The Three Musketeers Study Guide

The Three Musketeers by Alexandre Dumas, père

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Introduction

The Three Musketeers, published in 1844-1845, is typical of Dumas's works: quick-witted heroes who fight and love unceasingly, fast-paced narrative, and entertaining dialogue. In its romantic subject matter, the book is typical of its time; what is not typical is the fact that it has survived and remains entertaining and accessible for modern readers.

The novel has been adapted for over sixty films and spin-offs and has sold millions of copies in hundreds of languages all over the world. Despite the fact that it is very long and is filled with improbable events, larger-than-life characters, and exaggerated dialogue□or because of these traits□it is a fast, exciting read and still feels fresh and entertaining despite the long time that has elapsed since it was first written.

The story was drawn from a number of original historical sources, including *Les Memoires de M. d'Artagnan* by Sandraz de Courtils and *Intrigues Politiques et Galantes de la Coeur de France*, memoirs of events from the period in which the novel takes place. Dumas's collaborator, Auguste Maquet, brought him a rough scenario for a book set during the reign of King Louis XIII and starring the King, Queen Anne, Cardinal Richelieu, and the Duke of Buckingham. This scenario, drawn from events in the original sources, would be fleshed out by Dumas to become *The Three Musketeers*. According to records kept by the Marseille library, Dumas checked out *Les Memoires de M. d'Artagnan* and never returned it.

Because Dumas's works have been so wildly popular, for a long time he was not considered a "serious" writer. However, in recent years, more attention has been given to him because his work laid the foundations for bourgeois drama as he brought history alive for a broad segment of the population who otherwise would have had no interest in it and as he created a new kind of Romantic novel.

Author Biography

Alexandre Dumas was born on July 24, 1802, in Villers-Coterêts, north of Paris. His father was a soldier in Napoleon's army and his mother was the daughter of a local innkeeper. However, his grandfather was a marquis, and his grandmother was a slave in what is now Haiti. Throughout his life, his part-African ancestry would fascinate Parisians, who found it exotic; some made racist comments about him but were usually charmed by his witty responses.

Dumas's father died when he was four years old and left the family penniless. Dumas learned to read and write from his mother, his sister, and a neighbor but spent most of his time hunting and fishing in the forest near his home instead of studying. When he was sixteen, he met two friends, Vicomte Adolphe Ribbing de Leuven and Amedee de La Ponce, both highly educated, who encouraged Dumas to read widely. In addition, de Leuven, who wanted to be a playwright, soon convinced Dumas to collaborate with him on writing a play. Dumas, who had very elegant handwriting, found work as a clerk and in his spare time continued to read and to write. He attended plays and made friends in the theater world.

His first success came with his play *Henri III et sa cour* (Henry III and His Court), which was performed by the prestigious Comedie Francaise and, through his acquaintance with the duc d'Orleans, Dumas was attended by princes and princesses who happened to be visiting the duc at the time. Overnight he had fame and fortune and was the toast of Paris. He became friends with all the leading literary figures of the time, spent his money generously, traveled widely, and wrote prolifically.

In 1836, he signed a contract to retell various events in French history in the Sunday edition of the newspaper *La Presse*. These pieces, enthusiastically awaited by the public, led him to begin writing historical novels. During the course of one year, 1844, he wrote *The Three Musketeers*, its sequels *Twenty Years After*, *Le Comte de Bragelonne*, and *The Count of Monte Cristo*. All of these works are still in print in France.

Dumas wrote an astonishing number of novels and plays, some of them hundreds of pages long; he usually worked with collaborators who did the historical research and often came up with plots. Then Dumas would flesh out the bare bones of the structure and bring the story vividly to life. One collaborator, Auguste Maquet, eventually sued for what he felt was his literary due. During the trial, his version of a chapter from *The Three Musketeers* was compared to Dumas's, and the court found in favor of Dumas because of the greater quality of his writing. None of Maquet's independent writing ever succeeded.

Although Dumas was hugely successful, he spent money as fast as he made it and had to keep writing to pay off his debts; however, it is likely that he would have written whether he was paid to or not. Although he had robust health throughout his life, at age 68 he went to his son Alexandre's house and told him he had come there to die. His son, like him, was a successful writer but led a more quiet life than Dumas had.

Dumas died in Puy, near Dieppe on the coast of France, on December 5, 1870. Before he died, he told his son that of all his works, his favorite was *The Three Musketeers*. In 1883, a statue in his memory was erected at the Places Malsherbes on the Right Bank in Paris.

Plot Summary

Part I: Chapters One through Ten

Young, ambitious d'Artagnan goes to Paris to seek his fortune, bearing a letter of introduction to Monsieur de Treville, captain of the King's Musketeers. He is impetuous and proud, and at his first stop at an inn, he gets into a fight with a nobleman who makes fun of his horse. The man's henchmen beat up d'Artagnan, but when he returns to consciousness, he sees the man talking to a beautiful woman in a carriage, calling her "Milady," before they set off. When he checks his belongings, he finds out that the man has stolen his letter of introduction.

He goes to see de Treville anyway and is impressed by the dash and swagger of all the Musketeers he sees at de Treville's headquarters. De Treville says he will help d'Artagnan but that he can't be a Musketeer before proving his worth, so he makes d'Artagnan a member of the King's Guards, a position that will allow him to prove himself worthy. D'Artagnan sees his enemy from the inn, "The Man from Meung," and runs out to attack him. On the way, he inadvertently insults Athos, Porthos, and Aramis, three Musketeers, and they each challenge him to a duel later that day.

When he arrives at the dueling ground, the Musketeers are surprised that they are all scheduled to fight the same man. However, d'Artagnan is a man of his word and is determined to fight even though he knows they will probably kill him. This courage and honor impresses them. When the fight is about to start, the Cardinal's guards show up to arrest the Musketeers because dueling is against the law. D'Artagnan joins the Musketeers, and they all beat the guards. The Musketeers are impressed with this and adopt him into their circle.

King Louis XIII hears about the fight and asks to meet d'Artagnan, but he is not home when they come to see him. They head off to the tennis court, where d'Artagnan gets in a fight with one of the Cardinal's guards. He wins again. They meet the King the next day, and he praises their loyalty and bravery and gives d'Artagnan a reward.

They spend the money on a lavish dinner and on a servant for d'Artagnan. Planchet is a loyal, intelligent man, the ideal servant. The others have servants too: Athos has Grimaud, a totally silent man; Porthos has Mousqueton, who shares his taste for luxury; and Aramis has Bazin, who is devout and who wants Aramis to quit the Musketeers and become a priest.

A stranger, Monsieur Bonacieux, shows up at d'Artagnan's house and asks him for help. His wife, who is a lady-in-waiting for Queen Anne, has been kidnapped, perhaps because she may know something about the Queen's affair with the Duke of Buckingham. Monsieur Bonacieux is d'Artagnan's landlord, so he agrees to help him in exchange for free rent. The kidnapper is the Man from Meung, d'Artagnan's enemy. D'Artagnan sees the man and runs after him, but loses him again.

The three other Musketeers agree that they should help Madame Bonacieux because helping her will help the Queen and annoy the Cardinal, who is their sworn enemy.

A group of the Cardinal's guards show up to arrest Monsieur Bonacieux, and d'Artagnan lets them take him. The Musketeers can't afford to be involved in this arrest—they have greater plans. The police then wait in Bonacieux's apartment and question everyone who shows up to visit him, while d'Artagnan eavesdrops from his apartment. When Madame Bonacieux arrives, however, he rescues her from their clutches and takes her to Athos's house. She says that the Cardinal's men kidnapped her and that she has escaped. She has important things to do for the Queen, so d'Artagnan takes her back to the palace. Meanwhile, he's fallen in love with her. He is aware that he may be questioned about what he did that evening, so he goes to visit Monsieur de Treville so that he will have an alibi. He changes de Treville's clock so de Treville will think d'Artagnan was with him at the time when he was really fighting the Cardinal's guards.

Part I: Chapters Eleven through Twenty

D'Artagnan goes to see Aramis and finds a woman knocking on Aramis's door. This surprises him, and so does the fact that a woman, not Aramis, answers. The women give each other handkerchiefs, and the woman in Aramis's house leaves. He is shocked to see that she is Madame Bonacieux.

He asks her what she's doing, and she doesn't tell him, but she allows him to walk with her to another house, where she's carrying out some secret mission. When he goes home, he finds that Athos has been arrested because the police thought he was d'Artagnan. He goes to the Louvre to tell de Treville about the arrest. On the way, he sees Madame Bonacieux, who is walking with Aramis. He's angered that she lied to him about being on a special mission, but when he confronts the man, he sees that it's not Aramis at all, but the Duke of Buckingham, the Queen's secret lover. Courteously, he agrees to guard them as they walk to the Louvre.

At the Louvre, the Queen and the Duke have a secret and emotional meeting. The Duke knows that the Cardinalists have summoned him to France and have made it look like the Queen summoned him. He's not fooled. But he wanted to see her so much that he came anyway. He adores the Queen, and she loves him, but she's more reluctant to admit it because she is married and he is loyal to the King of England, historically an enemy of the French. Buckingham says he will declare war on France if it will give him an excuse to make diplomatic missions to Paris and see her. She gives him a love-token—a set of twelve diamond tags that the King gave her for her birthday.

Meanwhile, Monsieur Bonacieux has endured imprisonment in the Louvre. He's petrified and broken down by fear. He is interrogated and brought to Cardinal Richelieu. Frightened and impressed by the Cardinal, he tells all about his wife's intrigues on behalf of the Queen and the Duke and swears that he will remain loyal to the Cardinal and tell him all about his wife's activities.

The following day, de Treville hears that Athos has been arrested. He goes to ask the King to release him, but the Cardinal arrives first and tells the King that Athos should remain in prison. However, de Treville does convince him that he can't arrest a Musketeer without a good reason. He tells the King that d'Artagnan was with him at the time in question, not knowing that d'Artagnan reset the clocks so he would have this alibi. The Cardinal is suspicious but can't do anything to prove his suspicions, so the King agrees to free Athos.

As soon as de Treville leaves, the Cardinal tells the King that the Duke of Buckingham has secretly visited the Queen. The King is furious, and the Cardinal slyly acts like he's defending the Queen's honor against scandal. He mentions that the Queen is apparently involved in a conspiracy with Buckingham and therefore England, as well as with Spain and Austria. This angers the King, but he is made even more furious by suspicions that the Queen is having an affair with Buckingham.

A search proves that the Queen does have incriminating letters, which show that she is involved in a conspiracy against the Cardinal but which don't mention any affair with the Duke. The King is relieved. He doesn't care about the plot against the Cardinal, since it doesn't affect him, and he decides to apologize to his wife by holding a ball in her honor. The Cardinal is the mastermind behind all of this and suggests that the King ask the Queen to wear all twelve of her diamond tags. Since she gave them to Buckingham, this will expose her when she shows up without them. The King has no idea that the tags are missing and is pleased with the idea of asking her to wear his gift.

Secretly, the Cardinal has had Milady, who is one of his spies, steal two of the tags from Buckingham so that if he tries to return the set to the Queen, her treachery will be revealed when she shows up with only ten.

The King asks the Queen about the tags, and she realizes that the Cardinal knows Buckingham has them. She arranges for Madame Bonacieux to send someone to England with a letter for Buckingham asking him to return the tags before the ball. Monsieur Bonacieux refuses to go and leaves to tell the Cardinal that his wife is planning this. D'Artagnan has overheard their fight and offers to go to England to get the tags, saying he is doing it because he is desperately in love with her and because he wants to serve the Queen. De Treville agrees to let all four of the Musketeers go on this mission.

On the way to England, Porthos, Aramis, and Athos are all waylaid, and d'Artagnan has to leave them behind. He duels with and almost kills the Comte de Wardes, an agent of the Cardinal who is trying to prevent him from getting to England, but finally he makes it and gets the Queen's letter to Buckingham.

Part I: Chapters Twenty-One through Twenty-Nine

Buckingham realizes that two of the tags are missing and that Lady de Winter has stolen them. He prevents all ships from leaving England so that Lady de Winter won't be

able to get back to France to give the stolen tags to the Cardinal. This blockade is actually an act of war against France. Meanwhile, he has two other tags made, and d'Artagnan heads back to France with the now-complete set.

The Cardinal is confused when the Queen shows up with twelve diamond tags and his plan to expose her is foiled. He offers her the two missing tags, and the Queen acts surprised and thanks him for adding two more to her set of diamonds. In exchange for saving her, the Queen gives d'Artagnan a ring.

D'Artagnan gets a letter asking him to meet Madame Bonacieux the next night. He goes to visit de Treville, who asks him to be cautious in his involvement in royal intrigues. He advises d'Artagnan to sell the ring because if he is seen wearing it, enemies will have proof that he has helped the Queen. D'Artagnan refuses.

At the meeting spot, he waits for Madame Bonacieux. After an hour, he looks around and finds evidence of a struggle, and a man tells him a group of men came and kidnapped her.

De Treville believes the kidnapping was done by Cardinalist agents and tells d'Artagnan he will look into the matter. Meanwhile, he advises d'Artagnan to go find out what has happened to the other Musketeers. Before leaving, he finds that the Cardinal's guards are looking for him and that Monsieur Bonacieux was involved in the kidnapping.

D'Artagnan finds Porthos wounded but safe at an inn. Aramis is at a different inn, also wounded but safe, and Athos is at yet another inn, where he has locked himself in the basement and has been eating and drinking all the inn's supplies. He is very drunk, and he tells d'Artagnan the reason for his secret sorrow: he is actually a nobleman and once married a beautiful young common woman because he was so in love with her. After the marriage, he found that she was a thief, branded with the fleurde- lis, the mark of a terrible criminal, and that she and her lover had planned the marriage just so they could get Athos's money. Betrayed and angered, Athos hanged her.

D'Artagnan is horrified by this, and they agree not to talk about it again. All four friends go back to Paris, where they are informed that France is now at war with Britain and they need to find their own fighting equipment. Since they're all broke, this is a problem. Porthos is the first to get equipped, when he gets money from his mistress.

D'Artagnan sees the "Woman from Meung," who is actually Lady de Winter. He fights with the man accompanying her and finds that he is Lord de Winter, her brother. They agree to duel the next day.

Part I: Chapters Thirty through Thirty-Seven

The Musketeers meet Lord de Winter and three of his friends for the duel. The Englishmen are defeated, and although d'Artagnan disarms de Winter, he spares his life. De Winter is grateful and agrees to introduce d'Artagnan to Lady de Winter.

D'Artagnan begins visiting Lady de Winter, who is the woman known as "Milady." He falls in love with her, even though he knows she's evil. Milady's maid, Kitty, falls in love with d'Artagnan, but he ignores her until he realizes she can be useful; then he flirts with her and tells her he loves her. She tells him Milady loves the Comte de Wardes, and while he is with Kitty, he overhears Milady saying how much she hates d'Artagnan because he spared Lord de Winter's life. If Lord de Winter had died, Milady would have inherited all his money. She also mentions that she was involved in Madame Bonacieux's kidnapping and that the Cardinal wants her to be careful with d'Artagnan.

D'Artagnan is horrified and hurt. He steals a letter she wrote to the Comte and answers it himself, pretending to be the Comte and arranging a meeting at her house. When he arrives, the house is totally dark, and they have sex. She believes he is the Comte and gives him a ring.

Athos has seen the ring before□it is a family heirloom□and he once gave it away to a woman. D'Artagnan, still pretending to be the Comte, writes Milady a letter saying he can't see her any more. Milady is angered and decides to have revenge on the Comte by seducing d'Artagnan and getting him to kill the Comte. She invites him to her house, and after they have sex, he tells her there never was any Comte, that he was the one who visited her before. Enraged, she attacks him, and he tears her nightdress, revealing a fleur-de-lis, the mark of a criminal, branded on her left shoulder. Horrified, he escapes.

Part II: Chapters One through Twenty

D'Artagnan and Athos both realize Milady is Athos's wife, whom he thought was dead. Kitty comes to the Musketeers for help: they have to hide her from Milady, who is enraged at her complicity with d'Artagnan. She also tells them Milady was involved in Madame Bonacieux's kidnapping.

They pawn Milady's ring and buy equipment with it. D'Artagnan receives a letter from Madame Bonacieux asking him to meet her that evening and another letter from the Cardinal demanding his presence later on that same night.

Madame Bonacieux rides past the meeting spot in a carriage. The Musketeers can't tell if she's safe or a prisoner of the people she's with. They go to the Cardinal, who tells d'Artagnan that he wants d'Artagnan to be an officer in his guards. D'Artagnan politely declines, and the Cardinal warns him that now he will be unsafe from the Cardinal's attacks.

La Rochelle, a port town populated by Protestants, has been taken by British forces and is now under siege by the French. D'Artagnan's guard regiment is sent there to do battle, but the Musketeers remain behind. While he's alone there, he's shot at by two men, and the next day, on a spy mission, they try to kill him again. He kills one and captures the other, who tells him Milady was behind the assassination attempt. This other man is deeply grateful to d'Artagnan for not killing him, but he is later accidentally

killed when d'Artagnan opens some poisoned wine that Milady has sent, and he drinks it. The four friends realize they need to stop Milady and rescue Madame Bonacieux.

The three Musketeers run into the Cardinal at an inn, and he tells them to act as his personal bodyguards while he has an important meeting. Milady shows up and they eavesdrop on the meeting. The Cardinal sends Milady to England with a message for the Duke of Buckingham, telling him he must stop the war against France or the Cardinal will tell about his affair with the Queen. He will also have him assassinated. In exchange, Milady asks the Cardinal to put d'Artagnan in the Bastille and to find out where Madame Bonacieux is. Milady wants to kill Madame Bonacieux to get revenge on d'Artagnan.

Athos leaves the inn by himself. The other two Musketeers ride with the Cardinal to the army camp. Athos has been hiding in the woods, and he goes back to the inn and confronts Milady, who is shocked to see her old enemy and husband, whom she thought was dead. Athos tells her that if she does anything to d'Artagnan, he'll kill her. He also steals a safe-conduct pass the Cardinal has given her. This document says that whoever has the pass can do whatever he wants, in the Cardinal's name.

The four friends meet, and at an inn they brag and make bets with some soldiers that they can enter and hold the St. Gervais fort against attackers, all by themselves, for an hour. At the fort, they eat breakfast, make plans, and easily defeat all attackers for more than an hour, winning the bet. They decide to send a letter to Lord de Winter, warning him of Milady's evil history and her plans to kill him, and another letter to Madame de Chevreuse, who is Aramis's mistress and a close friend of the Queen, to warn the Queen that there's a plot to kill Buckingham.

Their gutsy defense of the fort comes to the Cardinal's attention, and he authorizes the captain of the guards to make d'Artagnan a Musketeer. He does, and now the four friends are even more closely united.

Milady arrives in England and is arrested. John Felton, a Protestant soldier, is her guard. She immediately begins plotting her escape.

The siege is still at a deadlock. The people inside the city walls are getting hungry and beginning to protest against the siege, which the Cardinal is happy about, but Buckingham sends word that in a week, English, Austrian, and Spanish forces will come to help them. This foils the Cardinal's plans.

The Cardinal catches the Musketeers reading a letter, and they taunt him and refuse to let him see it. The letter is from Madame de Chevreuse. The Queen has told her that Madame Bonacieux is safe in a convent in the small town of Bethune. The four friends decide that when the siege is over, they'll go rescue her.

Milady lies and tells Felton, who is a religious fanatic, that she is also a Protestant and that she is ill and the victim of the abusive Duke of Buckingham, who branded her with the fleur-de-lis because she fought against his supposed attempts to rape her. The brand would make people think she was a liar and a thief so that they wouldn't believe

her story of being raped. She says Buckingham killed her husband, Lord de Winter's brother, and that Lord de Winter, who believed Buckingham's story that she was a thief, captured her. To prove her willingness to die for her religious beliefs, when Lord de Winter walks in on their conversation, she grabs a knife and pretends to stab herself. Felton now believes she's a religious martyr, who would rather die than be defiled, and he falls in love with her.

Part II: Chapters Twenty-One through Epilogue

Lord de Winter suspects that Felton is on Milady's side and sends him away. Felton comes back and helps her escape. Felton plans to kill Buckingham and go to France with Milady. He does kill Buckingham, but not before Buckingham receives a letter from the Queen saying she loves him and will forever love him and that she knows he has declared war on France because he loves her. He dies happy in the knowledge of her love.

