thing to do is for us to leave together,' said Milady earnestly. 'I have a carriage coming to fetch me tonight. You can come with me and I will hide you safely until we can get in touch with your friends.'

'Oh, you are so kind, and I am so grateful,' cried the unhappy girl.

And so they waited together in Milady's room. As night was falling, they heard the noise of a carriage in the distance.

'Do you hear anything?' said Madame Bonacieux.

'Yes. It is the carriage my friends have sent for us,' replied Milady.

'Oh, my God!'

'Come, come! Be brave! Go to your room and bring all you need in one small bag. Then come back here and we will have some supper. We have a journey before us, and must keep our strength up.'

Madame Bonacieux was so nervous that she could eat very little supper. She ate a few mouthfuls of chicken, and took a sip from a small glass of wine.

'Come, come!' said Milady, lifting her own glass to her mouth. 'Do as I do—drink up!' But at the moment the glass touched her lips, she heard the distant sound of galloping horses. The noise acted on her joy like the storm which awakens a sleeper from a happy dream. She grew pale, and ran to the window. The noise became louder, and all at once she saw the glitter of lace hats and the waving of feathers. She counted two, then five, then eight horsemen. One of them was well ahead of the rest.

Milady gave a groan. In the first horseman she recognised D'Artagnan.

'Oh, my God, my God, what is it!' cried Madame Bonacieux.

'It is the cardinal's guards. Come—we must go at once. There is not a moment to be lost.'

Madame Bonacieux tried to walk, made two steps, and then sank upon her knees. Milady tried to raise and carry her, but could not do it.

'For the last time, will you come?' she said.

'Oh, my strength fails me, I cannot walk,' sobbed the girl. 'You must go without me.'

'Go alone, and leave you here? No, never!' cried Milady. She paused a moment, and then her eyes flashed wickedly. She ran to the table, took a small bottle of poison from her pocket, and poured the contents into Madame Bonacieux's glass of wine. Then, taking the glass with a firm hand, she said, 'Drink. This wine will give you strength. Drink!' And she put the glass to the lips of the young woman, who drank it gratefully.

'This is not the way I wished to revenge myself,' said Milady to herself, 'but it is all I can do!' And she rushed out of the room.

When D'Artagnan and his friends ran into the room a few minutes later, they found the seamstress lying dead on the floor, and the wicked Milady was nowhere to be found.

D'Artagnan gave a cry and kissed the lifeless hand of the poor girl. Porthos wept; Aramis pointed towards heaven; Athos made the sign of the cross.

At that moment a man appeared in the doorway, almost as pale as those already in the room. It was Lord Winter.

'Gentlemen,' he said, 'you are, as I am, in search of



They found the seamstress lying dead on the floor

a very wicked woman who,' he added with a terrible smile, 'must have passed this way, for I see a corpse*.' Athos rose and offered him his hand. 'You are welcome, my lord,' he said, 'for you are one of us.'

'Milady is to blame for all this,' Lord Winter went on. 'I set out five hours after her from Portsmouth. I arrived three hours after her at Boulogne. I missed her by twenty minutes at St. Omer. Finally, at Lille, I lost all trace of her. I was riding towards Paris when I caught sight of a man who, I know, is a friend of hers. His name is the Count of Rochefort. And by an amazing stroke of luck, he dropped a note which I picked up. That note was in Milady's handwriting, and it bore the one word, *Armentières*.'

'Armentières!' cried the musketeers with one voice. 'That is only a few miles from here. Come—let us go to Armentières!'

CHAPTER 23

JUDGMENT

The first thing the musketeers did was to send their four servants to Armentières, each by a different road. All four were to meet the next morning at eleven o'clock. If they had discovered Milady's hiding-place, three were to remain on guard, and the fourth, Planchet, was to return to Béthune to act as a guide to the four friends. These arrangements made, D'Artagnan, Porthos, Aramis and Lord Winter went to bed in the inn where they were all staying.

But Athos put on his cloak and hat and went out. It was ten o'clock and the streets of the small town were almost empty. Athos wanted to find someone to show him the way to a certain house, and at last he met a beggar sitting by the roadside. Athos mentioned a name and offered the beggar half a crown to lead him there. The man was obviously terrified, and refused at first, but at the sight of the piece of silver shining in the darkness he agreed, and led Athos down a dark and lonely path to a small house, far away from the town. Athos went towards the house while the beggar, who had received his reward, left as fast as his legs could carry him.

The house was in complete darkness. No light appeared through the windows; it was as dark and silent as the tomb.

Athos knocked three times before he received an answer. At last the door was opened, and a man appeared, tall and white-faced, with black hair and beard. Athos and he exchanged some words in a low voice, then the tall man made a sign to the musketeer that he might come in.

The man whom Athos had come so far to seek, and whom he had found with so much trouble, lived entirely alone in the dark house. There was no family, no servant, and the tall man had no friends. Athos quickly explained to him the reason for his visit, and told him what he wanted him to do. The unknown man at first drew back with signs of terror, and refused: but Athos showed him a letter, which was signed and sealed, and the tall man bowed his head and said he was ready to obey.

Athos asked no more. He arose, bowed, and went out, returning to the inn, where he went to bed. Early next morning D'Artagnan entered his room and told him that Planchet had returned. Athos got up and dressed at once, and found Planchet waiting impatiently outside the inn.

Planchet told them that, after some difficulty, he had found Milady's hiding-place. The other three servants were watching the cottage, which stood on a lonely road outside Armentières, close beside a river.

'Now what do we do?' asked D'Artagnan impatiently, on hearing the news.

'We wait until tonight!' replied Athos, and each man returned to his own room.

At eight o'clock in the evening Athos ordered the horses to be saddled and warned his friends and Lord Winter that it was time to start. In an instant all five were ready. Athos came down last, and found D'Artagnan already on horseback and growing impatient.

'Have patience!' said Athos. 'One of our party is still not here.'

The four horsemen looked round them with astonishment, for they could not think who this other person could be. Athos jumped into his saddle and set off at a gallop, calling, 'Wait for me. I'll be back soon.'

In a quarter of an hour he returned, accompanied by a tall man, masked, and wrapped in a large red cloak. Lord Winter and the three musketeers looked at one another in surprise. None of them knew who this man was; but they were certain that all was well, as it was done by Athos's order.

At nine o'clock the little party set off, taking the road to Armentières. It was a dark and stormy night. Heavy clouds covered the sky, hiding the stars; the moon would not rise until midnight. Occasionally, by the light of a flash of lightning, the road stretched itself before them, white and lonely; then everything was black again.

Several times Lord Winter, Porthos, or Aramis tried to talk to the man in the red cloak; but he only bowed without saying a word, and at last they gave up all attempts at conversation. The storm grew worse, and the wind whistled in the feathered hats and hair of the horsemen. Soon it began to rain heavily.

At last Planchet told them to stop, and, by another flash of lightning, they saw a little house on the banks of a river. One window was lighted.

'Here we are!' said Athos.

At this moment a man who had been hiding in a ditch jumped up and came towards them. It was Athos's servant. He pointed to the lighted window. 'She is there,' he said. 'The others are guarding the door.'

'Good!' said Athos. 'You are good and faithful servants.' He jumped from his horse and moved towards the window, after making a sign to the others to go towards the door.

The window curtains were drawn, but Athos climbed on to the sill and found that he could see over the top of them. By the light of a lamp he saw a woman, wrapped in a dark cloak, seated upon a stool near a dying fire. Her elbows were on a table, and she leaned her head

upon her hands. A bitter smile passed over Athos's lips. It was the woman he was looking for.

At this moment a horse neighed. Milady raised her head, saw the pale face of Athos through the window, and screamed. Athos pushed the window with his knee and hand. The glass broke, and, like a god of vengeance, he jumped into the room.

Milady ran to the door and opened it. More pale and threatening than Athos, D'Artagnan stood outside. Milady drew back with a cry. D'Artagnan drew a

pistol from his belt, but Athos raised his hand.

'Put back that weapon, D'Artagnan!' he said. 'This woman must be judged, not murdered. Come in, gentlemen.'

D'Artagnan obeyed; behind him entered Porthos, Aramis, Lord Winter, and the man in the red cloak.

The four servants guarded the door and window. Milady had sunk into a chair, with her hands held out in front of her. Seeing her brother-in-law, she gave a terrible cry. 'What do you want?' she screamed.

'We want,' said Athos, 'Anne de Breuil, who first was called Countess de la Fere, and afterwards Milady Winter.'

'That is me! That is me!' she whispered, in terror. 'What do you want?'

'We wish to judge you for your crimes,' said Athos. 'Defend yourself if you can. D'Artagnan, you shall accuse her first.'

D'Artagnan came forward. 'Before God and before men,' he said, 'I accuse this woman of poisoning Madame Bonacieux, who died yesterday evening.'

He turned towards Porthos and Aramis. 'We bear witness to this,' said the two musketeers, with one voice.

'Your turn, my lord,' said Athos. 'Before God and before Lord Winter came forward. 'Before God and before



Like a god of vengeance, he jumped into the room

men,' he said, 'I accuse this woman of having caused the murder of the Duke of Buckingham.'

'The Duke of Buckingham murdered!' cried the musketeers.

'That is not all,' Lord Winter went on. 'My brother, who made you his heir, died in three hours of a strange and sudden illness. My sister, how did your husband die?'

Milady let her head sink between her hands.

'It is my turn now,' said Athos. 'I married that woman when she was a young girl. I gave her my wealth, I gave her my name. And one day I discovered that she was branded—this woman was marked with a *fleur-de-lys* on her right shoulder.'

'Oh,' cried Milady, with a terrible laugh, 'you cannot find anyone to prove why I was branded! You will never find the man who did it, so you can never prove my crime.'

'Silence!' said a deep voice. 'I can reply to that! And the man in the red cloak came forward in his turn.

'What man is that? What man is that?' screamed Milady, half choked with terror, her hair hanging loose and her eyes starting out of her head. The unknown man walked up to her with a slow and solemn step, and took off his mask.

'Oh, no, oh no! It is a ghost! It can't be he!' she cried, turning towards the wall as if she would tear an opening with her hands.

'Who are you, then?' asked D'Artagnan.

'Ask that woman,' replied the man in the red cloak. 'The executioner, the executioner!' cried Milady, falling on her knees. 'Oh, have mercy on me!'

The man in the red cloak waited for silence, and then continued, 'I told you that she knew me. Yes, I am the executioner who branded her. Here is my story.'