Monsieur de Treville gives the four Musketeers permission to leave the siege and go get Madame Bonacieux. This is urgent because Milady is going to go to the same convent when she comes back from England, and if she sees Madame Bonacieux, she will kill her.

Meanwhile, she's already gotten there and has made friends with Madame Bonacieux, pretending to be a friend of d'Artagnan's, who is being persecuted by the Cardinal. Madame Bonacieux tells her that d'Artagnan is coming, which delights Milady, who plans to use Madame Bonacieux to hurt d'Artagnan.

The Man from Meung comes to see Milady. He is the Comte de Rochefort, the personal spy of the Cardinal. Milady tells him to have a carriage come and take her and Madame Bonacieux to Amentieres as soon as possible. She tells Madame Bonacieux that Cardinalist agents are coming to kidnap Madame Bonacieux and that she must come with Milady.

The Musketeers arrive first, foiling Milady's plan. She tries to get Madame Bonacieux, who has not seen them and thinks the Cardinalists have arrived, to run away with her, but Madame Bonacieux is paralyzed with fright. Disgusted, Milady poisons some wine and gives it to Madame Bonacieux to drink and then escapes by herself.

D'Artagnan comes in, and Madame Bonacieux dies in his arms. Lord de Winter arrives, looking for Milady. Athos tells de Winter that Milady is his wife, and they all join forces to chase her.

Athos sends the Musketeers' servants out to find out where in Amentieres Milady is, and then he and the others go to Madame Bonacieux's funeral. Athos then makes a mysterious visit to an unnamed stranger, whom he convinces to help them. When the servants return with Milady's whereabouts, the men all chase her and catch her just as she's about to leave France. They try her for all her crimes of murder and attempted

murder and for inciting others to murder. When Athos mentions the fleur-de-lis on her shoulder, she challenges them to find the court that branded her.

The mysterious stranger speaks up now. He is the headsman, or executioner, of the town of Lille, and he knows her whole story. She was a nun who seduced a young priest, who was the headsman's brother. They stole the Communion plate and the priest was caught, but Milady escaped. The headsman had to brand his own brother with the mark of a thief, and he was so enraged that he hunted Milady down and branded her himself. After that, she and the priest went away to Athos's lands, where Athos met and married her. The priest killed himself in mad jealousy and grief after she married Athos.

They sentence her to death for her crimes, and the headsman drags her outside to execute her by cutting off her head. He then throws her head and body into the river.

The Musketeers head back to the siege, but on the way, de Rochefort arrests d'Artagnan in the Cardinal's name. In a private encounter with the Cardinal, d'Artagnan tells the Cardinal that the woman who made all the accusations against him was a murderer and thief and that she's now dead. He tells the Cardinal the whole story of her life and hands the Cardinal the safe-conduct pass that Athos stole from her, which says that the person holding it is free to do as he pleases, in the Cardinal's name. This letter frees him from being punished for anything he's done. The Cardinal, of course, could ignore this since he didn't issue the letter to d'Artagnan, but he admires d'Artagnan's cleverness and writes out a promotion to lieutenant in the Musketeers. The promotion has a blank space for the name, so that, like the letter, it can be used by anyone.

D'Artagnan tries to convince each of his three friends to take the promotion, but they insist that he take it. He does not like losing his friends, but he has no choice but to take the promotion.

The siege ends after about a year, d'Artagnan has a great career in the Musketeers, and he and de Rochefort eventually duel three times and then become friends. Athos retires to the provinces, Porthos marries his mistress after her husband dies, and Aramis becomes a monk.

Author's Preface

Author's Preface Summary

In the preface to the book, Dumas explains that he came across the Memoirs of Monsieur d'Artagnan while in the Bibliothèque Nationale doing research for a history of Louis the Fourteenth. He found these memoirs so fascinating that it led him to pursue further research to confirm the adventures of d'Artagnan and to discover the true identities of the men using the false names of Athos, Porthos and Aramis. He then presents his story as a previously undiscovered manuscript that brings to light the details missing from d'Artagnan's memoirs, and goes on to the first chapter of his tale.

Author's Preface Analysis

Dumas did get his inspiration for the story from the Memoirs de M. d'Artagnan, a work written by Gatien Courtilz de Sandras around 1700. Courtilz de Sandras was well known for greatly embellishing the historical works he presented as memoirs, so the further embellishments of Dumas hardly make the story less "historical" than it already was. However, the story is very loosely based on actual characters and events. M. d'Artagnan was one of eight children born to a poor Gascon family, and he did indeed go to Paris to become a Musketeer, just as one of his brothers had done a few years earlier.

His musketeer friends were also based on real people: Aramis was Henri d'Aramitz; Athos was Armand de Sillegue, Lord of Athos (but he was killed before d'Artagnan arrived in Paris), and Porthos was Isaac de Portau. The Duchesse de Winter was patterned after the Countess of Carlisle, and the King and Cardinal, were, of course, actual historical characters. Most of the rest of the story must, however, be taken as entertainment – which is what Dumas intended.

Chapter 1

Chapter 1 Summary

The story begins in April 1625, when the young d'Artagnan leaves his father to journey to Paris in the hope of becoming one of the King's elite guard, the Musketeers. His father presents him with three parting gifts. The first is an excessively old and ugly yellow horse; the second is paltry sum of thirteen crowns; and the third was perhaps the most valuable -- a letter to Monsieur de Treville, the captain of the Musketeers. The elder d'Artagnan had once been M. de Treville's neighbor, and d'Artagnan's father was sure this friendship would procure a place for his son. The father then instructs his son to obtain from his mother her recipe for a miraculous healing balm, and offers the advice that his son should never back down from a duel or to allow anyone to insult his honour.

The younger d'Artagnan takes this advice to heart, and immediately seeks to embroil himself in a duel with a gentleman he meets at an Inn at Meung, who makes fun of his horse. The gentleman leaves with a lady, however, who convinces him that their time constraints make dueling impossible. The man avoids the duel, but the landlord lets it slip that d'Artagnan is carrying a letter of introduction to M. de Treville of Musketeer fame, and the man seems much struck by this.

After the man has gone, d'Artagnan finds his letter is missing, and after questioning the landlord, determines that the man has taken it. Despite this setback, he continues his journey to Paris, where he immediately sells his horse for three crowns, and finds a place to sleep for the night.

Chapter 1 Analysis

Right away, Dumas is clearly sketching the character of d'Artagnan as being fearless in the face of an enemy – although he is perhaps a little too quick to take offense. In the story, Dumas himself compares the young d'Artagnan to Don Quixote, the character invented by 17th century Spanish novelist, Miguel de Cervantes. Quixote attacked a windmill, thinking it was a giant, and similarly d'Artagnan was so eager to duel that he considered every smile to be directed as an insult against him.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 Summary

D'Artagnan arrives at the rooms of M. de Treville, the captain of the Musketeers. While he is waiting to see the captain, he observes many of the Musketeers lounging, talking and brandishing their swords in the antechamber to M. de Treville's cabinet. As a result of the conversations he overhears, he learns that the king's Musketeers are continually skirmishing with the cardinal's guards, and that there is much bad feeling between the two forces. He is astonished at this, because the cardinal is very powerful and exercises a great deal of political influence over the king.

D'Artagnan is especially struck by two Musketeers whose conversation dominates the group. One is a man named Porthos, who obviously pays careful attention to dressing well. He accepts many admiring comments on a magnificent belt he is wearing that is just visible under his cloak, and for which he claims to have paid a handsome sum. The other Musketeer is Aramis, a young man of few words and calm demeanor who is said to be studying theology with the hope of trading his uniform for a cassock. The chapter ends as d'Artagnan is called into the captain's chamber for his interview.

Chapter 2 Analysis

We are already introduced to some of the political intrigue – it's hinted that the popular Anne of Austria, Louis' Queen, may have other interests besides her husband, and the English Duke of Buckingham is mentioned by Aramis and quickly dismissed by Porthos. There is also talk of the cardinal and his henchman, Rochefort, being involved in some plotting involving the Queen, but the details and meaning are vague to d'Artagnan. By the end of the chapter, the reader is left in little doubt that Aramis and Porthos will figure largely in the rest of the story, as will the intrigues of the cardinal and Rochefort.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 Summary

M. de Treville has something else on his mind as he greets d'Artagnan, and signals him to stand by as he takes care of some other business involving Porthos, Aramis, and a third man, called Athos. He takes these men to task for having been arrested the previous evening by the cardinal's guards for creating a disturbance in a tavern, and explains that the cardinal had taken pleasure in informing him of this in front of the king. To d'Artagnan's amazement, M. de Treville is mollified to learn that the cardinal's information was wrong – the Musketeers had actually bested the cardinal's men without allowing themselves to be arrested. However, Athos has been badly wounded, the cardinal's guards having left him for dead. The captain calls for the king's surgeon to attend to Athos, who is trying to downplay the seriousness of his wound, and the three Musketeers retire from the room leaving d'Artagnan to make his request of a place in the regiment.

D'Artagnan explains the loss of his letter of introduction, and describes the man in Meung who has apparently stolen it. M. de Treville seems to recognize the description, but does not want to tell d'Artagnan too much as he is not sure whether he can be trusted. He tells d'Artagnan that no one can enter the Musketeers until they have been through some campaigns in a lesser regiment. However, he offers to write d'Artagnan a letter to the director of the Royal Academy, where he will learn the necessary skills for serving in the king's regiments. He writes the letter, and as d'Artagnan is about to take it from his hand, he glances through the window and sees the man from Meung. He rushes from the room to pursue him, leaving M. de Treville still holding the recommendation..

Chapter 3 Analysis

It's evident that Aramis, Porthos and Athos are the "Three Musketeers" after which the story is named. D'Artagnan has already begun to develop a deep admiration for these men, and M. de Treville is sketched as a kindly, fatherly figure to the Musketeers, ready to extricate them from any political difficulty, but intent that they should not be shown up by the cardinal's men to the king. The cardinal, who historically was known for publicly denouncing the practice of dueling, is portrayed as hypocritically allowed his men to duel under the pretext of protecting the public. The cardinal's men routinely seek out the king's Musketeers to pick fights with them, and seldom emerge victorious. M. de Treville seems to tolerate the dueling as long as his Musketeers preserve the king's pride by always winning. The cardinal is determined that no one will rival his influence with the king, so he works to undermine those, like M. de Treville, who are also in the king's good graces.

Portrayed as an honest and fair man who takes his duty to his king seriously, M. de Treville seems to be impressed by d'Artagnan, but is properly cautious so as not to inadvertently take in one of the cardinal's spies among his own regiment.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 Summary

D'Artagnan is leaving M. de Treville's apartments in a desperate hurry, and in doing so bumps Athos, who is still nursing his serious injury from the previous night. Athos howls with pain, and challenges d'Artagnan to a duel. For once, d'Artagnan is in too much of a hurry to duel, but Athos continues to detain him, so he promises to return at noon if Athos will let him go for the moment. This is agreed, and d'Artagnan continues after the man of Meung. In the next few minutes he not only loses the trail of the man of Meung, but he also crosses paths and argues with both Porthos (over his belt) and Aramis (over a handkerchief), and finds himself engaged to duels with each of them as well. He is to meet Porthos at one o'clock and Aramis at two o'clock. As d'Artagnan heads for his first appointment, he reflects that no matter which of them vanquishes him, at least he will have the honor of being killed by a Musketeer.

Chapter 4 Analysis

Dueling was a type of judicial combat that was intended to hold society accountable for offenses to the honor of others. However, in most societies, for an offense to actually come to the point of a duel, it would almost have to be a purposeful one since generally accepted rules usually allowed for an apology which would restore the honor of the offended person and render a duel unnecessary. The whole idea seems ludicrous to us today, and even in the time of Dumas it was greatly frowned upon. In fact, the trivial offenses that provoked d'Artagnan's duels could be seen as a device used by Dumas to parody the practice.

Chapter 5

Chapter 5 Summary

D'Artagnan goes to meet his first appointment in the out-of-the-way spot chosen by Athos, having no "seconds" to take with him since he knows no one in Paris. Athos is waiting for his seconds to appear, and in the meantime he and d'Artagnan discuss their options. D'Artagnan offers his mother's salve for Athos' shoulder wound and suggests they wait a few days until the shoulder is better for fighting. Athos considers this courteous, but reminds him that if they wait, the cardinal will surely catch wind of the duel and they would be prevented from it. D'Artagnan then offers to let Athos dispose of him at once without waiting for the seconds. Again Athos is impressed by d'Artagnan's courteous but brave attitude, however his seconds are arriving now. Naturally, they are Porthos and Aramis, which surprises d'Artagnan as he has not realized that these three Musketeers are inseparable friends.

D'Artagnan apologizes to Porthos and Aramis, who assume he is trying to get out of dueling, but he clarifies that he is only apologizing because Athos has the right to the first duel, and he will therefore most likely be dead and unable to meet them afterward. Without hesitation, he draws his sword to meet his fate fearlessly against all three if necessary. This impresses all three, but before the fight can begin, some of the cardinal's guards happen by. Seeing a duel about to begin, they seize the chance to arrest the three Musketeers, who hesitate for a moment since the odds are five against three, and one of the three is wounded. The guards tell d'Artagnan he is free to escape since he is not a Musketeer and they have no quarrel with him. D'Artagnan, however, decides to throw his lot in with the Musketeers and tells them they are four and he will not leave the spot as anything but a conquerer. This gives the Musketeers the spirit to fight, and they win, killing one of the guardsmen and wounding three of the others. Confiscating the swords of the vanquished, the Three Musketeers with d'Artagnan between them march triumphantly back to M. de Treville's hotel.

Chapter 5 Analysis

Athos was the first to be impressed with d'Artagnan, and through the rest of the story he maintains a fatherly protectiveness over the younger man, mentoring him more especially than the others.

When d'Artagnan makes the split-second decision to assist the Musketeers against the cardinal's men, he is making an important choice that will affect the rest of his career, since the cardinal does not forget offenses and is merciless to his enemies. He is also considered to have more political power than even the king. But this choice also ensures d'Artagnan's acceptance into at least the friendship of the Musketeers, although he cannot yet be admitted into the regiment.

Chapter 6

Chapter 6 Summary

M. de Treville makes a quick visit to the Louvre to see the king, as he usually does after his men have skirmished with the cardinal's guards, but the cardinal is already there, portraying the Musketeers as the instigators. When the captain finally is admitted, the king chides him for their behavior. M. de Treville then explains the true state of affairs and the king is actually joyful at the fact that his Musketeers have beaten the cardinal's guards. D'Artagnan's part in the proceedings comes out, and the king tells the captain to invite D'Artagnan and the three Musketeers to see him at the Louvre at noon the next day.

Unfortunately, the next morning at the tennis courts, the four again cross swords with the cardinal's guards, but this time so many others enter the fray on each side that it produces a huge commotion. D'Artagnan and his three friends extricate themselves from the fray just in time to make it to the Louvre with M. de Treville in time for their appointment, hopeful that they can get to him before the cardinal can prejudice him about the latest fray. Unfortunately, they arrive to find that he has been called away to his hunting grounds and that the cardinal had gone with him. M. de Treville sends the four friends away, saying he must see the king before they do. In the meantime, M. de Treville goes to the hotel where the cardinal's guards are housed, and seeks out the guard who began the latest skirmish. He is badly wounded (at d'Artagnan's hand), and he gives a true account of the circumstances in front of the hotel landlord.

This time, when M. de Treville finally sees the king it's much harder this time to mollify him, although he finally succeeds when he produces the testimony of the cardinal's own guard. When he hears the whole story, the king is proud of them again, and personally bestows forty pistoles of gold on d'Artagnan, who has shown the most bravery. He then instructs M. de Treville to place d'Artagnan in the corps of M. des Essarts,' the brother-in-law of M. de Treville. As Treville leaves the King, he notices that d'Artagnan is honorably sharing the gold with his three friends.

Chapter 6 Analysis

D'Artagnan has had many misfortunes, but by his honor and bravery, each is turned into a success, and he has now won favor even with the king although he has only been in Paris a few days.

He is also making enemies in high places, of course, but they are all among the less honorable characters of the story. Dumas makes the point that the best success comes to those who are honest and brave in their dealings with others.

Chapter 7

Chapter 7 Summary

D'Artagnan hires a lackey, or valet, with part of his portion of the gold pistoles. His new valet is a Picard named Planchet, and the valets of the other men are introduced at this point in the story as well. Athos' man is named Grimaud, Porthos' man is a Norman called Mousqueton, and Aramis' lackey is called Bazin.

After the valets are introduced, the characters of the Musketeers are sketched out further. Athos, Porthos and Aramis are highly unusual names for Frenchmen of this period, so d'Artagnan is aware that these are assumed names, meant to cover the identities of their owners, but he is already sure that they are all noblemen although he can find out nothing concrete beyond the obvious characteristics: Athos is very reserved, likes to gamble and at some time in his life he has obviously had a bad experience with a woman, as he seems slightly misogynistic. Porthos is a little bit of a dandy who talks loudly and often about his romantic conquests; and Aramis is a theological student who intends someday to "take orders" in the church.

The four friends are always together, each going with the others when it was anyone's turn to mount guard, so that d'Artagnan began to be regarded almost as though he were already a Musketeer, and the Musketeers returned the favor by mounting guard with d'Artagnan whenever it was his turn to do so in M. des Essarts' company.

Chapter 7 Analysis

The famous, "All for one and one for all!" has not yet been spoken, but the groundwork is already being laid, and the reader can see that is the way things stand between d'Artagnan and his three friends. Even though Dumas gives each man a few flaws to make him human, they all have the basic traits of honesty, integrity and bravery that allow the reader to sympathize with them as heroes.

Chapter 8

Chapter 8 Summary

The forty pistoles have now been consumed, as well as the available cash of the Musketeers. D'Artagnan's landlord, M. Bonancieux, comes to visit him, requesting his help on a personal matter (in lieu of d'Artagnan's now lagging rent), so d'Artagnan agrees to help him. The landlord explains that his wife, who is a seamstress to the queen, has been abducted for political reasons that involve the queen and the English Duke of Buckingham (George Villiers). He says that before her abduction, his wife had confided to him that the queen believed her enemies had forged a letter in her name to the Duke of Buckingham to entice him to Paris and lead him into a trap. From M. Bonancieux description of the abductor, d'Artagnan recognizes the same man who stole his letter in Meung. Moments later, d'Artagnan and M. Bonancieux see the man through the window and d'Artagnan immediately rushes after him, passing between Athos and Porthos on the stairs on his way out.

Chapter 8 Analysis

It's fortunate for d'Artagnan that his landlord is in need of his help – in exchange, he is able to secure free rent and the offer of an additional fifty pistoles from M. Bonancieux. As an added bonus, it appears that the kidnapper is precisely the man d'Artagnan most wants to revenge himself against. The man of Meung must be a henchman of the cardinal, since it's the cardinal who most wants to destroy the queen's influence with the king, and he has the most to gain from enticing Buckingham to the Queen's side: it will convince the king that she really is unfaithful to him.

Chapter 9

Chapter 9 Summary

Athos and Porthos have waited for d'Artagnan to return, which he does within half an hour, once again failing to meet up with the man of Meung. D'Artagnan then recounts to his friends the conversation with his landlord. The others agree that they would relish doing a service to the queen, especially if, at the same time it foils the cardinals plans. As the four are discussing these circumstances, the landlord rushes in and pleads for their help, as four men have come to arrest him. However, d'Artagnan counsels them that they should allow him to be arrested, since they will be unable to help him if they interfere and are arrested with him. M. Bonancieux is not happy about this, but the others respect d'Artagnan's opinion and concede. It's at this point that d'Artagnan coins the phrase, "All for one – one for all!" and they all swear to the motto together, knowing they will henceforth face a formidable opponent in the cardinal.

Chapter 9 Analysis

D'Artagnan is emerging as the natural leader of the four friends, not only because of his courage and bravery, but he has a quick intellect and a talent for strategy. Porthos is sometimes slow to catch on to d'Artagnan's thinking, but Athos and Aramis quickly grasp his ideas and see the merit in them. This has given them a great respect for his ability, and they do not begrudge the younger man his unofficial leadership role.