And the tale he told was indeed a tragic one. He said that when Milady was a young girl she was in a convent, training to become a nun. The executioner's younger brother was a priest who visited the convent regularly to give the nuns religious training. Milady, who was wicked even in those days, and had no real desire to become a nun, used all her charms on the young man and made him fall in love with her. Her influence on him was so great that she persuaded him to betray all his vows and run away with her. But to leave the district, to go to another part of France where they could live together without being known, required money—and neither of them had any. The priest stole the holy cups from the church and sold them; but as they were preparing to escape together, they were both arrested. It was the executioner's terrible duty to brand both the girl and his own brother.

They were imprisoned for a time, but then managed to escape; they fled together into Berry, and there the young priest obtained a job as a curate—a junior member of the church, serving a priest. Milady pretended to be his sister. It was at this time that Athos, the *Comte de la Fère*, met her and married her. Milady left the young priest, who returned to his home town, almost mad with grief. There he learned that his brother, the executioner, had been imprisoned in his place, when he had escaped with Milady. At once the unhappy young man gave himself up to the police, and hanged himself in prison that same night.

The executioner was set free at once, but his life was ruined, and he had lived, friendless and alone, ever since that day.

'That is the crime of which I accuse her,' said the man in the red cloak. 'She caused the ruin and death of a young priest, my brother.'

'D'Artagnan, what punishment do you demand against this woman?' asked Athos.

'The punishment is death!' replied D'Artagnan.

'My Lord Winter, what punishment do you demand?' continued Athos.

'The punishment is death,' replied Lord Winter.

'Porthos and Aramis,' repeated Athos, 'you are the judges. What punishment should she have?'

'The punishment of death,' replied the musketeers.

Milady gave a frightful shriek, and dragged herself upon her knees towards her judges. Athos stretched out his hand towards her.

'You have committed crimes against both men and God,' he said. 'If you know a prayer, say it—for you are condemned, and you shall die.'

At these words, which left no hope, Milady's strength failed her. She did not try to struggle when the man in the red cloak tied her hands behind her and led her out of the cottage. He held his executioner's sword in his hand. Milady was executed in a boat on the river, and her body was dropped into the depths of the water, which closed over it. So ended her wicked life.

Lord Winter, D'Artagnan, Athos, Porthos and Aramis went out to their horses, and their servants followed them. The lonely cottage was left empty, with its broken window, its open door, and its smoky lamp burning sadly on the table.

GLOSSARY AND COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. D'ARTAGNAN GOES TO PARIS

Glossary

Don Quixote: a Spanish nobleman in a famous story. He was always seeking adventures in which he could protect ladies, and often decorated with

famous: men from Gascony, a region in France. Gascons were famous for their bravery and boasting.

sword: a weapon with a long, sharp blade

Heaven: a district of Gascony

crowns: old French coins

Monseigneur: the French word for Mister, is shortened to M.

cardinal: a high official in the Roman Catholic Church. The cardinal referred to here is Cardinal Richelieu, who was very powerful during the reign of Louis XIII. He and the queen were bitter enemies.

duel: a duel is an organised (but illegal) fight between two men using swords or guns to settle an argument or avenge insults

musketeers: special soldiers trained to fight with muskets, an early sort of gun. Muskets were used mainly in battles and at long range, so the sword was still the main weapon.

disarm: got off

buttercup: a yellow flower

botany: the study of plants

honor: a respectful term of address for a cardinal

coachman: the driver of a coach and horses

protégé: someone who is under the protection of someone else

much disturbed: worried or upset
remounted: got back on

Comprehension questions

- 1 What did D'Artagnan's father give him before he left for Paris? Who was M. de Tréville? Explain how he could be of use to D'Artagnan.
- 2 Why did D'Artagnan argue with the unknown stranger at the inn? Describe the lady who spoke to the stranger the next morning. What was her name?
- 3 What happened to D'Artagnan's letter to M. de Tréville?

2. M. DE TRÉVILLE'S HOUSE

Glossary

Royal Academy: the military training college in France. The person in charge was called the director.

beg: ask
in great haste: in a hurry
challenge ... to a duel: to call on a man to settle a quarrel by fighting

Comprehension questions

- 1 Why were the king's musketeers and the cardinal's guards always fighting with each other?
- 2 What are the names of the three musketeers? Why was D'Artagnan in such a hurry to get past them? What was the result of his quarrel with them?
- 3 Explain why D'Artagnan was not able to join the king's musketeers. Where did M. de Tréville send him for training?

3. THE KING'S MUSKETEERS AND THE CARDINAL'S

GUARDS

Glossary

second: an assistant to a fighter during a duel (if the fighter didn't turn up, the second would have to offer to fight in his place)

on guard: standing in a defensive position for sword fighting
sheath: a sheath is a holder for a sword. To sheathe a sword means to put it in its holder, often as a sign of peace.

It was time: it was just in time
drawn: to take away someone's weapons

Comprehension questions

- 1 What happened just as D'Artagnan and Athos were preparing to fight their duel?
- 2 In the fight which followed, which side did D'Artagnan support? Describe the fight briefly.

4. HIS MAJESTY KING LOUIS XIII

Glossary

show a respectful term of address for a king
platoon: old Spanish coins

seamstress: a dressmaker, sewing woman
the king: an English duke, a favourite of King Charles I of England, who was in love with the queen of France. Because England and France were at war, it would be dangerous for him to set foot in France.
the queen's name: as if the queen had written or signed it

Comprehension questions

- 1 Was the king angry or amused when he heard about the fight between his musketeers and the cardinal's guards? Explain his attitude.
- 2 What did the king give to D'Artagnan, and what did D'Artagnan do with it?

5. A COURT PLOT

Glossary

seamstress: a sewing woman, dressmaker

Duke of Buckingham: (See Chapter 4 above)

In the queen's name: ie someone had sent a letter pretending to come from the queen

kidnapped: taken prisoner by force and kept hidden

Comprehension questions

- 1 Who called to see D'Artagnan in his room? Explain why the man was so worried.
- 2 Whom did Bonacieux suspect in this matter? What made D'Artagnan realise that the kidnapper was probably his own enemy from Meung?

6. D'ARTAGNAN REVEALS HIS AIMS

Glossary

Spain: Queen Anne was a Spanish princess before her marriage. She was also known as Anne of Austria.

forged: forging is the art of making replicas of handwriting, coins, bank notes, etc.

motto: words describing a special aim, policy or attitude

Comprehension questions

- 1 What happened to the landlord? Why did the musketeers allow the cardinal's guards to take him away?
- 2 What was the musketeers' motto? Explain what it means.

7. D'ARTAGNAN MEETS THE DUKE

Glossary

your Grace: a respectful term of address for a duke

Louvre: a royal palace in Paris, now a famous museum

Comprehension questions

- 1 When D'Artagnan saw the man in musketeer's uniform, who did he think it was? Who was the man, and who was the woman with him?
- 2 Where did the man and woman go? Explain why they were not stopped from entering.

8. THE QUEEN IS IN DESPAIR

Glossary

ball: a large evening party with dancing and entertainments

Hôtel de Ville: Town Hall in France

Comprehension questions

- 1 Who suggested that the king should go to the ball at the Hôtel de Ville? What did he suggest the queen should wear on this occasion? Explain why he suggested it.

- 2 How did Madame Bonacieux comfort the **queen**, and what did she promise to **do**?

9. MME BONACIEUX SEEKS D'ARTAGNAN'S HELP

Glossary

Upon my soul: an expression of surprise

Comprehension questions

- 1 Why did Madame Bonacieux not trust her husband?
- 2 What did D'Artagnan promise to do for Madame Bonacieux? Where did he get the money for the journey?

10. THE MUSKETEERS MAKE A PLAN

Glossary

leave: a period of time spent off duty, usually lasting several days
leave of absence: the full phrase for leave (above). **Leave** means permission and absence means not being there.

Comprehension questions

- 1 'In adventures of this kind, four must set out in order that one may arrive.' What did M. de Tréville mean by this? Who were the four who set out for London?
- 2 What instructions did D'Artagnan give his friends concerning the letter in his pocket?

11. THE JOURNEY

Glossary

drink the health: to wish someone good health **while drinking in their honour**

blotch: a hole acting as a drain beside a road
ambush: a sudden attack by enemies who are **either** hiding themselves or concealing their weapons
mane: the long hair on a horse's neck
Catala: a port on the French side of the narrow channel of sea that separates France and England, and which is opposite Dover

Comprehension questions

- 1 Describe how the cardinal succeeded in preventing the three musketeers from reaching London.
- 2 How did D'Artagnan obtain a permit to sail on the ship at Catala? Describe his fight with the Count de Wardes.

12. THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM

Glossary

Windsor: a royal palace near London
jeweller: someone who makes and repairs jewellery
Lord Chancellor: a very important office in English government at the time. The Lord Chancellor could order things to happen on behalf of the king or queen (eg close ports).

Comprehension questions

- 1 Whom did Buckingham suspect was the cardinal's spy who had stolen two of his studs? When were they stolen?
- 2 What did the duke do in order to send the full number of studs back to the queen? How did he make sure that D'Artagnan would arrive in Paris before their enemy?
- 3 What did the duke give to D'Artagnan as a reward for him and his friends? Did D'Artagnan reach Paris in time?

13. D'ARTAGNAN GOES IN SEARCH OF HIS FRIENDS

Glossary

- a very proud gentleman:** ie Porthos doesn't want anyone to know he was injured: it would hurt his pride
- outfits:** equipment used in war, not just uniforms
- livres:** the old French franc (a unit of currency)
- driven him out of his senses:** made him mad
- brothers:** close companions (ie so close they are like brothers)
- king's ransom:** a ransom is an amount of money paid in order to free someone who has been kidnapped. A king's ransom means the amount of money needed to release a king. The expression is used to refer to any very large amount of money.

Comprehension questions

- 1 When D'Artagnan and his friends returned to Paris, what two pieces of news did they receive from M. de Tréville?
- 2 Why was D'Artagnan so pleased by the first piece of news, and his friends so worried about the second?

14. MILADY

Glossary

- St Germain:** a suburb of Paris
- trifles:** matters of little importance
- fleur-de-lys:** the lily flower – crest of the kings of France
- was branded:** ie she had the sign of the *fleur-de-lys* burned into her skin, a common way of punishing criminals and enabling other people to identify them

Comprehension questions

- 1 Describe D'Artagnan's visit to the church and what he saw there. What happened afterwards?
- 2 Retell Athos's 'real tale of love' in your own words.

15. ENGLISH AND FRENCH

Glossary

- playthings:** toys (by calling swords playthings Lord Winter is making himself sound brave)
- Luxembourg:** the Luxembourg palace in Paris
- baron:** a rank of the English aristocracy
- taking to his heels:** running away
- body and soul:** completely

Comprehension questions

- 1 Whom did D'Artagnan see at the window of a house in St Germain. What did he ask Planchet to do?
- 2 While D'Artagnan was waiting in the lane, who arrived in a carriage, and what did the maidservant do?
- 3 Give an account in your own words of the scene between D'Artagnan and the nobleman beside Milady's carriage.
- 4 Describe the duel, and how it ended.
- 5 Give a description of Kitty. Did she like D'Artagnan?