Chapter 10

Chapter 10 Summary

M. Bonancieux's apartment is now turned into a "mousetrap" by the cardinal's men – meaning they are now watching it and arresting all who come there in search of the landlord. By this method, they hope to arrest any and all conspirators of Madame and M. Bonancieux. D'Artagnan stayed by his own window to observe the success of the trap, also removing some of the tiles from his floor, and the insulation beneath them so he could hear anything that was said below. He is able to follow the full circumstances of the next visitor who is caught in the trap, and to his amazement, it's a woman who turns out to be Madame Bonancieux.

D'Artagnan decides it's time to intervene, and goes immediately to her apartment with his sword, dispatching the four men who were interrogating her. He knows they will eventually return, but in the meantime, he and Madame Bonancieux exchange information – d'Artagnan informs her that her husband has been arrested and taken to the Bastille, and she confirms that she was abducted for political reasons, but is afraid to explain in further detail. D'Artagnan tries to convince her to trust him and his three companions to look out for her, and he at least convinces her to escape with him before the cardinal's men return. He knows Athos is away from home, so he takes her there to hide while he follows her instructions for sending a message to M. de la Porte, the queen's valet. When he has followed these, he tells the valet where to find Madame Bonancieux, and the valet suggests that if d'Artagnan has a friend whose clock is habitually slow, he should visit him immediately in order to establish an alibi, in case he is questioned about the evening's events. D'Artagnan visits M. de Treville, puts back the hands of his clock surreptitiously and remarks upon the time so M. de Treville will remember it. He then shares with M. de Treville much of the political intrigue he has discovered, and finally gets up to leave – but not before remembering to replace the clock's hands to their proper place.

Chapter 10 Analysis

D'Artagnan trusts M. de Treville, but he doesn't want to compromise him before the king, so he doesn't tell him all of his plans. Sketching out the basic intrigue, as he understands it, does not betray any confidences, since M. de Treville is aware of much of it already, as intimate as he is with the king and queen.

Chapter 11

Chapter 11 Summary

D'Artagnan takes the long way home that night from M. de Treville's apartments so he can think about the pretty Madame Bonancieux. She is married, but he thinks he may be in love with her. After walking for some time, he finds himself near Aramis' house and decides to pay him a visit, despite the late hour. Just as he gets close enough in the street to see the front door, he observed a shadow moving slowly until it finally stops in front of Aramis' door. It seems to be a woman in a cloak who doesn't want to be seen, so d'Artagnan watches from a distance. She gives three taps on the window shutter which is answered by someone inside, and a handkerchief is passed between the two people. When the woman, d'Artagnan follows her, and discovers her to be Madame Bonancieux, who he had left at Athos' house. He wonders if she is having an affair with Aramis, but she insists she doesn't know anyone by that name. As he questions her, it appears that her visit to the house is connected to the same political intrigue that produced her abduction but she again refuses to explain. He accompanies her for protection until she arrives at a second house, where she thanks him and says goodbye before disappearing inside.

Returning home, he finds his lackey, Planchet disturbed because Athos, who had come to see him while he was out, has been arrested by some of the cardinal's men. They assumed he was d'Artagnan and Athos allowed the misunderstanding because he believes d'Artagnan needs to be at liberty to uncover the political intrigue. D'Artagnan goes immediately to find M. de Treville to tell him of these developments. On the way, he sees a cloaked woman with a man in a Musketeer's uniform. The face of the man is hidden, but his figure is like that of Aramis, and he is sure the woman is Madame Bonancieux. D'Artagnan is angry that she seems to have lied to him about not knowing Aramis, and confronts the man, who isn't Aramis after all. D'Artagnan is even angrier as he assumes the man is a lover of Madame Bonancieux, and pulls out his sword to fight him. He then discovers the man is the Duke of Buckingham, and realizes that Madame Bonancieux is trying to take him secretly to see the queen, and d'Artagnan sheaths his sword and offers his services to the Duke. The Duke accepts, and d'Artagnan sees them safely to one of the Louvre's side entrances, where he leaves them.

Chapter 11 Analysis

If Madame Bonancieux is telling the truth about not knowing Aramis, there must have been someone else in his house with whom she communicated. She refuses to confide completely in d'Artagnan, which is wise, but he is determined to discover the intrigue and protect her fully from its consequences. He has not yet taken the Musketeers fully into his confidence either, because he is not sure how much of her secret he can or should share.

The cardinal's men seem very much interested in what may or may not be going on between the queen and Buckingham, and are not above arresting any and everyone who may have information the cardinal can use against her.

Chapter 12

Chapter 12 Summary

Madame Bonancieux leads the Duke through some private halls and stairs to a small room where the queen comes to meet him. Although he knows he has been lured to Paris by the cardinal's ruse, he takes advantage of the situation because he has fallen in love with the queen and wants to see her. The queen has resisted his advances, refusing to betray her husband despite the king's mistrust of her, but she has agreed to see and speak to the Duke on the condition that they never speak to each other again. He speaks passionately of his love for her, and she tells him she has dreamed he is dead from a knife wound. He has had the same dream, and says that this, and the fact that she fears for his life, proves that she returns his love. She refuses to admit it, but finally he asks her for a pledge of her regard -- a piece of jewelry she has worn so that he can wear it too. Agitated, she requires a promise that if she does this, he will leave France at once and return to England. He promises – she goes out and comes back with a rosewood casket that bears her monogram. She gives this to him and Madame Bonancieux leads him back out of the Louvre.

Chapter 12 Analysis

We now see that the queen has not actually done anything to betray the king, but evidently, the cardinal has been gradually undermining her in the king's eyes so that her husband believes there really is something going on. We can see the queen probably does have some regard for the Duke, but until now she has even resisted confirming this to the Duke, as she does not want to endanger him, or to hurt the king. The cardinal has hoped the ruse would put her in a position where he can accuse her, so it was risky for her to give Buckingham a gift.

Chapter 13

Chapter 13 Summary

Meanwhile, M. Bonancieux is at the Bastille being questioned by the commissary. In cowardice, he distances himself from his wife, saying that if she is involved in treason, he has not been part of it, and explains that his wife has been abducted. The commissary tells him his wife has escaped, which M. Bonancieux also exclaims is not his fault. He says he did ask his neighbor, d'Artagnan for help, but now sees he was wrong to do so, since d'Artagnan allowed him to be arrested. The commissary tells him d'Artagnan himself has now been arrested, and that M. Bonancieux can confront him. Athos is brought in, and M. Bonancieux makes plain their mistake. The commissary is distressed, and sends both men back to their dungeons. Later that night, Bonancieux is taken to a carriage, which proceeds through the streets of Paris. He is sure he is going to be executed, and finally passes out from fear.

Chapter 13 Analysis

While the cardinal's men seem to know a great deal about what is going on, they obviously don't know everything. They are unable to obtain the information they want from Bonancieux, since evidently his wife doesn't confide fully in him. Obviously, if she had, her husband would have told them whatever they wanted to know, in order to gain favor for himself and save his own skin. The reader begins to hope that M. Bonancieux is on his way to be executed, as he fears, because he has shown his true, selfish colors. There is little honor in a man who will disavow his wife for the sake of his own skin, and d'Artagnan is much more honorable and likeable by contrast. By the end of the chapter, one naturally hopes Madame Bonancieux, who seems to be almost as brave as d'Artagnan himself, can eventually find herself paired with a man who is more worthy of her.

Chapter 14

Chapter 14 Summary

M. Bonancieux comes to on a bench, in a richly decorated room. A guard summons him to enter an adjoining room, and to his surprise he is face to face with the cardinal, whose full name and title is Armand-Jean Duplessis, Cardinal de Richelieu. He again displays his cowardice by denouncing his wife and disclaiming any knowledge of her activities. The cardinal calls for Count Rochefort, who M. Bonancieux recognizes as the man who abducted his wife. However, Rochefort is one of the cardinal's men, and Bonancieux realizes this too late, and tries to withdraw his identification. The cardinal ignores him and sends him out with two of the guards while he speaks to Rochefort alone. Rochefort brings the cardinal up to date on the latest activities of the queen and the duke, telling him that the queen has given Buckingham a casket containing some diamond studs which the king had given to her.

The cardinal orders Bonancieux to be brought in again, calls him his friend, and sends him away with a hundred pistoles. When Count Rochefort returns and asks what his eminence has done with Bonancieux, the cardinal replies that he has sent the man away to spy on his wife. The cardinal then writes a letter and gives it to a servant to deliver to a woman he calls "my lady." The letter asks this woman, who is obviously someone the cardinal trusts, to contrive to be at the first ball possible where the Duke of Buckingham is invited, and to cut off two of the twelve diamond studs he would be likely to be wearing. As soon as they are in her possession, she is to let the cardinal know.

Chapter 14 Analysis

The cardinal knows that M. Bonancieux is so impressed by power and fearful of the Bastille, that he will report every movement of his wife to the cardinal, even though he has not literally been asked to do so. We now know the identity of d'Artagnan's "man of Meung," since we are told he is the same man who abducted Madame Bonancieux, and her husband has identified him for us; and we also know that the cardinal is already plotting to use the queen's gift to destroy her.

Chapter 15

Chapter 15 Summary

Athos still has not returned, and Aramis is away on leave, so d'Artagnan and Porthos go to M. de Treville and explain Athos disappearance. M. de Treville immediately uses his contacts to find out where Athos is being kept, and then goes to the king to try to secure his release. Unfortunately the cardinal is there before him. Nevertheless, after much discussion, which is not helped by the cardinal's occasional contributions, he manages to secure the promise of the king to release Athos. M. de Treville leaves, and alone again, the cardinal tells the king that Buckingham has been in Paris for the last five days.

Chapter 15 Analysis

M. de Treville is uneasy that the cardinal suddenly capitulated at the end of the discussion and allowed the release of Athos – he knows the cardinal is up to something. Sure enough, the cardinal really just wants him to go so he can bring up Buckingham to the king. The king is regularly unfaithful to the queen, but he does not see the hypocrisy in the fact that he expects her to remain faithful to him – and he is quick to imagine that if Buckingham is in France it must be to see the queen. The cardinal is careful never to accuse the queen of misconduct, and in fact, pretends to defend her to the king, but all the while, he is feeding suspicions to the monarch. These take hold, as he knows they will, and the king usually ends up reacting in the way the cardinal hopes he will.

Chapter 16

Chapter 16 Summary

The cardinal stirs up the king's jealousy to the point that he demands the queen's personal papers to see whether or not there is proof among them of some kind of conspiracy with Buckingham. The cardinal focuses on hinting at political conspiracy, but knows the king will assume it's an affair. The king sends his chancellor with orders not only to search her rooms, but also her person in case she has hidden a letter to Buckingham in her clothes.

The queen is horrified by the orders when the chancellor comes to carry them out, and since he finds nothing in her belongings, he advances to search her person so she voluntarily gives up the letter she had hidden in her dress. It's a letter to the queen's brother, who is the King of Spain, asking them to press the king to dismiss the cardinal, but there is nothing in the letter about romantic affairs. King Louis takes the letter immediately to show the cardinal, who pretends to believe the king should forgive the queen and give a ball to cheer her up. The cardinal then slyly suggests that the king should ask the queen to wear her diamonds to the ball – the ones the king had given her for her birthday, but advises him not to mention it until the night before the event. The king agrees to these suggestions and allows the cardinal to set the date of the ball. The cardinal waits until he has heard from "My Lady," that she has succeeded in stealing the two diamonds from Buckingham, and then gives the king a date.

Chapter 16 Analysis

Despite his protestations to the king that he doesn't believe Buckingham and Anne are having an affair, the cardinal secretly believes they are, and if he can present proof, the queen will be eliminated as a rival for the king's political favor. The cardinal has obviously worked out a plan for the king to discover that Anne has given the diamonds to Buckingham. If the king asks Anne on the night before the ball to wear the diamonds the next evening, she won't have time to get them back and will be put in the position of having to explain why. Then the cardinal will produce the two stolen by "My Lady," and reveal that they were taken from Buckingham. Things are looking very bad for the queen.

Chapter 17

Chapter 17 Summary

The cardinal reminds the king more than once not to ask the queen about the diamonds until the night before the ball, which makes the king suspicious. King Louis has often been annoyed that the cardinal seems to know things about his kingdom before he does. He decides to have a conversation with the queen to see if he can discover what the cardinal's knowledge is, and afterward impress his minister with his own understanding. However, rather than finding out anything himself, he inadvertently forewarns the queen that she will be expected to wear the diamonds to the ball. In her distress, the queen confides the difficulty to Madame Bonancieux, who promises her that she will get her husband to help retrieve the diamonds. She advises the queen to write a message to Buckingham, which Madame Bonancieux will take to her husband, who she has not seen since his liberation from the Bastille. She goes home with the queen's letter, but fortunately, after only a short conversation with her husband she is able to see where his loyalties now lie, and she doesn't fully confide in him. She is not sure what to do now, but fortunately, d'Artagnan has been listening through the floor from his rooms above, and when her husband leaves, he comes down to see how he can help.

Chapter 17 Analysis

After learning of her husband's cowardly change of loyalties, Madame Bonancieux has privately lost all feeling for him that she once had. Her own loyalty is to the queen, and she intends to risk whatever is necessary in her service. In this way she is much like d'Artagnan, who doesn't hesitate to risk his life for the sake of personal loyalties.

Since M. Bonancieux left the house so quickly after the conversation with his wife, it seems likely he has gone straight to the cardinal's men to pass along the little he has gleaned from his wife.

Chapter 18

Chapter 18 Summary

When d'Artagnan comes down from his apartments, he persuades Madame Bonancieux to tell him everything and to entrust him with the mission to London. At first she hesitates, but he assures her of his love and loyalty and she consents. As he has no money for the trip, she gives him the bag the cardinal had given to her husband, and d'Artagnan appreciates the humor in the fact that they will use the cardinal's funds to save the queen.

Bonancieux returns to the house with Rochefort, so d'Artagnan and Constance Bonancieux escape to d'Artagnan's rooms and listen to their conversation through the floor. Rochefort chides Bonancieux, telling him he should have pretended to take his wife's commission, so she would have given him the letter. Bonancieux assures him that there is still time to reverse the situation, since his wife is probably at the Louvre and he will convince her he has changed his mind. Rochefort leaves, and Bonancieux discovers his bag of money is missing. After a great fuss, he leaves to look for his wife at the Louvre. D'Artagnan leaves soon afterward, promising he will return worthy of Constance's love.

Chapter 18 Analysis

D'Artagnan is as brave as ever, but is gradually becoming less impulsive as he becomes more experienced. In the past, whenever he has seen the man from Meung (who he does not yet know as Rochefort) he has dropped everything to go after him. This time, he allows Constance Bonancieux to convince him to restrain himself and leave it for another day. She reminds him that at the moment he is on a mission for the queen and his life doesn't belong to himself. He can't risk his life until he has delivered the letter into Buckingham's hands, or their mission will fail.

Chapter 19

Chapter 19 Summary

D'Artagnan goes first to M. de Treville to secure a fifteen-day leave of absence on service to the queen. The captain will not let d'Artagnan tell him the queen's secret, and reminds him it's not his to tell. He willingly agrees to obtain leave from M. des Essarts for d'Artagnan, but advises him to take the three musketeers with him as well, and writes leaves for all of them. M. de Treville reminds d'Artagnan that the cardinal is very powerful and probably already knows of d'Artagnan's journey. Going as four instead of one will make it more likely that at least one of them will be able to complete the mission. D'Artagnan agrees and goes to find his three friends and ready them and their four valets for the journey.

Chapter 19 Analysis

Without question, the three musketeers agree to accompany d'Artagnan on his journey even after he tells them how dangerous it's, and that many of them are likely not to finish it. This understanding makes no difference to the friends, although Porthos and Aramis find they are curious as to the purpose of the mission. D'Artagnan tells them he is unable to tell them, but they all declare they are ready to follow him anyway.

Chapter 20

Chapter 20 Summary

The four men leave Paris at two o'clock in the morning with their servants. They arrive at Chantilly about breakfast time, and stop at a tavern, leaving their horses saddled outside so they can leave quickly if necessary. When they have eaten and are ready to leave, a stranger who has been sitting with them seems to purposely pick a fight with Porthos, and when Porthos accuses the stranger of being drunk, the man pulls out his sword. The other three must leave, so they leave Porthos to deal with the stranger and the rest continue the journey. A little further on, the group encounters an ambush, where Aramis and Mousqueton are wounded. Mousqueton is left there, but Aramis tries to go further until they have to set him and Bazin down at a wine shop while Athos and D'Artagnan continue alone with Grimaud and Planchet. They stop for the night at an inn and in the morning when they are ready to check out, the innkeeper accuses them of giving him forged money and Athos is seized by four armed men and tries to defend himself with his pistol and sword. D'Artagnan and Planchet slip away, and just make it to Calais before their horses fall from exhaustion. However, they are taking a boat to England from Calais, so they enter the town on foot, leaving the horses where they have fallen.

Their last hurdle is the most difficult. The cardinal has ordered the ports closed and no one can leave without his permission. D'Artagnan and Planchet notice a man who seems to have that permission, as he is carrying a paper signed by the cardinal. They follow him as he goes to get it countersigned by the governor, and once out of town, d'Artagnan challenges him with his sword and after wounding him, takes the paper, which is in the name of the Count de Wardes. D'Artagnan goes to the governor's house in place of the Count, receives the countersign, and he and Planchet make it on the boat and out of the harbor just before the cannon sounded the closing of the port.

As soon as the boat arrives at Dover, they take post-horses and leave immediately for London where they learn the Duke is hunting at Windsor with the king. D'Artagnan doesn't speak English, but he writes "Buckingham" on a piece of paper to obtain directions. He finds Buckingham, gives him the letter, and Buckingham sends his apologies to his king and leaves immediately with D'Artagnan for Buckingham's London residence.

Chapter 20 Analysis

M. de Treville's fears were justified – there seem to have been traps laid for them at every stop. D'Artagnan can't know whether his companions have survived the traps or not, so it's clear his loyalty to his mission was strong enough to compel him to finish it, despite the fact that he may have lost one or more of his closest friends. He is not doing it only for the queen, of course – but also for Constance Bonancieux.

Chapter 21

Chapter 21 Summary

At Buckingham's residence, d'Artagnan sees there is a life-sized portrait of Anne of Austria, and an altar holding the monogrammed box she has given him. Buckingham opens the casket to kiss each diamond and discovers that two are missing. He tells d'Artagnan he is sure it was the Countess de Winter who has stolen them, as he felt her touch at a recent ball. Without hesitation, he uses the power and wealth of his position to immediately have the English ports closed so the two missing diamonds cannot make their way to France, and calls for his jeweler to make copies to replace them. In two days, this is finished, and d'Artagnan prepares to return to France with the aid of Buckingham's special permission to leave port. Buckingham also promises to give him the gift of the four horses that will relay him along the road to Paris. D'Artagnan arrives in Paris within twelve hours, having passed alongside the Countess de Winter's boat as he left the English harbor.

Chapter 21 Analysis

The queen's enemy is very powerful, but fortunately, she has also made an equally powerful friend in Buckingham. However, even he couldn't have saved her without the help of the brave but very young d'Artagnan. As d'Artagnan tells him the story of his journey to England, Buckingham is amazed by the combination of bravery and competence in such extreme youth, even though d'Artagnan represents circumstances without embellishment. The real d'Artagnan could hardly have lived up to the character that Dumas has given to his fictional one, but the reader is reminded that while some of the historical facts and figures are real, the circumstances have been embellished to the point of complete fiction.

Chapter 22

Chapter 22 Summary

The next chapter opens at the ball – the cardinal notices that the queen has appeared without her diamond studs. He informs the king, who then asks the queen why she hasn't worn them. The cardinal is smiling behind the king, and she replies that she was afraid to wear them in such a crowd, but the king commands her to send for them, from the Louvre immediately. When they are alone, the cardinal gives the king a box containing two diamond studs, telling him to count the queen's to see if any are missing. When the queen returns wearing the diamonds, and none are missing, the king is joyful and the cardinal is angry. Later, Constance Bonancieux leads d'Artagnan to the queen's rooms to receive her thanks, and the queen bestows a ring on him. Constance promises to meet d'Artagnan soon, and tells him he will find a note at his lodgings that will tell him where and when.

Chapter 22 Analysis

The king is not necessarily joyful because of any true love for the queen, but because it means his honor has not been compromised. He is not as selfless and just a man as he likes to appear, but is actually rather hypocritical. As long as his honor is safe (in the sense that his wife has not had an affair), he doesn't much care about the queen herself, or what the cardinal may be plotting against her. To his mind both are his servants and mean little more to him than that.

Chapter 23

Chapter 23 Summary

There is a note waiting for d'Artagnan when he returns home at three in the morning, and it directs him to be at St. Cloud at ten o'clock that evening. He sleeps a few hours then rises to go out, passing M. Bonancieux on the way. M. Bonancieux hints that he knows of d'Artagnan's evening appointment, but d'Artagnan is too happy to pick up on this, and continues on his way to bring M. de Treville up to date on the success of his mission. The captain sees the queen's ring on d'Artagnan's finger, and advises him to sell it or put it away, so it won't excite the anger of the cardinal. D'Artagnan feels he has nothing to fear, however, and they discuss Athos, Porthos and Aramis, from whom they've had no news. D'Artagnan promises to leave in the morning in search of them, looks in at the stables on his way out. Three of the horses Buckingham has promised to send have already arrived, and Planchet is grooming them. The valet tells d'Artagnan that he observed M. Bonancieux running in the opposite direction from d'Artagnan after their morning's conversation, as though he were going to make a report.

Chapter 23 Analysis

D'Artagnan is brave and intelligent, but sometimes allows himself to become overly confident about these strengths, which leads to some carelessness. This is a reasonable trait for Dumas to assign him, since it's consistent with his youth (he hasn't yet turned 20). He is not as cautious as he should be about the ring the queen has given him, or about his meeting with Madame Bonancieux. While speaking to the woman's husband, he enjoyed a joke at the man's expense, which he thought would not be understood. However, Bonancieux apparently has found out about the meeting (as the landlord, it's reasonable to suspect he has a key to d'Artagnan's rooms and may have seen his wife's note) and d'Artagnan doesn't notice his angry flush in answer to the joke.

Chapter 24

Chapter 24 Summary

D'Artagnan waits at the appointed place at ten o'clock, but Madame Bonancieux doesn't appear. He begins to suspect something is wrong, and when he investigates, he finds signs of a nearby struggle, and impressions of carriage wheels and men's footsteps in the mud. When he picks up a woman's torn, white glove, he is certain Constance has been abducted again. With some difficulty, d'Artagnan convinces a timid neighbor to tell him what has happened. The elderly man confirms a young woman has been abducted by a man who answers the description of d'Artagnan's man of Meung. There is a smaller man with him who seems to be some kind of servant. D'Artagnan searches the area in vain for some clue to where they have gone but finds nothing. He passes the night uneasily in a nearby wine shop, and wakes early to find Planchet ready with their horses.

Chapter 24 Analysis

Constance's habitual abductions might seem like overzealousness, but it does make a certain amount of sense that the cardinal would be very much interested in the servant who has given the queen so much assistance. The cardinal most likely believes he will be able to get Madame Bonancieux to give him information about the queen that will convict her in the king's eyes, but the reader is by now fully confident that Madame Bonancieux would not betray the queen. The reader has probably also recognized the elderly neighbor's description of the smaller man who assisted in the abduction, even though d'Artagnan has not: it's most likely M. Bonancieux himself, which worsens our opinion of him, if that were possible. Dumas has also given us hints that the cardinal's henchwoman, the Lady de Winter, is even more interested in Madame Bonancieux as a way of taking revenge on d'Artagnan for besting her in the diamond affair.

Chapter 25

Chapter 25 Summary

D'Artagnan goes again to M. de Treville to explain the night's events, and ask for advice. The captain tells him to do nothing – he will see the queen and explain everything, and they will trust her to intervene if she can. He tells d'Artagnan to leave as arranged to find Porthos, Aramis and Athos, so the young man goes home to pack, and sees M. Bonancieux outside the apartments. D'Artagnan notices mud on M. Bonancieux's boots, and it's the same mud that is on his own – acquired the previous evening at the abduction site.

D'Artagnan and Planchet leave, taking the other mens' horses with them, and set out to find Porthos first. They find him exactly where they left him, but well established in one of the inn's rooms, recuperating from his wound. He has used up his funds, and the landlord is getting nervous about the bill, but Porthos has applied to a lady-friend for aid. D'Artagnan tells Porthos about the horses that Buckingham has given him, leaves one of them with his friend, and promises to return after he has found their other companions.

Chapter 25 Analysis

Dumas now takes the opportunity to further sketch the characters of the three Musketeers, each in a separate chapter. In Chapter 25, he reiterates that Porthos is a loveable, happy-go-lucky fellow who gives more thought to his clothes than to the future. He has cultivated a relationship with an older woman who is not particularly beautiful or wealthy, but he doesn't want his friends to find this out. To them he paints a picture of a wealthy and powerful benefactress. He is also not especially quick witted, but he is a courageous and gifted swordsman, and a loyal friend. D'Artagnan is also a loyal friend – he finds out the truth about Porthos' mistress, but protects his friend's honor by pretending he doesn't know.

Chapter 26

Chapter 26 Summary

Aramis is also still exactly where d'Artagnan left him. However, he is closeted with a curate and on the verge of hanging up his Musketeer uniform to go into the priesthood. He is arguing with the curate and a Jesuit over what subject his thesis should cover. After some discussion, the other men leave d'Artagnan and Aramis together, and Aramis tells his friend that the wound has been a warning to him that he must return to the church. D'Artagnan tells him the wound is almost healed, and argues that the problem must be a woman. He then produces a letter that had come to Aramis at his lodgings in Paris, and Aramis eagerly snatches it, joyfully abandoning any thought of ordination.

Chapter 26 Analysis

While Dumas has already mentioned that Aramis had intended to be a priest, we now learn that the one thing that can keep him out of the cassock is a romantic relationship. Whenever his current romance falls on the rocks, he leans toward taking orders – but all it takes is a good word from his lady-friend and he has forgotten all about that vocation. D'Artagnan figures this out, but again, he lets his friend keep his honor by keeping his knowledge of Aramis' weakness to himself.

Chapter 27

Chapter 27 Summary

Aramis has is unable to ride, so D'Artagnan allows Aramis to make his choice of Buckingham's horses, goes on alone to find Athos. He is worried because they had left Athos in the worst situation of all, and it was possible he had been killed. D'Artagnan arrives at the inn where they had been accused of passing forged money and confronts the innkeeper about the incident. The innkeeper apologises, telling d'Artagnan that the authorities had warned him to expect forgers disguised as Musketeers, and had sent six men to await them. After d'Artagnan and Planchet had slipped away, Athos had killed one of the men who had attacked them and wounded two others before barricading himself in the cellar, where he presently remained. The innkeeper feels well punished, as the cellar is where they keep their wine, and other expensive provisions, so for more than a week they have been unable offer these things to other guests. They are losing business because of it, and will be ruined if Athos stays in the cellar another week.

Athos enters the cellar to find Athos very drunk and morose. He brings him out of the cellar into a private room, promises the innkeeper payment for his loss, and when they are alone Athos finally confides to d'Artagnan the reason for his periodic black moods and distrust of women. To d'Artagnan's astonishment Athos reveals that he was once married to a girl who was new to the area, and whose brother was a curate. Athos, who was a powerful count, fell in love with her and married her. One day, he caught sight of her exposed shoulder and saw that it was branded with a fleur-de-lis – the brand of a criminal. The man she had been living with as "brother and curate" he discovered to really be her first lover and accomplice. The count had been excessively angry at the deception, and had exercised his power to execute justice by hanging her from a tree. Athos had pursued the accomplice as well, but without success. D'Artagnan is horrified by the story, and drops his head into his hands. Athos, who has already confessed to having drunk at least 150 bottles of wine, assumes his young friend is asleep and comments that the current generation seems to have difficulty holding its drink.

Chapter 27 Analysis

Of all the Musketeers, d'Artagnan was closest to Athos – he looked up to him as a mentor, and admired his dignity, good temper and courage. This is why d'Artagnan is especially concerned about what might have happened to him, and this is also why he is horrified by the story Athos tells him of his past. D'Artagnan knows that even though the nobleman had the right to exercise justice on his own land, most men in most situations would not have exercised that right, especially against a family member -- but would have taken a criminal to the authorities. What Athos did amounted to murder, and this is what horrifies d'Artagnan, and it also horrifies Athos when he allows himself to think about it. D'Artagnan's deepest relationship also has the deepest secret – but d'Artagnan will keep this one just as he has the others.

Chapter 28

Chapter 28 Summary

The next morning, d'Artagnan awakens to find that Athos is already awake. He tells d'Artagnan that earlier, under the influence of all he had been drinking, he had gambled away the horse that was sent by Buckingham. He also confesses that he had also lost d'Artagnan's horse, and then d'Artagnan's ring (at which point d'Artagnan nearly begins to panic) but then he staked his servant and won back the diamond, both horses and both saddles and trappings. Unfortunately he didn't stop playing at that point, but in the end only the horses are lost, and they still have servants, ring and trappings. D'Artagnan is so relieved at the return of his ring, that he is less disturbed about the horses than he might have been – and he finally allows Athos to talk him into staking his trappings to for 100 pistoles, so they will have money for their journey. This they do, and d'Artagnan wins the money but he is disappointed at the thought that Porthos and Aramis will be riding magnificent horses while he and Athos are carrying saddles alongside them. The two friends return to the inn where Aramis is waiting for them. Immediately, Aramis informs them he has just sold his horse, but has kept the trappings. D'Artagnan and Athos laugh at this, and the three continue on. When they find Porthos, he is enjoying a fabulous meal at the inn, and invites them all to join him. As they enjoy the fine dishes, it dawns on Athos that they can only have been paid for with Porthos' horse. Porthos admits it, but says he has kept the trappings. Unfortunately, when they return to Paris they receive word that they must be equipped for battle in two weeks – which means they must come up with two thousand livres each for horses and other necessities. This news leaves the friends in a melancholy mood.

Chapter 28 Analysis

The "all for one and one for all" philosophy doesn't look as though it's going to do d'Artagnan much good. He seems fairly careful with his resources, but the Musketeers evidently are not very adept at managing theirs. It seems likely that d'Artagnan will eventually be required to sell his ring, unless the four friends can come up with another answer in the next two weeks.

Chapter 29

Chapter 29 Summary

Despite the concern about equipage, d'Artagnan has not forgotten about Madame Bonanceiux. M. de Treville did speak to the queen as promised, but has heard nothing yet. D'Artagnan has no choice but leave Constance's welfare to the queen and concern himself with preparing for the regiment's campaign. Porthos is the first to come up with a way of gaining his equipage. D'Artagnan, curious about what he will do, follows him to a church, where he watches Porthos flirt alternately with two different women. One of them is apparently his mistress, and he is trying to make her jealous by flirting with another woman he has randomly chosen for her good looks and evident status. D'Artagnan recognizes this second woman as the one he had seen with the man of Meung – whom the man had called "My Lady." This piques his curiosity, he never loses sight of her, even while enjoying Porthos' drama, which seems to be coming to a successful conclusion.

Chapter 29 Analysis

Although d'Artagnan doesn't realize it himself, the reader already has enough clues in the story to know that the woman known as "My Lady" is the Countess de Winter, the woman who had stolen the diamonds from the Duke of Buckingham in London. Buckingham had given d'Artagnan the name of the woman who had stolen the jewels, it's true, but d'Artagnan doesn't know what the reader does – that the cardinal addressed his letter to "My Lady," when he gave the instructions.

Chapter 30

Chapter 30 Summary

D'Artagnan is intrigued and follows "My Lady" from the church. The plot thickens when he sees her pull up in front of a house where he recognizes the servant on the terrace. It's a servant named Labin, who they had seen with the Count de Wardes, the man whose permission for travel they had stolen on their way to Buckingham. My Lady sends her maid from the carriage to give a letter to the servant on the landing. However, Planchet has gone up to the terrace to speak to Lubin, and Lubin has been called away, leaving Planchet alone for a moment. The girl hands the letter to Planchet by mistake, and when the carriage leaves, Planchet turns it over to d'Artagnan. The letter asks for an assignation – it sounds like an admirer asking for a meeting – and it gives a method for sending a reply. D'Artagnan asks Planchet what he has found out from the servant, and is told that the Count is alive but still weak from the wounds d'Artagnan gave him. They return to their pursuit of My Lady's carriage, and observe her exchanging sharp words with a cavalier who speaks to her in English. D'Artagnan introduces himself and asks if the cavalier is bothering her. She replies that the man is her brother but that he is bothering her, and the cavalier insults d'Artagnan for interfering. The lady's carriage moves on, and d'Artagnan recognizes the Englishman, who introduces himself as Lord de Winter, Baron of Sheffield. He is the man who had won the horses from Athos at the inn. D'Artagnan challenges him to a duel and they agree to meet later that evening with their seconds. D'Artagnan returns to tell Athos of all that has occurred and they send word to the others about the duel.

Chapter 30 Analysis

The lines between the protagonists and antagonists are sometimes hard to determine when Dumas' characters first appear. Consistent with reality most of his characters are a blend of good traits and bad, when d'Artagnan first meets another character he isn't sure which side they are working for. Dumas has made it clear to his readers that "My Lady" is working for the cardinal, although d'Artagnan doesn't know this for a fact as yet. He does have some suspicions, since she was with the man of Meung when he first saw her. But he can know nothing concrete. Like d'Artagnan, we know nothing of Lord de Winter, except that he has had the good fortune to win some magnificent horses playing dice, and that he is not on good terms with the lady.

Chapter 31

Chapter 31 Summary

The men meet at the time appointed for the duel, but the Englishmen think Athos, Porthos and Aramis have strange names and want to be assured they are fighting men who are of equal standing. Athos, who is in reality a high nobleman, reveals his true name privately to one of the Englishmen, who is satisfied of the rank, but now Athos says he will have to kill him to keep his secret. Athos kills his man, but d'Artagnan spares Lord de Winter's life, and says it's because he loves de Winter's sister. Lord de Winter is impressed by d'Artagnan's gentlemanly standards of fighting, and offers to introduce him to his sister that very evening. He does so, explaining to her that d'Artagnan spared his life, so she has something to thank him for. D'Artagnan notices Lady de Winter greatly displeased by this, but thanks him anyway. She explains de Winter is more accurately her brother-in-law, as she has been widowed by his younger brother. As d'Artagnan departs, he meets Lady de Winter's maid, Kitty, on the staircase, who seems taken with him. D'Artagnan continues to visit Lady de Winter, each day flattering her and assuring her of his complete devotion.

Chapter 31 Analysis

D'Artagnan seems to have completely forgotten the abducted Madame Bonancieux in favour of Lady de Winter, which could destroy the reader's faith in his loyalty. However, Dumas has left enough clues to inform the reader that d'Artagnan is simply pretending to woo Lady de Winter, in order to execute some plan of his own. However, he is becoming so involved in the proceedings that sometimes it seems even he has a hard time determining where his pretense ends and where real attraction begins.

Chapter 32

Chapter 32 Summary

Meanwhile, Porthos has been invited to dinner at the home of his mistress, the attorney's wife. The attorney is there as well, and his wife has introduced Porthos as her cousin, who she is concerned for since he will soon be leaving on a military campaign with the Musketeers. She has invited him to dinner particularly to meet her husband, to convince him to furnish Porthos with his equipage. The attorney is a miserly man, and though he is not poor, he furnishes a very meager table. After dinner, the mistress, Madame Coquenard, discusses the particulars of the equipage with Porthos. She agrees to furnish him with a horse and a mule for his servant, as well as 800 francs in cash for the rest of his needs.

Chapter 32 Analysis

Porthos had hoped for much better. Dumas has already made plain that the presentation of his status is very important to Porthos, so having his servant appear on a mule, and himself on a second-hand horse is not a thrilling prospect. However, the reader is meant to reflect that only a short time earlier, Porthos was eating a fine meal provided by a very fine horse, which he did not seem heartbroken at having sold at the time. It must also be remembered that he still has the magnificent trappings from that horse, which should be some consolation to him no matter what sort of horse the attorney's wife provides him.

Chapter 33

Chapter 33 Summary

D'Artagnan has found himself becoming truly attracted to Lady de Winter, even though he is aware that to some extent at least, she is a tool of the cardinal. Finally, Kitty, the maid, intercepts d'Artagnan at the gate and asks to speak to him privately. She takes him to her quarters, which are separated from Lady de Winter's by only a thin partition, and explains to him that Lady de Winter doesn't love him. Kitty herself is in love with him, and wants him to know that her mistress has a twisted fascination for the Count de Wardes. She produces a letter Lady de Winter has given her to deliver to de Wardes, and d'Artagnan is devastated because he has really begun to imagine himself in love with the lady. Kitty wants him to know what Lady de Winter is really like, however, and hides him in the closet when her mistress comes upstairs, so he can overhear their conversation. Lady de Winter says she despises d'Artagnan and wants to take revenge on him for spoiling her plans in regard to Buckingham's diamonds. She says her abduction of Madame Bonanceiux has been wasted, because d'Artagnan sees to have forgotten her, and fumes that he has compounded his crimes by sparing her brother-in-law's life and thereby cheating her out of the money she would have inherited with his death. D'Artagnan is appalled by the revelation that Lady de Winter is a monster. He visits her again the next day, pretends nothing has changed, and goes to see Kitty again afterward. Kitty gives him a third note Lady de Winter has written to de Wardes, and this time d'Artagnan writes an affirmative answer to it telling the Lady he will come to her chamber that evening. He doesn't actually sign de Wardes name, but knows My Lady will assume it comes from him.

Chapter 33 Analysis

D'Artagnan hopes to go to the Lady de Winter under the guise of the Count de Wardes to see what he can discover about the fate of Constance, now that he knows without a doubt that My Lady knows where she is. He knows he is using Kitty's affection for him to accomplish this, but although he is kind to Kitty, she knows he doesn't love her but she wants to help him anyway.

Chapter 34

Chapter 34 Summary

Aramis and Porthos are still trying to come up with funds for their equipage. Athos finally receives a letter he has evidently been expecting and it comes with 150 Spanish double-pistoles. He pretends it's from a publisher for one of his poems, but d'Artagnan overhears enough to know it's from his lady friend. He and Aramis go to meet Porthos, and on the way they meet Mousqueton, his man, who is delivering a mule and horse to Porthos. D'Artagnan exclaims that he recognizes the horse – it's the yellow horse his father gave him, on which he rode to Paris.

Chapter 34 Analysis

Mousqueton pretends that Porthos' mistress intended to send a charger and an Andalusian mule, but the husband found out and kidnapped them on the way, replacing them with these animals. Mousqueton was on an errand to return them to the mistress.

Chapter 35

Chapter 35 Summary

D'Artagnan keeps his assignation with Lady de Winter, and thankfully, she extinguishes all the lights in her chamber before welcoming him. All cats are grey in the dark, and the lady asks if de Wardes' wounds still bother him. D'Artagnan says they do, and Lady de Winter refers to d'Artagnan as a monster for having wounded him. She then gives the man she thinks is de Wardes (d'Artagnan) a sapphire ring to remember her by, and d''Artagnan leaves. The next day, he tells Athos all that transpired, and shows him the ring. Athos is staggered by it – the ring is a family heirloom he had given to his wife, the woman he had hung. But as it seems impossible the woman could be alive, he convinces himself he must be mistaken – and entreats d'Artagnan to put the ring out of his sight, and to promise not to see the woman again. Kitty comes to d'Artagnan with a note from Lady de Winter, requesting another interview. D'Artagnan keeps his promise to Athos, and writes (pretending to be de Wardes) that he has so many interviews with other women that he must keep them in order, and he will let her know when it's her turn again. Upon receiving the note, Lady de Winter is very angry and vows vengeance.

Chapter 35 Analysis

For practical fighting men, d'Artagnan and Athos both seem somewhat irrational when it comes to their romantic interests. As evil as d'Artagnan knows Lady de Winter to be, she still exercises a power of attraction over him. Athos knows his wife to have been evil, and knows from d'Artagnan's descriptions that Lady de Winter's character is of the same sort of evil. In addition, he recognizes the ring as the same one that was in his family, which he gave to his wife – but he still manages to remain in denial that Lady de Winter and his wife could be the same person.

Chapter 36

Chapter 36 Summary

Rebuffed, as she thinks, by de Wardes, Lady de Winter turns to d'Artagnan, and he agrees to meet her despite his promise to Athos. He convinces himself he goes because she will be suspicious of him if he doesn't. As before, he professes his love for he, and she asks him to prove it by avenging her against de Wardes. He promises to do so, and is torn by his realization that she is a monster, and the fact that he is captivated by her regardless. They agree that he will take care of de Wardes the next day, and Lady de Winter commands him to come back at 11:00 that evening to finalise their plans.