16. MAID AND MISTRESS

Glossary

- haunted her with kindness:** been very kind to her
- indelible mark:** a mark that cannot be removed

Comprehension questions

- 1 What did Kitty show to D'Artagnan to prove that Milady was not in love with him? Why did D'Artagnan decide to make use of Kitty's love? How could she help him in his plans?
- 2 What plan did D'Artagnan make in order to take his revenge on Milady? Describe how the plan worked. What did Milady give him as a love token?
- 3 What happened when Milady discovered the truth?

17. ATHOS LEARNS THE TRUTH

Glossary

foot by foot: ie very slowly
leaving two thousand men: ie two thousand English **soldiers** died during the battle

Comprehension questions

- 1 Describe the scene between Athos and D'Artagnan when Athos recognised the ring and learned the truth. Who was Milady?
- 2 Give an account in your own words of the meeting between the three musketeers and the cardinal, and their arrival at the Red Dovecot.

18. THE USEFULNESS OF OLD STOVE PIPES

Glossary

ruin: expose her love for Buckingham, so that the king would punish her
gone on the look-out: gone out to see if there are any enemies or criminals around

Hell has made you ...: in this speech, **Athos uses 'hell'** to describe Milady's evil ways

drawn your teeth: made you harmless

Comprehension questions

- 1 Explain how Athos was able to overhear the conversation between the cardinal and Milady in the room above. What instructions did Richelieu give to her?
- 2 What did Milady obtain from the cardinal in return, and how did Athos manage to get it from her? Describe the scene between them.

19. CONVERSATION OF A BROTHER WITH A SISTER

Glossary

passion: anger
pier: a structure on a shore that enables people to get **into** and out of boats without wading through the water

Comprehension questions

- 1 What was the name of the young naval officer who met Milady's ship at Portsmouth? Where did he take her?
- 2 Give the various points in Lord Winter's conversation which gradually made Milady realise that he knew everything about her, and that he must have received the information from Athos and D'Artagnan.
- 3 What solemn warning about Milady did Lord Winter give to Felton, and what was Felton's reply?

20. DAYS OF IMPRISONMENT

Glossary

spark: small amount
fever: high temperature, a sign of illness

savage joy: pleasure at something bad happening
poison his mind: to poison someone's mind means to turn them against someone else, usually unjustly and with lies

Comprehension questions

- 1 Describe the ways in which Milady slowly won over John Felton to her side and made him fall in love with her.
- 2 How did she poison his mind against Lord Winter and the Duke of Buckingham?

21. ESCAPE

Glossary

exile: a forced life away from one's home country as a punishment

Carmelites: an order of Roman Catholic nuns and priests

Comprehension questions

- 1 Tell the story of Milady's rescue by Felton and their escape to the ship.
- 2 How did Felton obtain permission to enter Buckingham's room in Portsmouth? Describe what happened there. Whom did Felton meet as he ran out of the room again?
- 3 What made Felton realise that Milady was faithless to him? What promise did Lord Winter make to him?

22. THE CARMELITE CONVENT AT BÉTHUNE

Glossary

spelt: meant

hostage: someone who is kept by an enemy as a way of influencing that person's friends, family, etc.

one of us: on our side

Comprehension questions

- 1 When Milady arrived at the convent in Béthune, who else was there? How did Milady plan to make use of her?
- 2 Describe Milady's plan, and explain why it failed. What did she do to Madame Bonacieux?
- 3 Who joined the musketeers in their pursuit of Milady? How did they know she had gone to Armentières?

23. JUDGMENT

Glossary

vows: promises made by people who join religious orders. It is a very serious thing to break these vows.

Comprehension questions

- 1 Describe Athos's secret visit to the tall dark man.
- 2 Who was the man in the red cloak? Tell his story in your own words.
- 3 List the various crimes Milady was accused of. What happened to her at the end of the story?

WORDLIST

English	Uzbek	Russian
accept	qabul qilmoq, ro'zi bo'lmoq	принимать, согласяться
account	hisob, hisob-kitob	счет, расчет
accuse	ayblamoq	обвинять
admit	zavqlamoq	восхищаться
admit	faras qilmoq, tuxsat etmoq	допускать
adore	ilohiy lashitmoq, sig'inmoq	обожать, поклоняться
affair	ish	дело
amid	otrasida	среди, посреди, между
anchor	langar	якорь
annoy	jig'iga tegmoq, jahlini chiqarmoq	досаждать, надоедать, раздражать
anxiety	bezovtalik	беспокойство, тревога
approach	yaqinlashmoq	приближаться, подходить

WORDLIST

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English	Uzbek	Russian
active	kelmoq, etishmoq	прибывать, достигать
astonish	hayron bo'lmoq	удивлять, изумлять
attempt	uriniб ko'rish, tajriba	попытка, опыт
attend	hozir bo'lmoq, qatnashmoq	уделять внимание, присутствовать
attitude	munosabat	позиция, отношение
avenge	qasos olmoq	мстить, отплатить за себя
bar	panjara	решетка
bear	chidamoq, sabr qilmoq	терпеть, выносить, держаться
beneath	pastda	внизу
besiege	qamal qiluvchi tomon	осаждающая сторона
betray	xiyonat qilmoq	предать, изменить
bitterly	achinarli	горько, очень, ужасно