Chapter 36 Analysis

It can only be d'Artagnan's youth that allows him to be so mesmerized by Lady de Winter. He knows things about her that horrify him, and he tells himself he is only pretending to fall in with her plan to kill de Wardes, but he allows himself to be so captivated by her that even he realizes if de Wardes was in the same room at the moment he would certainly do as she asked. It's only when he is away from her that he is able to think rationally.

Chapter 37

Chapter 37 Summary

When D'Artagnan returns to Lady de Winter's chamber, she questions him about his plan to kill de Wardes. He does not really want to kill the man, and he tries to steer the conversation to her feelings for him, because some part of him thinks she might really care for him. With this thought in mind, he confesses that de Wardes was never in her chamber – it was himself masquerading as de Wardes. He (irrationally) expects a few tears and then forgiveness, but she is furious and strikes him, turning away. He has hold of her robe, and as she turns it reveals her shoulder which is marked by a fleur-de-lis. D'Artagnan is horrified, and she turns into a terrible creature now that she knows he has seen it and vows that since he knows her secret he must die. She grabs a dagger and goes for him but he keeps her at bay with his sword until he can maneuver out of her room and escape.

Chapter 37 Analysis

Lady de Winter seems to be the only one of Dumas' characters who is wholly evil, with no redeeming qualities other than her physical beauty. Even the cardinal is occasionally portrayed as merely working for what he sees as the good of France. His intentions may be misguided, but they are not as blatantly evil as Lady de Winter's.

Chapter 38

Chapter 38 Summary

D'Artagnan goes immediately to see Athos and tells him that the Lady de Winter has a fleur-de-lis on her shoulder. He describes Lady de Winter in detail to Athos, and Athos asks several questions about her appearance which d'Artagnan confirms. There is no doubt that Lady de Winter is the same woman Athos had married and thought he had murdered. D'Artagnan gives the sapphire ring to Athos, since it's his family's heirloom, but Athos doesn't want it, since Lady de Winter has been in possession of it. D'Artagnan advises him to sell it, and use the money to provide his equipage. Athos agrees on the condition that D'Artagnan takes a portion of the proceeds for his own, as well.

Chapter 38 Analysis

When the others were worrying (a few chapters ago) about how they would provide for their equipage, Athos had vowed he wouldn't stir from his house in pursuit of funds – they would have to come to him. On one occasion, they almost did come to him in the shape of a bag of money that was in the possession of the Englishman Athos killed in the duel between d'Artagnan and Lord de Winter. At the time, however, Athos refused to accept English money on principle. (He apparently had never heard the maxim, "beggars can't be choosers.") Athos is very proud and very exacting in his principles. This kind of person finds it hard to accept the charity of others, or to take something from someone he has killed. Fortunately for Athos, Dumas is able to produce a ring from his own family, so that he has almost no excuse for refusing to accept it. He still tries to avoid taking it, but as d'Artagnan puts his foot down, Athos has no choice, and thereby finds himself able to purchase his military equipage.

Chapter 39

Chapter 39 Summary

The next time the four friends are reunited, it's at Athos' house, and Planchet comes in with two letters for d'Artagnan. One seems to be from Constance Bonancieux, telling him she will be passing along the Chaillot road that evening at six or seven o'clock, concealed in a carriage. She wants a glimpse of him, but says he must not show any recognition of her as she passes. Athos thinks it may be a trap, but d'Artagnan believes he recognizes the handwriting and it's genuine. The second letter is from the cardinal, and requests an interview with d'Artagnan at eight o'clock the same evening. Athos thinks this letter is just as bad as the first, but d'Artagnan has determined he will attend both appointments.

The first appointment is not a trap – the woman who passes is definitely Constance, and he is unable to restrain himself from galloping beside her a short distance until he remembers her warning. He is disturbed by the mystery of this odd meeting, and goes to keep his second appointment, which is to be with the cardinal.

Chapter 39 Analysis

After his behavior with Lady de Winter, it seems d'Artagnan doesn't deserve Constance. His devotion to her seems fickle, while hers to d'Artagnan is as her name implies. D'Artagnan also thoughtlessly forgets her injunction not to draw attention to her as she goes by, and he gallops after her and tries to peer in the window. Although he has matured in some ways since he first came to Paris, his youth still shows in many of his impulsive reactions, and his susceptibility to Lady de Winter's shallow physical beauty.

Chapter 40

Chapter 40 Summary

It's his first face-to-face meeting with the cardinal, and the cardinal impresses d'Artagnan by recounting everything he knows about what has happened to the young man since he left his home in Gascony. Finally the cardinal gets to the point: he offers d'Artagnan a position in his own guards. D'Artagnan knows it's dangerous to decline, but tries to do so in a way that doesn't insult the cardinal. The cardinal half cajoles, by offering a promotion, and half threatens by telling d'Artagnan that he has heard complaints against him. D'Artagnan still respectfully declines, and the cardinal reacts with anger that nevertheless seems tinged with respect. The next day the Musketeers and d'Artagnan's regiment leave on their military campaign – the siege of La Rochelle. As they march out of Paris, d'Artagnan doesn't notice that Lady de Winter points him out to two seedy-looking men who then follow the company.

Chapter 40 Analysis

The cardinal has seen a great deal of evidence of d'Artagnan's courage and skill, not only in the results of the skirmishes between the young man and his own guards, but also in his success in the affair of the queen's diamonds. He knows quite a lot about d'Artagnan's life, and is smart enough to want this man on his side. In this, he shows a higher intellect -- he is not twisted by hate, as Lady de Winter is. She wants her enemies crushed. The cardinal wants to turn his enemies into his friends.

Chapter 41

Chapter 41 Summary

D'Artagnan is temporarily separated from his friends, since their regiments are encamped in different locations. One afternoon he is walking outside camp alone when he is fired upon. He escapes safely into camp, but determines the attackers were either soldiers from La Rochelle, emissaries of the cardinal, or Lady de Winter's instruments of revenge. The next day, M. des Essarts tells him the king is looking for volunteers for a dangerous mission which will either kill or distinguish the volunteers. D'Artagnan thanks him, and immediately volunteers. He is to take four men with him, and several step forward. They accomplish their mission, one guard falls, one returns safely to camp, and two have disappeared. D'Artagnan will not return without the fallen man, but as he is retrieving him, he is suddenly shot at by the two soldiers who had disappeared. He pretends to fall, which draws them out so he can see them. One is soon shot by the enemy, and d'Artagnan seizes the other, wounding him with his sword before the man gives up. The wounded man then confirms that Lady de Winter has sent them. They have a letter from her which chides the men for allowing Madam Bonancieux to escape to a convent. The knowledge that she is safe disposes d'Artagnan to leniency. He spares the life of the second man, and brings him back to camp where d'Artagnan is received with relief by his regiment and is complimented by the king.

Chapter 41 Analysis

D'Artagnan seems to be both brave and courageous. These are two very distinct qualities that are often confused. Bravado implies a lack of fear in the face of danger, while courage implies the ability to push onward even though fear is present. D'Artagnan has shown both qualities throughout the story, and on this occasion there is no sign of fear. He welcomes the chance to distinguish himself in a deadly situation, because that will make his future if he comes through it – and he never betrays any doubt that he will.

Chapter 42

Chapter 42 Summary

Soon afterward, as d'Artagnan is wondering how his Musketeer friends are faring, he receives a letter from a man who says he has been hosting the three men and they have been enjoying his Anjou wine. The letter says they have asked their host to send d'Artagnan a dozen bottles of it so he can enjoy it as well. D'Artagnan invites two of his fellow guards to enjoy the wine with him, and asks Planchet to get everything prepared. Brisemont, the soldier who had tried to kill d'Artagnan, is helping Planchet and d'Artagnan allows him to taste the wine since he is still weak from his wound. Just then, the Musketeers turn up, as their regiment has returned with the king, and d'Artagnan tells them they are just in time to enjoy the wine they have sent him. They don't seem to know what he's talking about, and after a short exchange d'Artagnan understands that the wine may have been another attempt on his life by Lady de Winter. He rushes back to the mess room and finds Brisemont is writhing on the floor in agony.

Chapter 42 Analysis

Justice has been served on the soldier who tried to ambush d'Artagnan. It's, in fact, so complete that as he is dying the soldier accuses d'Artagnan of purposely poisoning him in revenge. D'Artagnan has not done so, of course – but Dumas could not risk leaving the traitorous soldier hanging around his hero. At some point later in the story Brisemont might easily have been persuaded by Lady de Winter to make another attempt on d'Artagnan's life, as he seems the mercenary sort.

Chapter 43

Chapter 43 Summary

One evening during the siege, the Musketeers have been given a pass to leave the camp, but d'Artagnan is in the trenches and cannot accompany them. They pass the evening in the Red Dove-Cot Tavern, and are on their way back to camp when they meet a cloaked man, who demands to know who they are. When they realize it's actually the cardinal, they give their names and are asked to retrace their steps to the tavern, accompanying the cardinal for his protection. They obey, following him to the tavern where he tells the landlord to find a comfortable room for them to remain in until he has finished his business and is ready to return to camp.

Chapter 43 Analysis

The cardinal is commanding the campaign, which is ultimately a religious one, so the Musketeers are right to obey him. The cardinal recognizes their names and knows of the clashes they have had with his guards, but as these skirmishes are typical between his men and the Musketeers, he doesn't hold it against them. Instead, he has respect for their ability and is likely to be glad he has their protection on the way to what is evidently a secret meeting at the tavern. These secret meetings are also typical of the cardinal during such a campaign, because he would be gathering intelligence from his many emissaries. For this reason, the Musketeers would not think it odd that he would be going well-cloaked to a late-night meeting at a tavern.

Chapter 44

Chapter 44 Summary

The room where the landlord has placed the Musketeers happens to be in the process of having its stove updated. The old stove is still there, and is disconnected from its funnel, which disappears into the wall. Athos is pacing the room, and eventually becomes conscious of the fact that each time he passes the open end of the funnel, he can hear conversation from the room above. He begins to listen, and hears the cardinal refer to his companion as "My Lady." When he hears the woman's voice, he is startled. He beckons the other Musketeers to shut the door and come listen with him. The cardinal instructs Lady de Winter to go to Buckingham, who is conspiring to come to the aid of the town against which the cardinal is holding siege. Lady de Winter is to threaten him with the cardinal's retaliation against the queen, and if that doesn't stop him, she is to manipulate a fanatic into assassinating Buckingham. She agrees to the plan, and asks in return that the cardinal will eliminate d'Artagnan for her. He agrees that if she brings proof that d'Artagnan has aided Buckingham, he will not hesitate to throw him in the Bastille for her. Athos beckons the others away from the stovepipe, as he has heard enough. He tells his friends to give the cardinal the excuse that he has gone ahead to clear the way, but they should remain as the cardinal has asked. He then sets off on the road that leads toward camp.

Chapter 44 Analysis

The cardinal isn't as antagonistic toward d'Artagnan and the Musketeers as Lady de Winter is – and in fact, he seems to have a great deal of respect for their courage and ability. He often remarks to himself that he must have them in his guards. However, he is willing to make payment for Lady de Winters' assistance in whatever way she likes as long as it doesn't cause him too much difficulty, so he will deliver d'Artagnan's head on a platter if that's what she asks.

Chapter 45

Chapter 45 Summary

Athos doesn't go far. He merely waits until the cardinal has left with Porthos and Aramis, and returns to the tavern, and ascends to Lady de Winter's room, entering and closing the door behind him. She recognizes him in horror and is livid when he reveals that he knows what she has been doing and also knows her plans regarding d'Artagnan. He forbids her to touch one hair of d'Artagnan's head. She declares however, that she will bring about his death, and that of Madame Bonancieux as well. Athos answers by taking possession of the carte blanche the cardinal has just given her, which absolves the bearer of any action they might commit, saying it's by Richeliu's order and for the good of the state. He then leaves her, saying he has withdrawn her teeth. He rides quickly to camp, arriving at the gate before the cardinal arrives with Porthos and Aramis. When the Musketeers are alone again, Porthos and Aramis commiserate about what they have overheard, especially worried about the carte blanche they heard him discussing. At that point, Athos produces it, and they send a message to d'Artagnan to come and see them as soon as he is able to leave the trenches.

Chapter 45 Analysis

Athos, who earlier in the story had little motivation for leadership, now seems to be awakening gradually and taking charge more. This may have something to do with the fact that he realizes he did not murder his wife after all, and that he still has a chance to avenge himself in a more legal and admirable fashion.

Chapter 46

Chapter 46 Summary

In order to have a private discussion with d'Artagnan that is not noticed by the cardinal or his men, the Musketeers loudly wager with some other dragoons that the four of them will go and breakfast in the enemy bastion that has been captured during the previous night by d'Artagnan's regiment. They wager they can remain there for an hour, without being taken again by the enemy. If they are successful, the dragoons will provide dinner for the eight of them – if they are unsuccessful, the Musketeers will provide dinner. This is agreed upon, and the four friends establish themselves in the bastion, where they can now be assured of complete privacy. The enemy's dead are the only inhabitants of the building, but Athos reminds the others that this will mean extra muskets and ammunition, so they will have all the resources they need to stave off any attacks. A large crowd of onlookers collects at the edge of the camp to enjoy the wager from a safe distance, and the four disappear into the bastion.

Chapter 46 Analysis

Again, Athos is taking charge and employing brilliant strategies. His talents seem to have been sleeping for many years, and are finally awakening. It's as though he is suddenly discovering a new strength and vitality within himself that he didn't know he had. He finally has a cause that is important to him: avenging himself against his former wife and at the same time protecting his protégé, d'Artagnan, from her devices.

Chapter 47

Chapter 47 Summary

With the help of the dead men in the bastion and their ammunition and muskets, the Musketeers and d'Artagnan have their breakfast and conversation in between bouts of fighting off the enemy. Athos tells d'Artagnan everything that has transpired since they saw him last, and they formulate a plan to foil Lady de Winter in her effort to assassinate Buckingham and bring about the deaths of Constance and d'Artagnan. They decide their best course of action is to send two messages: one to England to inform Lord de Winter of his sister-in-law's plans and of her past; and the other to the queen to tell her of the plots against Buckingham and Constance Bonancieux. It's determined that d'Artagnan will sell the ring given him by the queen in order to finance the journeys of their messengers. When their plan is resolved and they have fulfilled the wager by remaining in the bastion for over an hour, they return to camp amid much cheering from the onlookers. News of the escapade reaches the cardinal and M. de Treville, and the cardinal promotes d'Artagnan to the regiment of the Musketeers.

Chapter 47 Analysis

Athos has no particular love of the English, or of Buckingham, and he would not take the trouble to warn the duke except for d'Artagnan's insistence. D'Artagnan, in love himself, has pity for the love of the queen for Buckingham and wants to help protect the object of her devotion, just as she has helped protect the object of his devotion, Constance Bonancieux. Thanks in some part to Athos, the escapade at the bastion wins d'Artagnan his lifelong dream – a place in the Musketeers. While it would have been more fulfilling to have received the recommendation from the king rather than the cardinal, d'Artagnan doesn't question the source as long as he has his wish.

Chapter 48

Chapter 48 Summary

The messages are written – Bazin, Aramis' servant takes the message that goes to the queen, and Planchet takes the message to Lord de Winter. Lord de Winter's message explains that his sister-in-law has no real claim as his relation, since she was already married when she married his brother. It also reveals that she has tried twice to have her brother-in-law killed for his inheritance; and says she will probably make a third attempt upon reaching England. Finally, the letter warns of the seriousness of her intentions by making reference to the criminal brand on the lady's shoulder.

The Musketeers wait with bated breath until Bazin and Planchet each finally return and report the success of their missions.

Chapter 48 Analysis

Lady de Winter has sworn that anyone who knows the secret of her brand must die – which is why she so badly wants to eliminate d'Artagnan. However, the more people who share the knowledge, the better – she can only eliminate so many enemies before it begins to catch up with her. Lord de Winter is in a position to make her past crimes very well known, and as he is personally threatened by her, he is the best person to inform of her plans. He can be depended upon to warn Buckingham of the plot, and the Musketeers will not be caught in the treason of communicating with Buckingham in case their letter should be intercepted.

Chapter 49

Chapter 49 Summary

Lady de Winter arrives in England, and her boat is intercepted by a small coast-guard cutter. One officer comes on board her boat, and converses with its captain. On the pretext that she is a stranger and is subject to a routine policy of being taken to a particular hotel to be questioned by the government before being released, the officer has her belongings transferred to the cutter, and invites her to board as well. Reluctantly, she submits to the process, assuming it to be usual policy in time of war. When they arrive at shore, she is escorted to a carriage, which eventually conveys her to a castle, where there is a small chamber prepared for her. She realizes she is going to be a prisoner in this room, and is astonished when her brother-in-law turns out to be her captor.

Chapter 49 Analysis

Lord de Winter now understands to a certain extent the depth of his sister-in-law's evil, and seems to have taken careful precautions with her. Lady de Winter is at a disadvantage however, because she doesn't yet know that her brother-in-law is in possession of certain facts, and she thinks she is still on the same footing with him as she was when he left France.

Chapter 50

Chapter 50 Summary

At first Lady de Winter pretends she has come to England to visit him in the interest of familial concern, but the more Lord de Winter speaks, the more she realizes he knows all about her, and she stops pretending. He promises her that within two or three weeks she will be deported to one of England's southern colonies, but in the meantime she will be looked after by his most trustworthy man, Mr. Felton, the officer she met on the cutter.

Chapter 50 Analysis

Our confidence in Mr. Felton is complete, as he has ignored all of her pleas and threats in the carriage on the way to the castle, remaining impassive to all her theatrics. We know that Lord de Winter must have taken the precaution of preparing this man to withstand his sister-in-law's wiles, and hopefully he has chosen his man well.

Chapter 51

Chapter 51 Summary

Back at the campaign, both sides are waiting for word from Buckingham. The besieged town of La Rochelle is waiting for word that Buckingham is coming as he had promised, to assist them with reinforcements; and the cardinal is waiting for word that he has been assassinated and is unable to come. One afternoon, the cardinal comes upon the Musketeers, and as he notices them first he advances quietly hoping to overhear them. Their servants are keeping guard however, and warn them, so they hastily put away a letter which he tries to question them about. They exchange implied threats, until the cardinal finally pretends to acquiesce in good humor, and he leaves, privately angry. The men go back to the letter, which is from Aramis' seamstress at Tours, and has news of Madame Bonancieux's location. She is at a convent in Bethune.

Chapter 51 Analysis

Aramis' contribution to the group is his seamstress "cousin" in Tours, who is wonderfully useful in passing information to and from the queen. In this instance, she relieves d'Artagnan by answering that Constance is safe and under the protection of the queen.

However, the good news is tempered by the knowledge that the Musketeers have greatly angered the cardinal by seeming to conspire and refusing to answer his questions.

Chapter 52

Chapter 52 Summary

Lady de Winter has plenty of time to sit and think, and she deduces that she has d'Artagnan to thank for having revealed all her secrets to Lord de Winter. When Felton comes in with her dinner, she pretends she has fainted, hoping to work on his sympathies and gradually win him over. It has no effect on the first try, but she hopes to eventually penetrate his reserve.

Chapter 52 Analysis

If Lady de Winter seemed like a poisonous spider before, she seems even more so now. She is imprisoned in a single room without a weapon of any kind, and yet she is still spinning a dangerous web that seems capable of catching something suitable for her to feed on.

Chapter 53

Chapter 53 Summary

The next day, by a combination of tears and feigning illness, she continues to play on what she begins to perceive as a tiny ray of softness in Felton. Later that day, when she picks up on the clues that he is a puritan, she pretends to share his religious conviction and styles herself as being persecuted unjustly by Lord de Winter. This at last has some effect, but Felton is still being cautious, and begins to listen and watch her closely. She knows this, however, and is careful always to maintain the part – loudly singing puritan songs and prayers she remembers hearing from some of her past servants and doing so in her most beautiful and pious voice.

Chapter 53 Analysis

Dumas hints that Lady de Winter has now found the chink in Felton's armour, and there can be no doubt she is going to achieve her aim of somehow making him help her. There is also no doubt that he will only end up becoming another of her victims, as well – there does not seem to be a shred of any real feeling in this character.

Chapter 54

Chapter 54 Summary

Lady de Winter continues her campaign to seduce Felton. When Lord de Winter visits, and she knows Felton is listening behind the door, she is careful never to say anything he could interpret as evil. Instead, she stirs up de Winter's anger using disdainful expressions so he will become exasperated and it will seem to Felton that de Winter becomes angry at her without a cause. When he does so, she prays loudly for God to forgive him, just as she herself does. These tactics eventually succeed in rousing Felton to the point that he begins to have private conversations with her when Lord de Winter is not around. She takes advantage of these to imply that de Winter and Buckingham are conspiring to destroy her, knowing that puritans have a great dislike of Buckingham and this will ensure Felton's sympathy toward her.

Chapter 54 Analysis

While Lord de Winter knows she is dangerous, he nevertheless underestimates her evil and overestimates Felton's strength against it.

Chapter 55

Chapter 55 Summary

When Felton enters her chamber the following day, Lady de Winter is pretending to hang herself. This agitates him and he is torn between the warnings of Lord de Winter, and his own changing opinion of the Lady. Lord de Winter is beginning to suspect she is working on Felton, and he tells Felton something of her past. Afterward, Felton is even more confused, and tells Lady de Winter that her brother-in-law has said some terrible things that imply she is either a demon, or Lord de Winter is a terrible liar and a monster. He says he will return later that evening to give her the opportunity to explain herself.

Chapter 55 Analysis

Felton's high morals and high standards should protect him from Lady de Winter's manipulation – but instead they give him sympathy and a belief in the goodness of women that actually handicap him. He can't believe that this beautiful and seemingly pious woman could be capable of the things Lord de Winter has accused her of plotting and concludes that it must be Lord de Winter who has the problem. It's easier for him to believe it of a man than of a woman, especially in a time when woman are assumed to be pure and gentle creatures without the violent passions of which men were capable.

Chapter 56

Chapter 56 Summary

While Lady de Winter is waiting for her evening appointment with Felton, she spends her time fabricating the tale she will relate to him. When he finally arrives he is treated to an intricate story in which Buckingham is a horrible villain who drugged and kidnapped her in an effort to seduce her. She paints herself as a pious puritan who resists him to the very end, in the face of his tactics which are more and more evil as her story continues. By the end of this first half of her story, she can tell by Felton's reaction that she has very nearly got him in the palm of her hand.

Chapter 56 Analysis

Lady de Winter knows exactly what will extract the most sympathy from Felton. He is a religious man, of a sort whose sect has experienced persecutions from the political powers of the day. He has strong morals and is a military officer which means he probably has a protective nature, especially toward helpless creatures and women. She knows her story needs to contain lots of helpless feminine elements combined with religious zealousness pitted against the unfeeling brute force of a political man of power with evil, ungodly intentions. Obligingly, she gives him all of those elements, and in fact it would have been surprising indeed if he hadn't succumbed.

Chapter 57

Chapter 57 Summary

Lady de Winter continues her story, saying that in the face of her continued resistance, Buckingham finally brings in the executioner and has her branded as a criminal. She then exposes her shoulder to Felton and shows him the brand. He is a little confused to see it's the brand of France, rather than that of England, but she explains that this was another ruse on Buckingham's part, so he wouldn't have to provide anyone with an explanation of which court the sentence had been issued. She tells Felton that Lord de Winter's brother saved her, married her and then was killed without revealing the truth to Lord de Winter, so that now her brother-in-law believes the lies Buckingham has told him. She can see the Felton has fallen for her story completely now, and to make sure of it, she pretends to make another attempt on her own life.

Chapter 57 Analysis

By now, Felton is so personally devastated by the fact that he seems to have been so duped by Lord de Winter, a man he had considered like a father – that he is exhibiting signs of intense mental distress. This makes him vulnerable to fanatically and blindly following her suggestions, and we begin to recognize in him the "fanatic" that the cardinal suggested Lady de Winter should assign the task of assassinating Buckingham.

Chapter 58

Chapter 58 Summary

Lord de Winter has figured out that Lady de Winter's attempts to corrupt Felton have been successful and he sends the man away on an errand, and he informs his prisoner of this fact. He then tells her that at noon the next day she will be deported, and that the ship's captain has orders to throw her into the sea if she speaks at all to anyone on board. He leaves her, and she is furious, but still hopes Felton might intervene. He does. In the night, she hears a tap at the window, and it's Felton, who has engineered her escape. They leave in a boat, and Felton tells her she will drop him at Portsmouth and he will avenge her honor by assassinating Buckingham, rejoining her later in France at the Convent of Bethune.

Chapter 58 Analysis

Dumas has trained us to believe Lady de Winter's evil is almost infallible, so we fully expect her to succeed in escaping to France, although we aren't entirely sure her success will extend to Buckingham's assassination. D'Artagnan has foiled her before, and we hope he may this time as well. However, if we know our world history, we recall that Buckingham was assassinated in Portsmouth by a discontented naval officer in 1628, and we have a suspicion that this is Dumas' interpretation of that event.

Chapter 59

Chapter 59 Summary

Felton arrives at Buckingham's house at the same time as another man, who is covered with dust and out of breath, and is asking to see the duke. He refuses to give his name to anyone but the Duke, so Felton gains precedence and is admitted first because he represents himself as a messenger from Lord de Winter. Felton insists he must speak to the duke alone, and after satisfying himself that Lady de Winter must have been telling him the truth about Buckingham, he stabs him with his knife just as a messenger enters announcing that a letter has come for the duke from France. Felton tries to escape, but as he leaves he meets Lord de Winter, who was coming to warn the duke but is moments too late. As the duke is dying, the letter from France is read to him – it's from the queen, and is a warning that an attempt will be made on his life, and contains assurances to the duke of the queen's affection. The queen's messenger adds the verbal message that the queen has always loved him. With the strength he has left, Buckingham commands that the servant will restore to the queen all the gifts she has given him, and adds to them the knife that has slain him, which Felton had dropped.

Chapter 59 Analysis

Dumas seems to have had quite a romantic streak, which should not go unappreciated. With his dying breath, Buckingham is thinking of Anne of Austria, and her assurances of her love reach him in time so that he hears them before he expires. Many modern authors wouldn't have such consideration for their readers, and might perhaps have Anne's letter arrive just a moment too late, or not at all. Constrained to some extent by historical events, however, Dumas is unable to alter the timing of Lord de Winter's warning so that Buckingham's life might be saved. Still, one does what one can.

Chapter 60

Chapter 60 Summary

King Louis gets a bit tired of the siege, decides to take a break by going to the fetes in Saint-Germain, and takes an escort of twenty Musketeers. Since M. de Treville knows d'Artagnan and his friends are anxious to go to Paris to see to the safety of Madame Bonancieux, he makes sure they are included among the escort. Once at Paris, the escort is given four days' leave of absence, and almost immediately, d'Artagnan sees the man of Meung in the street. He is unable to catch up to him, but retrieves a paper that has fallen out of the man's hat. In Lady de Winter's handwriting is written the name of a town: Armentières. They don't know what this means, but as they can do nothing at the moment, they leave at a gallop for Bethune.

Chapter 60 Analysis

It's becoming evident that d'Artagnan is not going to figure out who the man of Meung is until the end of the story. Possibly by then he will have forgotten the original dispute, just as Rochefort seems to have forgotten, since he doesn't seem to be much perturbed at all whenever he encounters d'Artagnan.

Chapter 61

Chapter 61 Summary

Lady de Winter is also on the way to the convent at Bethune, but she doesn't know Madame Bonancieux is there. She is going because it's where the cardinal has asked her to meet him after her mission is accomplished, and she has sent him a note informing him of its successful conclusion. Once at the convent, however, she discovers her great luck and immediately sets out to gain Constance's trust in her usual deceitful fashion, pretending she is a good friend of d'Artagnan and the Musketeers. Constance is immediately trustful of her, and confides to her that d'Artagnan is on his way to remove her from the convent, and she will see him soon. Just then, a horseman arrives at the convent but it'sn't d'Artagnan. It's the Count de Rochefort (d'Artagnan's man of Meung), to see Lady de Winter.

Chapter 61 Analysis

It's difficult to tell whether it's a complete coincidence that Lady de Winter has been sent by the cardinal to the convent at Bethune. Lady de Winter is certainly ignorant that Madame Bonancieux is there, but she has already made it plain to the cardinal that

Chapter 62

Chapter 62 Summary

Lady de Winter tells Rochefort that Buckingham has been assassinated, and also informs him that Madame Bonancieux is right there in the same convent with them. She then shares the news that d'Artagnan and his friends are on their way, and complains that they would already be in the Bastille if the cardinal had not developed an inexplicable weakness toward them. Rochefort tells Lady de Winter that the cardinal isn't coming, but has sent a message that she is to give Rochefort any messages she wants him to take, and then she is to remain where she is and await further instructions. Lady de Winter tells the man of Meung that she will probably have to leave the convent, since her enemies are coming, but she will wait for him in the town of Armentieres. As he leaves her, she asks him to give her compliments to the cardinal, and Rochefort answers that she should give his compliments to Satan.

Chapter 62 Analysis

Lady de Winter can hardly believe her own good fortune – to find Madame Bonancieux under her nose when she hasn't even gone to the effort to maneuver the circumstances – it's almost too good to be true. She has had a run of good luck ever since she was able to convince her jailer not only to be her emancipator, but also to take on the role of the fanatic assassin she would have had to search out. And now she happens into the convent where one of her two next targets is hiding.

It is interesting that Rochefort, who is d'Artagnan's man of Meung, plainly acknowledges that he considers Lady de Winter to be evil personified. He may have his faults as the cardinal's emissary – but even to him – Lady de Winter is Satan's emissary. It is doubtful that Rochefort or the cardinal has any idea what Lady de Winter is really capable of.

Chapter 63

Chapter 63 Summary

Madame Bonancieux returns and Lady de Winter convinces her that she has just received information from Rochefort, who she pretends is her brother, that the message Constance has received from d'Artagnan is a fake. It's really the cardinal who is coming to kidnap her. Constance believes her and is alarmed – but Lady de Winter tells her she herself will help Constance escape in the carriage that Rochefort will send in a couple of hours. In the meantime, they sit down to a private dinner in Lady de Winter's room, although Constance has been too nervous to eat or drink much by the time the carriage comes. She is frozen in terror as she hears the arrival of d'Artagnan and his friends, because she believes them to be the cardinal and his men, and Lady de Winter is unable to coax her out to the carriage. She can see she won't have time to abduct Madame Bonancieux as she had intended, so she poisons Constance's wine. She entices her to drink, saying it will give her strength to make the journey, and then Lady de Winter escapes from the room before d'Artagnan and his friends find their way in. By the time they realize Constance is poisoned, and that Lady de Winter is responsible, Constance is dying in d'Artagnan's arms. Just then, Lord de Winter bursts in to warn everyone – once again arriving too late.

Chapter 63 Analysis

Dumas must have noticed (as most of us have) that there are some people who are five minutes late everywhere they go – no matter how close they live to their destination, or how much time they have to prepare. Evidently, Lord de Winter is one of these people. Let that be a lesson to all of us – sometimes five minutes can make all the difference!

We want to be sorry for d'Artagnan for losing Constance at this point, and in some ways we are – but his ability to be sidetracked by Lady de Winter after Madam Bonanceiux's abduction renders us a little skeptical that he can really be affected any more deeply by this latest loss of her. In a way, we wonder if Dumas' use of the name "Constance" is almost ironic. It is hardly a term that can be used to describe d'Artagnan's feelings for her.

Chapter 64

Chapter 64 Summary

Athos sends the four valets to Armentières, the location written on the paper Count Rochefort had dropped, to see what they could discover about Lady de Winter's whereabouts. In the meantime, Athos goes on his own errand, to find a particular man. He asks directions several times, finds the man, and after a short discussion, leaves again. He returns to his companions, and the five men (including Lord de Winter) attend Constance's funeral at the convent. In the meantime, the valets have located Lady de Winter, and are guarding all the exits of her hotel. That evening, Athos orders the horses readied and tells his friends it's time to go after Lady de Winter. He doesn't explain a sixth man in a red cloak, who has turned up to accompany them.

Chapter 64 Analysis

In some ways, of all the men, Athos is turning out to be the most admirable. While d'Artagnan is courageous, smart, and brave, his feelings do not seem to run as deep as those of his more mature friend. At first we would not have noticed these traits in Athos, since his wounds from his first wife gave his life a bitter edge that prevented his real characteristics from coming to the surface. But even that is a symptom of how deeply the affair of his first wife affected him. Now that he has been able to make reparations for the way he handled his anger in his youth, Athos is coming into his own. Unlike d'Artagnan's love, which seems easily swayed by surface beauty, Athos' love and loyalty means more because has learned that things like love, loyalty and character are expressed in ways that are more substantial. All of the actions Athos takes against Lady de Winter now are much more important than retribution. They are a way of cleansing himself. He wants to pursue justice in the right way this time, since he pursued only vengeance in his youth and rather than cleansing him it poisoned him. This time, he isn't going to let her poison him.

Chapter 65

Chapter 65 Summary

When the six men arrive at Armentières, they are told by the valets that Lady de Winter has left the hotel, and is some distance away in a house by the river. When they arrive at the house, they see her inside alone, and Athos bursts through the window. She tries to go out through the door, but d'Artagnan is there. D'Artagnan draws his pistol, but Athos restrains him, saying it's important that she be judged and not assassinated. One by one the men lay her crimes before her, including Lord de Winter who accuses her of assassinating Buckingham. This is news to the other men, as they had not yet heard of this development. Athos then reveals to everyone the secrets that only d'Artagnan has known – that of his marriage to her and her deceit, and the brand on her shoulder. At this, Lady de Winter defies them to find the man who executed the brand. Athos, however, is ready for her, and allows the man in the red cloak to come forward. The man reveals that he is the executioner who branded her, for seducing his brother, who was a priest, and enticing him to steal the holy vessels from the church. His brother was branded for his part in the crimes, but she escaped, although he eventually located her and branded her as well. The executioner's brother then escaped from prison, and the two criminals settled in the town where Athos later met and married her. Meanwhile, the executioner was required to remain in prison in his brother's place until the required time was served. When his brother discovered this, he gave himself up, and then hung himself.

After all her crimes have been enumerated, the men read her sentence, which is death.

Chapter 65 Analysis

Apparently, "My Lady" (referred to in some translations as "Milady") has been of the same character from a very young age, as she was only in her teens when she seduced the young curate and induced him to steal from the church. She has no sense of right or wrong – in every dealing with other people, she evaluates how she must approach them in order to manipulate the result she wants, without considering what is right, noble or appropriate. This is the hallmark of a psychopath, in modern terminology.

Chapter 66

Chapter 66 Summary

They take her to the river, and the executioner binds her hands and feet. Lady de Winter begins to struggle and protest, and d'Artagnan finds it hard to watch. As soon as she realizes that, she calls out to him pretending she has loved him. He takes a step toward her but Athos intervenes reminding him of the kind of woman they are dealing with. Athos calls on the executioner to do his duty, as each man steps forward and gives their personal pardon before her execution. Then the executioner takes her across the river in a boat and decapitates her, then dumps her body in the deepest part of the river on the way back across.

Chapter 66 Analysis

The executioner is the only one with the legal power to execute the woman without being branded a murderer, so he is the one who binds her and takes any action that could be construed as murder if anyone else were to perform it. Athos points out that although the woman has a child by her marriage to Lord de Winter's brother, she has never mentioned him, and does not even now when she is about to die. To the men, this is the final proof of the depths of her evil. In Dumas' time even the worst of women were assumed to have a natural instinct for motherhood. For this to be missing meant they were in the presence of the ultimate evil.

Chapter 67

Chapter 67 Summary

By now their leave is up, and the Musketeers return to accompany the king back to camp. On the way, one evening in a tavern, d'Artagnan sees the man of Meung again, who does not elude him this time. Instead, he introduces himself as the chevalier de Rochefort, the cardinal's master of the horse, and he is there to arrest d'Artagnan. His friends intervene and tell Rochefort the four of them are on their way to the cardinal, and they will see he gets there. When they arrive at the cardinal's quarters, Athos, Porthos and Aramis make it clear that if d'Artagnan doesn't reappear in a reasonable time, they will come to find him. The cardinal is disturbed but doesn't respond. When they are alone he tells d'Artagnan he has been arrested on charges of corresponding with enemies of France, and of trying to make his general's plans miscarry. D'Artagnan makes it plain that he knows his accuser is a woman who is herself a criminal, and astonishes the cardinal by enumerating Lady de Winter's crimes. The cardinal was not aware of these details of Lady de Winter's past, and promises she will be punished if these things are true. D'Artagnan tells him this will not be necessary as she has already been punished and is now dead. The cardinal tells him he will be tried and condemned for murder, at which point d'Artagnan produces the carte blanche, signed by the cardinal himself, pardoning the bearer for any crime he may have committed in the execution of his duty. After some reflection, the cardinal tears up the paper and writes out another, handing it to d'Artagnan, who is sure it must be his condemnation to death. Instead, he finds it is his promotion – it's the commission of a lieutenant in the musketeers.

Chapter 67 Analysis

If the carte blanche had not worked, presumably d'Artagnan could have explained the role of the executioner in Lady de Winter's death – he was not personally responsible for her death, although he doesn't take the time to explain this to the cardinal. But apparently the cardinal is not used to listening to detailed explanations in any case.

While d'Artagnan had already become a musketeer, now he receives an officer's commission in the regiment, which is quite an honor for a penniless Gascon. Usually in those days an officer's commission was bought and paid for by families of rank for their second and third sons, who were not inheriting the family titles. Altogether, d'Artagnan's exceptional qualities of courage, persistence and honour have taken him places that he would never have gone without them.

Epilogue

Epilogue Summary

The story ends with the information that D'Artagnan took his promotion, Porthos quitted the service and married Madame Coquenard. Aramis entered a monastery, and Athos remained a musketeer under d'Artagnan's command for five years, at which time he also left the service. D'Artagnan fought Rochefort three times until they gave up and became friends.

Epilogue Analysis

An epilogue seems almost unnecessary since there are two other books in the trilogy which follow this one, which would seem to present ample opportunity to follow up. However, since one hears very little of the additional stories, with the exception of The Man in the Iron Mask, which is only the final third of the last story, perhaps it's just as well we have been given a glimpse of the future. For those who want to know more, however, there are many more adventures to be had from d'Artagnan and his friends.

Characters

Queen Anne

Queen Anne is married to King Louis XIII. She is originally from Spain, and is unhappy and unsettled as queen of France. She is still loyal to her Spanish origins, but wants to feel secure as queen; and she is in love with an Englishman, the Duke of Buckingham. The King knows she doesn't love him and he doesn't trust her. The Cardinal hates her.

Aramis

Aramis is handsome to the point of being almost beautiful. He claims that he's only in the Musketeers for a short term and that soon he will become a priest, his true calling, but he makes no attempt to leave the Musketeers' ranks. He is described as having "a demure and innocent expression, dark, gentle eyes and downy pink cheeks like an autumn peach." He spoke very little and when he spoke he drawled. Despite his effete mannerisms, he is a skilled fighter, and has great inner strength; when he is wounded, he says little, but keeps on fighting until he collapses. He never uses injury as an excuse to escape his duty, or a good fight. He has a mistress, Madame de Chevreuse, but he is private about his personal life and does not usually discuss her, or her identity, with the other Musketeers.

Athos

Athos is the leader of the Musketeers, partly because he is older than the others, but also because he is highly intelligent and brave and is a phenomenal fighter. He carries a secret sorrow and is usually melancholy. Later in the book he reveals that he was born a noble lord and once fell in love with a beautiful girl of sixteen, who seemed pure and devoted, who had moved to the area with her brother, a priest. Deeply in love, Athos flouted tradition, which said that noble men should only marry noble women, and married the girl. Only after the marriage did he discover that she was branded with a fleur-de-lis on one shoulder□the mark of a thief. She had stolen a gold communion plate from a church. The "brother" was her first lover and her accomplice; they had conspired to marry her to Athos to get Athos's money. When Athos discovered that his beautiful love had betrayed him, he used his title as ruler and justice of the region to tie her hands behind her back and hang her from a tree until she apparently died. He tells d'Artagnan, "That cured me for ever of women, of enchanting creatures lovely as the dawn, and with the souls of poets. God grant you the same experience!" This cynicism masks a bitter pain and loneliness, which has marked Athos for life.