English	Uzbek	Russian
blame	tanbeh	порицание, упрек
bless	duo qilmoq	благословлять
blush	uyalib qizalmoq, uyalmoq	краска стыда, смущение
boast	mahtalmoq	хвастаться
breast	ko'krak	грудь
brief	qisqa	краткий, сжатый, резюме
burst	yig'lab/kulib yubotmoq	залиться слезами/смахом
carriage	zambil	носилки
castle	qasr	замок, убежище
caution	ehtiyotgorlik, ogohlik	осторожность, предусмотрительность
certain	ma'lum bir	определенный
challenge	chaqiriq, ragolini so'tamoq	бросать вызов, спрашивать пароль
chapel	ibodatxona	часовня, церковь
charge	zarfad hisob, ayblov	заряд, счет, обвинение

English	Uzbek	Russian
cham	joziba, maftunkor	обаяние, очарование
chat	garitmoq, do'stona garlashish	болтать, дружеская беседа
choir	xo'r	хор
cloak	plash, mantiya, niqob	плащ, мантия, маска
commit	topshirmoq, uzatmoq, ishonmoq	передать, вверять
conceal	yashirmoq, sir tutmoq, jim tutmoq	скрывать, утаивать, умалчивать, маскировать
concern	g'amخورlik, xavotirlanish	забота, беспокойство, огорчение
condemn	jazolamoq, hukm qilmoq	осуждать, выносить приговор
confess	tan olmoq, pasihat qilmoq	признавать, исповедовать
confidence	ishonch, pimanidir sir tutib garitmoq, o'ziga ishonmoq	доверие, сказать что-либо по секрету, самоуверенность

English	Uzbek	Russian
conquer	zabt etmoq, yengmoq	завоевать, победить
contend	kurashmoq, hamkorlik	бороться, соперничать
content	qoniqish, qoniqish hissi	довольство, чувство удовлетворения
corpse	murda	труп
couple	ikkita, juft	два, пара
court	saroy (qiroi toji)	двор (королевский)
crown	hokimiyat, daraxt tojlati	венец, корона, верховная власть
curate	qavat rahbarisining yordamchisi	помощник приходского священника
cure	doti-datmon	лекарство
curse	lan'atlangan so'kinish	проклятие, ругательство
danger	hajang, qahr bilan qatamoq	кинжал; бросать гневные взгляды
date	jur'at etmoq, jazm qilmoq	сместь, отваживаться, осмелиться
deceive	aldamoq	обманывать

English	Uzbek	Russian
defeat	mag'lubiyat, rejalaming buzilishi	поражение, расстройство планов
departure	jo'natish, ketish, bosh tortish	отправление, уход
descend	tushmoq, metos bo'yicha betmoq	спускаться, сходить; передавать по наследству
despair	umidsizlik	отчаяние, безнадежность
destiny	taqdir, qismat	судьба, удел, неизбежность
devotion	sodiqlik, uaqinlik, dindorlik	преданность, сильная привязанность; набожность
disappointment	ko'ngil qolish, poxushlik	разочарование, неприятность;
dizzy	bosh aylanishini sezish	чувствовать головокружение
drive (drive)	roda, otida yurish, savt qilish, ta'qib qilish	гулг, стадо/ ездить, кататься, волить, преследовать
earnestly	jiddiy, astoydil	серьёзно, искренне

English	Uzbek	Russian
embarked	yuqlanmoq, kemaга minmoq, hatakatga kelmoq	грузиться, садиться на корабль, прибегнуть к + действиям
enemy	uy, dushman	враг
entrust	ishonmoq, yuqlamoq, topshirtoq	верять, возлагать, поручать
escape	qochish, xalos bo'lish, qutulish	бегство, спасение, избавление
estate	ko'shtmas mulk, tabaqa	недвижимость, имущество; сословие
exceedingly	favqulotda, juda	чрезвычайно, очень
executioner	jallod	палач
exhausted	behol, ozib ketgan	истощенный, изнуренный; выхлопная труба
expense	chiqimlar, xarajalar	траты, расходы
faint	xushdan ketish, zaif	обморок, потеря сознания, бледный, слабый
fair	ajoyib, go'zal	прекрасный, красивый

English	Uzbek	Russian
favour (in someone's favour)	oliyanoblik, ma'qullash (kitmindingir foydasiga)	благосклонность, одобрение, (в пользу кого- либо)
fear	qo'rqish, havoitir, imkoniyat	страх, боязнь, опасение
feather	pat (qushlarda)	перо
fetch	alvon, egizak	привлечение, двойник
flame	olov, ehtiros	пламя; пыл, страсть, пылающий
flash	shaqnash, uyarqirash	вспышка, сверкание
fold	tugma, ilgak, qushmoq	застежка, крючок, обнимать, завертывать
foretold (foretell)	fol ochmoq	предсказывать
fright	qo'rqish, qo'rqichli	испуг, путало, страшилище
frown	qovoq sologan	сдвинутые брови, хмурый взгляд
furious	qutirgan	взбешенный, неистовый