Bazin

Bazin is Aramis's personal servant. He is eager for Aramis to quit being a Musketeer and enter the Church.

Madame Bonacieux

Madame Bonacieux is the wife of Monsieur Bonacieux. She is lady-in-waiting to Queen Anne and is completely loyal to her. She's also beautiful and not above flirting behind her husband's back, and when d'Artagnan falls in love with her, he's drawn into a web of intrigue involving the King, the Queen, Cardinal Richelieu, Milady, and other noble and dangerous players.

Monsieur Bonacieux

Monsieur Bonacieux is d'Artagnan's landlord and the husband of Madame Bonacieux. He is weak willed and cowardly. When his wife is kidnapped, he first goes to d'Artagnan for help in finding her but then turns against his wife after the Cardinal flatters and threatens him. After this, he is loyal to the Cardinal.

Duke of Buckingham

The Duke of Buckingham, whose real name is George Villiers, is hopelessly in love with Queen Anne and will do anything to see her and to make her happy. Back in England, he is Minister of War for King Charles I, a position that makes it necessary for him to travel to France on diplomatic missions. During these trips, he always tries to see the Queen or send her loving messages. He is a true nobleman and is good-looking, rich, powerful, loyal, and brave.

d'Artagnan

D'Artagnan is the hero of the novel. He is a young man from a noble but impoverished family, who leaves his home province of Gascony and goes to Paris, hoping to make his fortune. He is ambitious, proud, brave, clever, and insightful, but he is also impetuous and, because of his rural upbringing, not very wise about the ways of the world. Soon after he arrives in Paris, he inadvertently offends Athos, Porthos, and Aramis, three of the King's Musketeers and ends up scheduled to fight three duels, one after the other, against these master swordsmen. The fight is interrupted by the arrival of Cardinal Richelieu's guards, and in the ensuing battle against them, d'Artagnan impresses the Musketeers so much that they all become friends, showing how d'Artagnan's personal charm, quick thinking, and gentlemanly conduct affect those around him. He also has a zest for love and romance, and he generally follows the chivalrous ideals of his class,

although like many energetic young men, he sometimes tosses these ideals aside when he sees a pretty face.

Madame d'Artagnan

D'Artagnan's mother is filled with sorrow when he leaves home. Unlike her husband, who feels the same way but hides it, she cries openly. She gives him a parting gift of the recipe for a miraculous herbal salve that will heal all wounds, except heart wounds.

Monsieur d'Artagnan

Monsieur d'Artagnan, d'Artagnan's father, is an impoverished nobleman who clings to courtly ideals despite his financial ruin. He has taught sword fighting to d'Artagnan, a skill that will hold him in good stead. He is loyal to friends and family, aware of both the rights and responsibilities of his rank, and a staunch upholder of tradition. When d'Artagnan leaves home, he tells him, "Be honest and above board with everyone. Always remember your rank and carry on the tradition of good behaviour which your family has been true to for the past five hundred years." He also tells him, "Stand no nonsense from anyone but the King and the Cardinal. Remember, nowadays it's only by personal courage that a man can get by in the world," and he warns him to take opportunity without thinking and to take risks, live adventurously, and never shy from danger. All of these are ideals that d'Artagnan carries within him, and he lives them throughout the book.

Madame de Chevreuse

Madame de Chevreuse is Aramis's mistress. Because she is a friend of the Queen, the King sends her out of Paris because the Cardinal convinces him that she is helping the Queen conspire against the King.

Madame de Coquenard

Madame de Coquenard is married to a rich attorney, but she is Porthos's mistress. She adores him, and his visits are the high point of her life.

Comte de Rochefort

The Comte, the Cardinal's personal spy, is called "The Man from Meung" through most of the book because no one knows who he really is. He is d'Artagnan's personal nemesis and a mysterious figure who always appears when things are going wrong.

Monsieur de Treville

Monsieur de Treville is tough, strong, intelligent, and shrewd. He is the captain of the King's Musketeers. He is originally from the same province as d'Artagnan, and he and d'Artagnan's father are old friends. When de Treville was a child, he was a playmate of King Louis XIII, and like all children, they often wrestled and fought; often, de Treville gave the King a royal trouncing, leading the King to respect him for the rest of his life. This early exposure to royalty opened doors for him, but he has not earned his position only through royal favor. As d'Artagnan's father tells d'Artagnan, "Between this King's accession to power and the present day he's fought at least a hundred other duels, perhaps more. He's defied edicts, ordinance and decrees and see where he's got to! He's head of . . . a band of dare-devil heros who terrify the Cardinal, the great Cardinal, and it takes a good deal to frighten him." As his position shows, he is utterly loyal to the King.

Comte de Wardes

Comte de Wardes is loyal to the Cardinal and is one of his spies. Lady de Winter is in love with him.

Lady de Winter

Called "Milady" by many of the characters, she is beautiful, with a heart as evil as her face is lovely. She is sly, cunning, and loyal to Cardinal Richelieu, and she and the Musketeers are sworn enemies. She has a mysterious past; she claims to be from England but speaks French perfectly. (How did she become connected with the Cardinal?) And when d'Artagnan gets involved in a scuffle with her and tears her nightdress, he finds that she has a fleur-de-lis branded on her left shoulder. (What horrible crime did she commit to earn it?) Ultimately, the reader finds that she is the same woman who once married Athos. D'Artagnan is fascinated with her; she is unutterably beautiful, but when she thinks no one is watching, he sees her face change to that of a murdering animal.

Lord de Winter

Lord de Winter is Lady de Winter's brotherin- law. He is fastidious about his personal appearance and doesn't like to become involved in action, but later in the book, he becomes involved in Lady de Winter's intrigues.

John Felton

John Felton is an officer in the British navy. He is the ward of Lord de Winter and is a Protestant.

Grimaud

Grimaud is Athos's servant. Athos has taught him hand signals so he can communicate without speaking, and he is totally silent.

Kitty

Kitty is Lady de Winter's personal maid. She falls in love with d'Artagnan and, hoping to please him, allows him access to Lady de Winter's private chambers. She is sweet but easily led and becomes jealous when d'Artagnan seems more interested in Lady de Winter than in her.

King Louis XIII

King Louis XIII is weak, insecure, easily confused and led astray, and petty. He is manipulated by his various advisors, particularly Cardinal Richelieu, who use his petty obsessions against him; for example, the Cardinal uses his insecurity about his wife's affection for him to set a trap for the Queen. The King is oblivious of this and thinks those who manipulate him most are those who are most loyal.

The Man from Meung

See Comte de Rochefort

Milady

See Lady de Winter

Mousqueton

Mousqueton is Porthos's personal servant. He is similar to Porthos in that he has a taste for luxury.

Planchet

Planchet is d'Artagnan's personal servant. He is loyal, smart, and brave, and he will follow d'Artagnan anywhere.

Porthos

Porthos is loud and vain, and he likes to brag and to appear wealthier than he is. For example, he wears a gold-embroidered sash, but the gold is only where people can see it; where the sash can't be seen, under his cloak, it is plain. However, these flaws of vanity and self-importance are largely superficial; when it counts, he's brave and loyal, always ready to fight to the death for his honor or his friends' safety. He is the lover of Madame Coquenard, who is married to a rich attorney.

Cardinal Richelieu

Cardinal Richelieu, not the King, is the strongest man in the Kingdom and the true leader of France. He is egotistical, controlling, manipulative, and sly, but he understands people and their motives and thus is extremely effective at getting things done; if he were not evil, he would be a phenomenal leader. Although he hates the King and is secretly his rival, he publicly promotes loyalty to the King and privately acts as his advisor because he knows that his power and position are based on those of the King. Although he is a Cardinal, a high religious office, he is the least devout person in the book and the most evil; his character thus provides a commentary on Dumas's views of the corrupt nature of the Catholic Church during this period.

Themes

The Quest

The book begins with a quest: young d'Artagnan sets out for Paris to seek his fortune. Like many heroes of quests, he is of noble birth but humble circumstance and must rely on his own wits and talent to rise to the level of his destiny. He yearns to be a Musketeer but must first prove himself worthy of the position. Aided by his father's friend, de Treville, he becomes a guard, and because of his curiosity, initiative, and pride, he is drawn into the center of a web of intrigue that eventually allows him to prove his worth and gain success as a Musketeer.

The book also contains another quest: the Musketeers join forces to protect the honor of the Queen, to help her conceal her affair with Buckingham, and to help her to arrange meetings with him. This may seem like a relatively trivial matter to most modern readers when compared to the urgencies of the political situation of the time, but according to the code of chivalry and honor that the Musketeers be- lieve in, fostering true love is of the highest importance.

Love

All of the Musketeers view love as an exalted state and revere chivalry and honor. For example, their main mission in the book is to help Queen Anne in her affair with the Duke of Buckingham because they recognize that she and Buckingham share true love. D'Artagnan falls in love with Madame Bonacieux and gets into any number of dangerous situations when he tries to protect her from their mutual enemies. Athos, who once loved a woman, was forever scarred when she turned out to be a thief and liar who betrayed him.

Amorality

Despite their interest in true love, the characters are curiously amoral. If a woman is married, this is no obstacle to true love; they will happily have an affair with her if she's attractive enough. Although they defend each other to the death, they cheerfully kill any and all enemies and never give the dead another thought. And although they value honor and integrity, this does not extend to their enemies; d'Artagnan would defend Madame Bonacieux with his life, but he deceives Milady into making love with him in order to get revenge on her and lies to her maid Kitty, telling her he loves her to get information and help in his campaign against Milady.

Style

Complicated Story Line

The Three Musketeers, like other romances originally published in serial form, does not have the type of plot structure that modern readers recognize and approve of. There is no slow development of events, no building to a major climax. Instead, the action starts explosively and then simply continues, with new threads of action being woven in as the novel moves along. At some points, readers may feel that the book isn't getting anywhere but soon forget this as they become caught up in the action again. Although the chapters often end on "cliffhanger" notes, the plot is so complicated, with so many characters and events, that the overall story line of the book is difficult to sum up or describe.

Vivid Characters

Dumas's characters are vividly drawn and easily recognizable: d'Artagnan, with his youthful optimism, country-bumpkin naivete, and belief in his own self-worth; Athos, who is melancholy and carries a secret sorrow; Porthos, who is loud, grandiose, and flamboyant; and Aramis, who is somewhat effeminate and who longs to enter the Church. They are not "deep" characters, and the reader learns little about their inner feelings and motivations and even less of their pasts, but they are drawn vividly enough to become memorable people who remain in readers' minds and engage their interest.

Most of the supporting cast are "stock" characters who do not change or grow over the course of the novel: the evil Cardinal, the bumbling King, the beautiful Madame Bonacieux. These simple characters are a typical feature of the novels of Dumas's time.

Swashbuckling Action

Although Athos, Porthos, Aramis, and d'Artagnan are all very different characters, they have one thing in common: they are men of action who don't spend a lot of time considering the deeper meaning of life or of their actions. If someone is an enemy, they kill him and don't waste time wondering if they did the right thing or if his wife and children will grieve. They're ruthless with their swords, moving from one fight to the next with dispatch and energy. In the same way, if a woman is pretty, they flirt with her, whether she's married or not, and d'Artagnan is not above pretending to love a woman if she has valuable information he can use. They are careless about money, spending it if they have it and never worrying about tomorrow if they don't. Loyal to the death to each other, they have no compunctions about lying to others if the others are enemies or if it will get them what they need.

In all these traits, they are classic action heroes, similar to heroes of modern films, comic books, and novels. Dumas's style emphasizes action, and from his point of view, it had better be fast and entertaining.

Short, Fast-Moving Lines

La Presse, the newspaper in which the novel first appeared in serial form, paid authors by the line, so that a one-word line of dialogue, such as "Yes" paid as much as a whole sentence. Dumas invented the character of Grimaud, a servant, who had the habit of answering questions with a single word. This allowed Dumas to make a great deal of money without much work, until the paper changed the rule so that a "line" had to cover at least half the column. Dumas promptly killed off Grimaud, and according to Andre Maurois in *The Titans: A Three-Generation Biography of the Dumas*, told a friend who asked why, "I only invented him as a fill-up. He's no good to me now." Although Grimaud became a totally silent character in the novel version, Dumas's technique of using short, quick stretches of rapid repartee remained so that his work seems remarkably modern. He doesn't waste time or space on "he said" or "she said," when it isn't necessary, but simply presents the dialogue and trusts the reader to figure out who is speaking, as in the following excerpt:

They've been seeing each other.
Who? asked the Cardinal.
She and he.
The Queen and the Duke?
Yes.
Where?
At the Louvre.
You're sure of that?
Positive.
Who told you?
Madame de Lannoy, who's absolutely trustworthy.

In *World and I*, Cynthia Grenier remarked, "Dumas's special talents were ahead of their time. His gift for creating dialogue and character and action plus his way of working with collaborators would have made him ideally suited for working for motion pictures."

Historical Context

Many of the characters who appear in *The Three Musketeers* were real people who are depicted reasonably accurately in the novel, although Dumas did take fictional liberties with their actions. King Louis XIII, Anne of Austria, and Cardinal Richelieu were important people during the period of the novel. Monsieur de Treville and Richelieu really were enemies—in fact, in 1642, de Treville was part of a plot to assassinate the Cardinal. Richelieu did have his own personal company of guards, who did have a fierce rivalry with the Musketeers. The tension between France and England, and the ensuing war in which the Guards and Musketeers fought, was an historical fact.

Louis XIII (1601-1643) ruled France from 1610 until his death, but the real ruler for much of that time was his domineering mother, Marie de' Medici. In 1617, he arranged the assassination of her minister, Concino Concini, forcing her into retirement. In 1622, he and she were reconciled, however, and in 1624, he allowed her protégé, Cardinal Richelieu, to run the government as chief minister. When his mother urged him to remove Richelieu from power in 1630, Louis, who believed Richelieu was on his side, sent his mother into exile instead. As in Dumas's book, Louis was melancholy and not very bright when it came to dealing with people, and he was happy to have the Cardinal do the work of ruling for him.

Richelieu strengthened the authority of the king and centralized government control. He also lessened the power of the nobility in favor of the king and suppressed the Huguenots, a Protestant faction, who were humbled by the siege of La Rochelle, which is described (albeit unrealistically) in the book.

D'Artagnan's character was based on Charles de Batz-Castelmore, who was from Gascony and had the title Sieur d'Artagnan through his mother's family. He left his home province in 1640 (the novel has him leaving home in 1625). He served as a Musketeer under Cardinal Mazarin and King Louis XIV (not, as in the book, their predecessors Cardinal Richelieu and King Louis XIII) and had a distinguished career. He died in 1673 while fighting at the siege of Maestricht.

In addition, Porthos, Aramis, and Athos were based on real people. Porthos was really Isaac de Porthos, who was a member of Captain des Essart's company of the King's Guards until 1643. After 1643, he served as a Musketeer with d'Artagnan. Aramis's character was based on Henry d'Aramitz, who was a relative of Monsieur de Treville, and became a Musketeer in 1640. Athos was really Seigner d'Athos et d'Auteville and was also a relative of de Treville's. He was a Musketeer and died in 1643, apparently as the result of a duel.

The main exception to Dumas's use of real people as bases for his characters is "Milady," or Lady de Winter. She was a creation of Dumas's, and it is interesting that she dominates the second half of the book, more than any of the "real" historical characters do.

Critical Overview

Dumas has been criticized largely because of his use of collaborators to produce his fiction and because his books have more action than emotional depth. Authors of his day were jealous of his phenomenal success; as Andre Maurois wrote in *The Titans: A Three-Generation Biography of the Dumas*, "It was a scandal that a single writer should produce all the serials in all the papers; offensive that he should employ a team of anonymous collaborators." However, it must be remembered that at the time, it was considered perfectly acceptable for most writers to work with collaborators; what his detractors really objected to was his sheer volume and the success that emanated from it. One, Eugene de Mirecourt, went so far as to publish a pamphlet attacking Dumas, but it was so tastelessly written and so filled with offensive attacks on Dumas's African heritage and personal life that it was ignored.

His contemporaries also objected to Dumas's use of history for his own ends and his not being completely true to the facts. In *Smithsonian*, Victoria Foote-Greenwell wrote that when Dumas was accused of raping history, he replied, "Yes, but look how beautiful the children are."

According to J. Lucas-Dubreton in *The Fourth Musketeer: The Life of Alexandre Dumas*, Balzac actually could not stop reading the book once he got it, and although he scoffed at Dumas's use of history, he admitted that Dumas was a master storyteller.

Despite his use of collaborators, Dumas's talent for creating characters, dialogue, and interesting turns of events was the spark that could ignite even the dullest of plot frameworks. Maurois wrote, "Dumas had genius of a certain kind□the genius that comes of vigour and a sense of the dramatic." Maurois also noted that the book's charm comes from the fact that Dumas conveys "a living spirit of France. . . . an epitome of that gracious, courageous, light-hearted France which we still like to recover through the imagination." In addition, he remarked that the lasting popularity of the book through the centuries and throughout the world is the surest mark of its value.

Lucas-Dubreton called the book a "masterpiece which remains as fresh and living as if it were written yesterday." Foote-Greenwell remarked that despite its length, improbable plot, and exaggerated events, "the book, awash with derring-do and sly comedy, is also great fun to read," and that this was the secret of its success. She also remarked that the book's fast action, adventure, and vivid characters "make Dumas's books a treasure trove for celluloid."

In *Great Foreign Language Writers*, Barnett Shaw wrote, "Two hundred years from now, you can be sure that at any given moment, someone, in some far-off place, will be reading *The Three Musketeers* or *The Count of Monte Cristo* in one of the dozens of languages into which Dumas has been translated."

Criticism

- Critical Essay #1
- Critical Essay #2

Critical Essay #1

Winters is a freelance writer and has written for a wide variety of educational publishers. In this essay, she considers modern elements of Dumas's writing style in The Three Musketeers*.*

The Three Musketeers is still read and loved today, despite the fact that it was written over 150 years ago. Most work from that time has been forgotten, but Dumas's style, largely shaped by his originally publishing the story as a serial, is remarkably fresh and modern.

The style and structure of the novel were shaped by Dumas's need to write it as a serial, or, as the French called it, a *feuilleton*. Each week, a chapter would appear in the newspaper, ending on a suspenseful event, with the note, "To be continued in our next edition." This kept readers hooked, and it kept them buying papers.

Unlike some other writers of his time, Dumas could not afford to begin his story with a lengthy description of his characters' family background and personal history. A more traditional novel might explore d'Artagnan's family's past and explain why his father, a nobleman, had fallen on hard times, but Dumas doesn't bother. He dives right in. In the first pages of the novel, d'Artagnan has already left home and his bizarre-looking horse is already creating a ruckus in the market of the town of Meung. Readers find out later why he has left home and who his family is, but this is secondary to the action: he meets the man who will be his nemesis throughout the novel, the mysterious "Man from Meung."

Knowing that readers might not remember from week to week where he had last left off the story, Dumas recapitulates at the beginning of each chapter, telling readers the time, date, and place of the action.

Another aspect of the serial structure that affects the telling of the story derives from the fact that readers did not have the concentrated span of time necessary to delve into the psyches of complex characters. Thus, the characters don't change or grow much over the course of the novel. Although their fate may change, as when d'Artagnan is made a Musketeer and then a lieutenant, their personalities do not: they remain as they were when they were introduced in the first chapter. D'Artagnan remains quick-witted, energetic, and proud; Athos remains melancholy; Porthos remains strong and flamboyant; and Aramis retains his almost effeminate looks and his desire to join the Church. The Cardinal is evil through and through, although he does come to a truce with the Musketeers, and Milady similarly begins evil and stays that way, never learning from the consequences of her actions. These types of "flat" characters are a necessary part of serial fiction; their unchanging traits and appearance help readers remember them when picking up the story after some time has lapsed.

In addition to his strikingly modern technique of beginning the tale in the middle of the action, leaving out slow-moving background information, and ending each chapter on a

cliffhanger, Dumas's style of dialogue also seems remarkably fresh to the modern ear. His dialogue is fast paced and often witty, despite the fact that it was written over 150 years ago by a man who lived in a society very different from modern times.