English	Uzbek	Russian
fury	quturish	неистовство, бешенство, ярость
gamble	qizg'in o'yin, tavakkal	азартная игра, рискованное предприятие
gentle	muloyim, yahshi, uvuvosh	микий, добрый, тихий, кроткий
gradually	asta-sekin, izchil	постепенно, последовательно
gratitude	minnatdorchilik	благодарность
grief	qavug' u, g'am, afsus	горе, печаль, оторчение
guilty	agalashmoq, tashkil qilmoq	быть замешанным. организовать, быть организатором
handkerchief	qo'l to'molchasi	носовой платок
harbour	port, gavan, rana	порт, гавань, убежище
harm	ziyon, zarar, yovuzlik, ozot	вред, ущерб, зло, обида
haste	shoshilinch	поспешность, спешка, торопливость

English	Uzbek	Russian
hatred	nafrat	ненависть
health	sog'liq	здоровье, здравица за чье- либо здоровье
hedge	buta	живая изгородь
heels	poshna	пятка; шпоры, каблуки
heir	voris	наследник
hesitate	ikkilamoq	колебаться, стесняться, не решаться
holy	muqaddas	священный, святий
horrid	dahshatli, qo'rqinchli	ужасный, страшный
humble	oddig, kamsoqum	скромный
hurt	og'riq, ura	боль, рана, повреждение
image	tasvir, shakl	образ, изображение
income	daromad	доход, заработок
inn	katvon saroy, mehmonxona	гостиница, постойный двор
innocent	ginohsiz	невинный
inextricable	ajratmas	неразлучный, неразделимый

English	Uzbek	Russian
in spite of	...ga qaramay	несмотря на
insult	tahqir, ozor	оскорбление, обида
intend	niyat qilmoq, nazarda tutmoq	намереваться, иметь в виду.
interfere	aralashmoq	вмешиваться
judge	qozi	судья
lane	tor ko'cha, so'qmoq yo'l	узкая дорога, тропинка, узкая улица
lean (leant, leant)	tanlamoq, oldinga egilmoq	выглядывать, наклониться вперед
load	uyk, yuklamoq	груз, бремя, нагружать
lodging (lodge)	uy, qotuvixona, boshpana betmoq	домик, сторожка; квартировать, приютить
loyal	sodiq, vafodor	верный, преданный, лояльный
magic	magiya, sehrgarlik	магия, волшебство
maid	xizmatkor ayol, kelinning dugonasi	горничная, прислуга; подружка невесты

English	Uzbek	Russian
marble	marmar	мрамор
master	mulk egasi, xo'jayin	владелец, хозяин
meantime	o'sha vaqt	тем временем, между тем
mercy	rahm, shafqat	милосердие, сострадание, прощение
merely	faqat, shunchaki, atiga, birgina	только, просто, единственно
miscible	achinarli, baxtsiz	жалький, несчастный, убогий, скудный
motion	harakat	движение, жест, походка
nailed	sigmoq, mixlamoq	прижать, пригвоздить; ногой, коготь, гвоздь
naval	harbiy-dengiz	военно-морской
neglect	itifotsizlik ko'rsatmoq	пренебрегать, не выполнять
noble	oiluianob	благородный, великодушный

English	Uzbek	Russian
novice	monaxning shogirdi	послушник, начинающий, новообращенный
obey	bo'yusmoq	повиноваться, подчиняться, выполнять приказание
occasion	hodisa, imkoniyat	случай, возможность
occupy	bosib olmoq	занимать, завладеть, оккупировать
opportunity	imkoniyat	возможность
pace	qadam	шаг, длина шага; темп; широкая ступенька
permission	ijozat, ruxsat	позволение, разрешение
permit	ruxsat etmoq	допустить, разрешить
persistence	qaysarlik, o'jarlik	упорство, настойчивость
persuade	ishontirmoq, ko'ndirmoq	убеждать, склонять, уговаривать

English	Uzbek	Russian
pierce	sanchmoq, tirmoq	пронзать, протыкать, прокалывать
pipe	quvich, tuborovod	труба, трубопровод
pistol	to'roncha	пистолет, револьвер
pliny	gahmidilik, ashinish	жалость, сострадание
plain	ochiq, gavshan, tabiiy	ясный, явный, очевидный
plot	filpa	заговор, интрига; участок земли
poison	zahar	яд, отравы
positive	ijobiy	положительный, определенный, точный
possess	eega bo'lmoq	обладать, владеть
pour	qutmoq	вливать, наливаться
poverty	qashshoqlik	бедность, оскудение

English	Uzbek	Russian
preceding	oldin bo'lmog', o'tib ketmog'	предшествовать, занимать более высокое превосходить по важности
prevent	oldini o'lmog'	предотвращать, предупреждать, не допускать
proof	guvohlik ko'rsatmasi, isbot	свидетельское показание, доказательство
punish	jazolamoq	наказывать
pure	toza, pokiza	чистый, без примесей, чистокровный, целомудренный
purse	katmoncha	кошелек
pursuit	ta'qib, quvish	преследование, погоня
push	itartmoq	толкать
quill	qush pati	птичье перо
rage	g'azab, qahr	ярость, гнев
rapid	tez	скорый, быстрый
ray	nur, yog'du	луч
reason	sabab	причина

English	Uzbek	Russian
rebel	qo'zg'olonchi	повстанец, бунтовщик, матежник
recital	hiqoya, aytib betish	повествование, подробное перечисление фактов
reckon	o'ylamoq, fikrda tutmoq	считать, подсчитывать; придерживаться мнения
recover	qaytib o'lmog'	обретать снова, возвращать, возмещать убытки
regiment	polk (Angliya'dagi batal'on)	полк, (батальон в Англии также)
reliable	ishonchli, chidamli	надежный, заслуживающий прочный, довери
relief	yengilik, askin	облегчение, утешение
rely	ishonmoq	полагать, доверять
remain	qolmoq	оставаться
rent	ijara haqi	арендная плата, квартирная плата

English	Uzbek	Russian
repentant	afsuslanish, pushaymon bo'lish	кающийся, раскаиваю- щийся, чувствующий вину
reply	javob (javob bermoq)	ответ (отвечать)
rescue	qutqatmoq	спасать, помогать
revenge	qasos	мечь, мщение
rogue	muttalahat, o'g'ri	жулик, мошенник, негодяй, бродяга
root	sabab, ildiz	причина, корень. источник
rosewood	palisandr daraxti	палисандровое дерево, розовое дерево
ruin	halok bo'lish, halokat	гибель, крушение, разорение
rush	jadal harakat	стремительное движение, бросок, натиск, напор

English	Uzbek	Russian
safe	zaratortmag'an, butun	невредимый, цельный, в безопасности
sake	eder, biyor tafiatini ko'zlab	ради
scold	upushmoq, adabini bermoq	браниться, распекать
scratch	timalgan joy	царапина
scal	belgi, tamg'a	печать, клеймо
seek	izlamoq	искать, разыскивать
seize	bostirib olmoq	хватать, захватывать (крепость)
sense	his, tuyg'u	чувство, ощущение
separate	erkin, mustaqil	отдельный, самостоятельный
shepherds	cho'ron	пастух
siege	qamal	осада, медленно тянувшаяся неприятное время
sigh	nafas	вздох

English	Uzbek	Russian
sink	cho'kmoq	пасть, упасть; утонуть
sob	xo'ngab yig'lash	рыдание, всхлипывание
solemn	tantani, muhim	торжественный, важный, отвечающий требованиям закона
solution	hukm	решение
soul	ko'ngil, yurak	душа
sparkle	yarg'lash	блеск, сверкание
spite	g'azab, ko'ra olmaslik	злоба, зависть
sprang (spring)	sakrash, sarqish	прыжок, скачок
sput	shpor	шпора
stove	pech, o'choq	печь, кухонная плита
stout	qattiq, mustahkam	крепкий, прочный
strain	pasl	порода, наследственная черта, племя, род

English	Uzbek	Russian
stranger	begona, chet ellik odam	чужестранец, незнакомец, посторонний человек
stup	g'arang bo'lmq	оглушать, ошеломлять
surrender	taslim bo'lish	сдача, капитуляция
sweat	qasam ichmoq	клятва; клясться, присягать
swell	kelishgan/muhim odam	щегольской, шикарный; важный человек
threat	do'q, do'pisa	угроза
timid	yuraksiz, uyatchang	робкий, застенчивый
tope (tear)	yig'imoq	прореха, износ, рваться в клочья
traitor	xiyonatchi	предатель, изменник
treachery	xiyonat	предательство, вероломство
treasure	xazina	драгоценности, (клад)
tray	patnis	полнос

English	Uzbek	Russian
troop	otliqlar vzvod, chavandozlar guruhini	кавалерийский взвод, группа всадников
trust	ishonmoq	доверять, ответственность
urgent	shoshilinch	срочный, необходимый
utterly	favquloda	крайне, чрезвычайно
value	qimmatbaho narsa	ценность
various	har xil	разный
vengeance	qasos	мсть, мщение
villainous	jirkanch, qabih	мерзкий, подлый, злодейский
violently	kuch bilan(qattiq)	сильно (очень)
warn	ogohlantirmoq	предупреждать, предостерегать
weep	yig'lamoq	оплакивать
whip	qatichi	кну́т, хлыст
whole	butun	целый, весь, в целом; итог
wick	lampira piliği	фитиль
witness	guvoh	свидетель

English	Uzbek	Russian
witty	o'tkir so'z	остроумный
worthy	muносиb	достойный, заслуживающий
wound	yara, alam	рана, обида, оскорбление
wrap	o'gamoq, o'galtmoq	кутаться, завертывать
wretch	ablah	негодий; несчастный
wave	to'lqin	волна

1. Name	John Doe	Age	25	Sex	Male	Height	5' 10"	Weight	180 lbs
2. Address	123 Main St.	City	Chicago	State	Ill.	Zip	60601	Country	USA
3. Education	High School	Level	Graduated	Year	1998	Score	85%	Rank	15th
4. Employment	Software Engineer	Company	ABC Corp.	Start Date	2000	End Date	2005	Reason	Resignation
5. Marital Status	Single	Partner Name		Partner Address		Partner City		Partner State	
6. Children	2	Child 1 Name	John Doe Jr.	Child 1 DOB	2001	Child 2 Name	Jane Doe	Child 2 DOB	2003
7. Hobbies	Reading, Sports	Favorite Book	1984	Favorite Sport	Baseball	Favorite Team	Chicago Cubs	Favorite Color	Blue
8. Languages	English, Spanish	Fluency Level	High	Other Languages	French, German	Fluency Level	Low	Other Languages	Italian, Japanese
9. Health	Good	Current Doctor	Dr. Smith	Current Medication	None	Current Allergies	Peanut, Shellfish	Current Conditions	Asthma
10. Contact Info	Phone: 555-1234	Email	john.doe@abc.com	LinkedIn	john.doe	Twitter	john_doe	Facebook	john.doe