For example d'Artagnan gets in trouble with Porthos when he runs into him, gets entangled in his cloak, and notices what no one else has seen: Porthos's magnificent gold shoulder-belt is only gold in front, where it's visible. Under his cloak, it's plain fabric, revealing that he's a showoff and a braggart but is not really as well off as he would like others to think. Porthos asks d'Artagnan what he's doing, and d'Artagnan replies, "I'm very sorry, but I'm in a great hurry. I'm running after someone." Porthos angrily demands, "Do you always leave your eyes at home when you run?" D'Artagnan replies, "No, and my eyes are so good that they sometimes see things other people don't see," a sly dig to the embarrassing plainness of the back half of Porthos's shoulder belt. This of course angers Porthos, and the two schedule a duel.

In another amusing bit of dialogue, d'Artagnan gets in trouble with Aramis when he picks up a handkerchief Aramis has dropped. The handkerchief belongs to Aramis's mistress, and since one of her husband's friends is standing by, Aramis is not anxious to admit that she gave it to him. D'Artagnan insists that it belongs to Aramis, prompting Aramis to challenge him to a duel for embarrassing him. At the duel, Aramis doesn't want to tell the other Musketeers what the fight is about, so he says, "I'm fighting him on theological grounds," and the quick-witted d'Artagnan agrees, "Yes, we had a little dispute about a certain passage in St. Augustine."

In other cases, the dialogue sounds remarkably similar to conversations in modern movies, as when d'Artagnan bullies a stranger, asking for his travel permit:

I want your travel permit. I haven't got one and I
must have one.
Are you mad?
Not at all. I simply want your travel permit.
Let me pass at once!
No, Sir, said d'Artagnan.
And he stood barring the stranger's way.
In that case, Sir, I shall have to blow your brains
out!

Another aspect of Dumas's style that gives it a modern feel is his use of short paragraphs, often only one or two lines long. This is in striking contrast to many other nineteenth-century works. A glance at the literature of the period usually shows lengthy paragraphs, sometimes a page long, with little dialogue. Dumas broke up his scenes into short, quick actions and stretches of fast dialogue, which makes the book read very quickly, like any modern "page-turner."

Part of the reason he did this may have been that he was not paid by the word, like many other writers (such as Dickens), but by the line. Thus, he would be paid three

francs for the sentence, "Yes, I did see the Queen, at the Louvre," which would have covered one line. However, he could break up that line into six, for example:

Have you seen her?
Whom?
The Queen!
Yes.
Where?
At the Louvre!

By doing this, he could make eighteen francs, or six times as much, for the same amount of work. His characters frequently interrupt each other and ask short questions, which are replied to with oneword answers that require more questions to get the full information. They then interrupt the answers, making for even more lines.

Although Dumas may have hit on this technique in order to make more money, it had the side effect of making the story read very rapidly. Modern writers use the same technique, not because they're paid more—even in Dumas's time, editors wised up to this trick and refused to pay for oneword lines—but because they know it keeps readers in the story. Pick up any modern detective story, suspense thriller, or bestseller, and the same pattern of short paragraphs, a great deal of dialogue, and short lines will most likely appear on the pages.

His style of dialogue also appears realistic. In real life, people do interrupt each other, and they rarely give a full explanation of anything when asked a question. A fatal flaw of much nineteenthcentury fiction, and bad modern fiction, is dialogue in which people explain too much:

As you know, Robert, my father has held this land since the late 1600s, when his ancestor came over from Ireland with only a few pennies in his pocket, married a rich Virginia girl, and used her fortune to begin raising horses.

This sort of thing is deadly for most readers, who will close the book in boredom.

It's impossible to know now how much of *The Three Musketeers* was the work of Auguste Maquet, Dumas's collaborator, and what exactly Dumas did for the work, but it's easy to guess. Typically, Maquet would draw up an outline of events, characters, and scenes, which Dumas would bring to life with dialogue, humor, vivid description, and breakneck action. This method of working is common today in television and film production, where a writer's original work is often drastically rewritten to cut out any slow parts and fill it with action and intrigue.

Dumas, who used collaborators for most of his work, was very open about the practice; in fact, he wanted to have Maquet's name printed along with his as the author of the serials, but the newspaper editors objected, saying that Dumas's name alone would sell far more copies than those of Maquet and Dumas together. They refused to print

Maquet's name, leaving Dumas open to accusations that he abused his collaborators, making money off their work and doing little of his own. However, even in his own time, these accusations didn't go far. At a trial aimed at determining who was the true author of *The Three Musketeers*, Maquet presented his version along with Dumas's, hoping that it would convince the judge that he was the real author. Instead, his version was so colorless and lifeless compared to Dumas's that the case went nowhere. All of Dumas's collaborators have been forgotten, and none of their own work is still read, proving that Dumas's talent was the spark that brought the stories to life.

Source: Kelly Winters, Critical Essay on *The Three Musketeers*, in *Novels for Students*, The Gale Group, 2002.

Critical Essay #2

In the following essay, Garnett discusses the question of authorship of The Three Muskateers*.*

On the evening of 27th October 1845, an unrehearsed scene took place on the stage of the Ambigu Theatre, Paris. On the final fall of the curtain, while the applause still thundered, a man precipitated himself on the stage, where, shedding tears of mingled joy and gratitude, he embraced another man.

The first man was Auguste Maquet. The man whom he embraced was Alexandre Dumas.

The play that had been performed was *The Musketeers*.

Dumas *fils*, who narrates the incident, says that he was in a box, Maquet and his family being in the next one as ordinary spectators, they having no expectation of the occurrence of anything unusual; that the piece was nearing the end when his father summoned him by means of an attendant, and said, "If the play continues to go like this, I promise you some pleasure. I want to give Maquet the surprise of hearing himself named with me. No warning. And you will see how he takes it. But be careful to say nothing."

The Three Musketeers is one of those rare books which have a universal popularity. The man hardly exists who can read of the adventures of Athos, Porthos, Aramis, and d'Artagnan unmoved. Perhaps he could find a score of critical objections to the story if he tried; but he will not care to try, and he will never forget the pleasure he experienced. From Flaubert and Stevenson to the man in the street, admirers of the book are numberless. The romance on its publication in 1844 won instant fame; in Paris copies disappeared like snowflakes in sunshine, and almost at once translators were at work. In recent years a statue of d'Artagnan has been unveiled, archives have been ransacked for facts about his family and those of his companions in arms, and books and articles have been published about them. Today the cinematograph is showing the Musketeers all the world over, and they are the subject of an opera. D'Artagnan had by far the most distinguished career of the four; it is said that his master, Louis XIV., wrote a verse to commemorate him when he was killed at the siege of Maëstricht. Furthermore, a prolific author of the time, Gatien Courtilz de Sandras, wrote three thick volumes entitled *Mémoires de Monsieur d'Artagnan*. Much read in its day, this book passed into oblivion. After its use as the idea or foundation for the romance called *The Three Musketeers*, copies were sought for. Thackeray tells us that he chanced to pick up the first volume in Gray's Inn Road, London, for 5d., and that he liked d'Artagnan in that book best. Victor Hugo bitterly regretted Dumas' use of it, he himself wanting to utilise one of its episodes. A partial version in English has appeared. As for *The Three Musketeers* it is read as much as or more than ever, and the few who do not like it are resigned to its selling for aye with its sequels *Vingt ans après* and *Le Vicomte de Bragelonne*.

In the month of January 1919 the European bookshops began to display a volume encircled by a band bearing the conundrum

WHO WROTE *THE THREE MUSKETEERS*□ DUMAS OR MAQUET?

The text within the covers gave as the answer □Maquet.

The author, M. Gustave Simon, wrote on behalf of the Maquet family. He held all the Maquet papers, and claimed to be fulfilling a duty imposed by Maquet on his heirs. The book was the forerunner of the *cause-célèbre*, echoes of which reverberate throughout the world of letters even today. The lawsuit, which turned chiefly on the interpretation of a contract between Dumas and Maquet and the application thereto of the copyright law in respect of the author's royalties, has been decided. The books written by Dumas and Maquet in collaboration still bear the name of Dumas only; but nearly all those who have read M. Simon's book, and thousands who have not read it, but have read the almost unanimous verdict of the French Press in Maquet's favour, consider that he was the author of *The Three Musketeers*. M. Simon's thunderbolt first fell from the *Revue de Paris*, for it was there that the most striking portion of his book appeared. In his book he complacently refers to the anguish of men of letters, who, after reading the *Revue*, asked themselves what had Dumas to do with *The Musketeers*, seeing that Maquet had found the subject of the romance and then written it. M. Simon, in effect, answers: "I cannot help it. It is the documents that are in Maquet's favour." Well, I ask no better than to be allowed to prove by reference to documents that M. Simon is in error. The anguish of the men of letters will then be relieved, and it is hardly too much to say that even unlettered men will breathe more freely. If Maquet really and truly were the author of *The Three Musketeers*, ought they not to read the many volumes signed 'Auguste Maquet'?

As M. Simon's book preceded the lawsuit, he had not the pleasure of recording there that, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, his conclusions were adopted by M. *le Substitut* Tronche- Macaire in a speech which has become famous. M. *le Substitut* would be astonished to find that his speech must now be corrected.

Alexandre Dumas, who was born in 1802, and was the despair of his would-be instructors, after living in dire poverty, educated himself and achieved fame in 1829, when his play *Henri III. et sa cour* gained a triumphant success. On that eventful night, his collar, cut by himself, was of paper, but this passed unobserved, so dazzling was the triumph which was applauded by a score of princes and princesses blazing with diamonds. Before Maquet made his acquaintance, early in 1839, Dumas had successively produced *Christine*, *Antony*, *Richard Darlington*, *Le Mari de la Veuve*, *La Tour de Nesle*, and other equally remarkable plays besides fresh and charming volumes of *Impressions de Voyage*, and many novels and romances, chief among which, perhaps, was *Acté*, a tale of the days of Nero, which had placed him in the front rank of historical novelists. Everything that he produced was the subject of violent controversies, and yet looking back, we see that in 1839, in France, Dumas' works ranked in popular esteem only after Lamartine's and Victor Hugo's. In England his name

was scarcely known. His personality was more than attractive—magnetic; his conversational powers unforgettable.

Auguste Maquet, who was born in 1813, was a model student, and at an early age turned a good education to account, for he earned his living as a school teacher, while he wrote plays in collaboration with his young friends Théophile Gautier and Gérard de Nerval—plays which were not performed, however. The school management, rightly suspecting him of being at heart a Romantic, treated him too hardly; he handed in his resignation. In his desk were some five or six MS. plays. One of them, entitled *Un Soir de Carnaval*, was judged worth the offer to a manager. On its refusal, Gérard de Nerval took it to his friend Dumas. Dumas, wholly to oblige Nerval, rewrote it, called it *Bathilde*, and sent it to the same manager who had refused *Un Soir de Carnaval*. It was accepted, and successfully performed as Maquet's work.

It was in this way, then, that Maquet, whose personality was reserved, a little unsympathetic, made Dumas' acquaintance. Maquet next wrote a novel in two volumes called *Paresse*, which relied on analysis of character rather than on action for its interest, but he failed to place it with a publisher. Not allowing himself to be discouraged, he resolved to follow Dumas' example, and weave an episode from history into a story, a story of (it is said) sixty pages called *Le Bonhomme Buvat, ou Le Conspiration de Cellamare*, and offered it to the *Presse*. The editor declined it. The dispirited author, happening to meet Dumas, briefly told him the subject of the story, which Dumas, after paying for it, took to Florence, where, utilising it, he wrote the celebrated romance in four volumes known as *Le Chevalier d'Harmental* (1843). With another somewhat similar and equally popular historical romance, *Ascanio*, published by Dumas at about the same time, Maquet had nothing whatever to do. But we know that Maquet received payment from Dumas for the idea, communicated verbally, of a third story called *Sylvandire*, and that Dumas dedicated the book to Maquet.

So far, Maquet had not collaborated with Dumas, for he had not written a book with him, but it was known that Dumas was indebted to him for ideas. Now he began to find publishers for various stories, which met with some little success. Dumas, in a letter dated 17th February 1845, addressed to the Society of Men of Letters, says that in the preceding two years Maquet had put to his individual credit *Le Beau d'Angennes*, *Les Deux Trahisons*, *Cinq mots sur un mur*, *Bathilde*, *Vincennes*, *Bicêtre*.

Although the first-named work—a romance— is the only one that is in the least remembered today, Maquet must not be thought, as many have considered him, a man who could not stand on his own feet. With a certain modesty and great uprightness of character, he had great facility in composition, ingenuity, a wide fund of information, and an unflagging capacity for work. His education was altogether superior to Dumas', whose knowledge of the world and absolute confidence in himself were then so lacking in his young friend.

We come now to 1844, the year of the publication of *The Three Musketeers*, which M. Simon calls the most celebrated romance of that period. As a matter of fact, *The Count*

of Monte-Cristo, a large part of which was published in the same year, had an even greater vogue. Ignoring *Monte-Cristo* for the time being, M. Simon writes:

> In 1844 a great event occurred. It was spoken of everywhere and in all ranks of Society. Announcements were displayed in all the bookshops. It was the publication of *The Three Musketeers*, a romance! But what a romance! It enraptured the public. . . . Maquet had until then worked alone. There had been no collaboration properly so called until then. He confined himself to taking his "copy" to Dumas, who manipulated it as he chose, without mutual understanding, without exchange of ideas; he was so full of respect and admiration for the Master, he was so happy to see each of his works favourably received. Was it not for him a kind of warrant of capacity which could create for him rights for the future? And what a stimulant for him, what an exhortation to perseverance.
> What an eager desire to discover a new subject! What joy to exercise his industry as discoverer! And, above all, what a happy good fortune if he could, without consulting Dumas, bring him some important work.
> A popular work! He had hunted out the *Mémoires d'Artagnan*, which were almost unknown at that time. What a windfall! He immediately became enraptured with his subject, his heroes. He wrote, full of ardour, without rest, the sheets accumulated, he was already in possession of several volumes, and he carried his trophy to Dumas.

All this is absorbingly interesting, or would be so, if we were sure that it was a statement derived from documentary evidence, and not the result of M. Simon's imaginative talents. M. Simon naturally foresaw the question: what had Dumas to do with the book? He writes:

> Oh, let us have the indulgence and generosity of Maquet; let us not deprive Dumas of what belongs to him. He had an active part in the collaboration, he modified the order of some chapters, he added some developments, but it was Maquet himself who conceived and conducted the romance. Maquet had handed Dumas his work ("the several volumes"). They discussed it together. Such a splendid subject, with such a scope, necessarily inspired Dumas with new episodes. But the plan and the intrigue were so well contrived, the sheets of "copy" were so numerous

that the work of revision was relatively easy. It was not more than the dotting of the i's.

M. Simon does not refer his readers to any documents whatsoever in support of all this, but tells us that Maquet expressly declares in his notes that he wrote the first volumes. "In a list of manuscripts," adds M. Simon, "there are these lines: 'Manuscript of the end of The Musketeers. My first work: *à moi seul*.'"

As against Maquet's private notes, M. Simon cites, however, in the note at the end of his book, a passage from a carefully written letter which was communicated to him as his work was going to press. It was addressed to M. Paul Lacroix with the object of rectifying certain erroneous statements made by a biographer. Maquet wrote:

> All the execution of *The Musketeers* is wrongly attributed to me. I had, together with Dumas, arranged to write an important work to be drawn from the first volume of the *Mémoires d'Artagnan*. I had even, with the ardour of youth, begun the first volumes without an agreed plan. Dumas happily intervened with his experience and his talent. We finished it together.

M. Simon cannot explain away this passage, but his final words are, "The author is Maquet."

This letter, especially in the circumstances in which it was written, must altogether outweigh a note which its writer never printed.

So far, in his relations with Maquet, Dumas, as we have seen, had done more than the lion's share; he had adopted ideas and developed them entirely at his ease in his own manner. With what result? That these works, when published, fitted in with and resembled his other works (written by himself alone or in collaboration with others). In fact, *La Comtesse de Salisbury*, *Le Capitaine Paul*, *Acté*, *Georges*, *Gabriel Lambert*, *Le Capitaine Pamphile*, *Le Maître d'Armes*, *Pauline*, *Les Frères Corses*, *Amaury*, *Ascanio*, *Maître Adam le Calabrais*, *Isabeau de Bavière*, *Souvenirs d'Antony*, all resemble one another in the same sense that *Ivanhoe*, *The Talisman*, *Quentin Durward*, *Anne of Geierstein*, widely different though they are, resemble each other. The books bear the stamp of their respective authors.

We turn now to M. Simon on the subject of *Monte-Cristo*. "*It happens that Dumas to set idle gossip at rest wrote an account of the genesis and composition of this book*." M. Simon, having found the account, utilised and adopted it. There being no dispute in the matter, I will only say that the idea of the book and the first plan were Dumas'; that in the course of a conversation after Dumas had written a volume and a half, Maquet made a remark of the utmost value about the plan; that Dumas adopted Maquet's view; and that the two men then wrote the rest of the book together. It is clear, therefore, that either M. Simon trusts Dumas to give a correct account of the literary history of *Monte- Cristo*, or he considers it binding on him because Maquet did not dispute its accuracy.

What would M. Simon not have given to have found a *Causerie* by Dumas on the subject of *The Musketeers*? What a drain on his imagination would it not have saved him! Unfortunately, in resorting to his imagination, he completely overlooked the clues given by Dumas both in his Preface to the romance and again in his letter of 1845 to the Society of Men of Letters, wherein, as M. Simon shows, he enumerates his own publications without Maquet's collaboration. This enumeration included his *Louis XIV. et son siècle* in nine volumes. (Dumas erroneously says ten volumes.) Let us first of all turn to the Preface, and extract a few sentences:□

[PREFACE TO *THE THREE MUSKETEERS*.]

Wherein it is proved that, in spite of their names in os *and* is, *the heroes of the history which we shall have the honour of relating to our readers are not mythological*.

About a year since, while making researches in the Bibliothèque royale for my *History of Louis XIV.*, I lighted by chance on the *Mémoires de M. d'Artagnan*, printed, like so very many of the works of that period whose authors wanted to write the truth without risking a more or less lengthy enforced stay in the Bastille, at Amsterdam, and issued by Pierre Rouge. The very title was seductive; I carried it off, by permission of the Librarian, if you please, and I devoured it.

And then Dumas, after referring his readers to the *Memoirs*, adds:□

But, as is well known, what strikes the poet's capricious fancy is not always what fixes the attention of the Multitude. So while admiring, as others will doubtless do, the details we have mentioned, what struck us was something to which certainly no one else had paid the slightest attention.

D'Artagnan relates how, on his first visit to M. de Tréville, Captain of the King's Musketeers, he encountered in the ante-room three young men serving in the illustrious Corps to which he solicited the honour of admission, and named Athos, Porthos, and Aramis.three strange names struck us, &c., &c., &c.

As for the *History of Louis XIV.* (with which Maquet had nothing to do), it was there naturally that Dumas had written the name *d'Artagnan* for the first time. Its readers, moreover, have the pleasure of comparing Dumas, the historian, with Dumas, the romancer; for one of the most exciting episodes in the history□that of the diamond studs given by Anne of Austria to the Duke of Buckingham □is developed in the romance. All

who have studied their Dumas know that a mine once found was never relinquished until every ounce of ore had been extracted from it. Did he write a history, it was sure to provide him with a romance or two, and perhaps a play as well; did he write a romance, it would suggest a play, a history, or a volume of memoirs, so-called; and it is astonishing how fresh and delightful each successive work invariably is. Dumas made little use of the *Mémoires d'Artagnan* for his *History of Louis XIV.*, but the hour or so spent over the first volume was to bear good fruit in due season. How is it that M. Simon neglected both Dumas' Preface and his *History of Louis XIV.*?

But in all probability M. Simon would say: "I admit that I did not notice these clues, as you call them, but they prove but little. Dumas says that he found the *Mémoires* at the Bibliothèque royale, but later in his Preface he says that he also found there a manuscript written by the Comte de la Fère, which we know never to have existed. The Preface was a piece of *blague*. It is of no importance. And as for the *History of Louis XIV.*, I admit that to write it Dumas had to read some volumes of history and memoirs in which the name d'Artagnan occurred, but what then? How do we know that Maquet did not read similar books, including, as I have said in my book, the *Mémoires de M. d'Artagnan*, which inspired him to write several volumes of *The Musketeers*. It was a coincidence only that the two friends happened to pursue a similar course of reading. But I confess that if Dumas had devoted a *Causerie* to *The Musketeers*, which we know he never did, his volumes of *Causeries* not having a word about it, if, I say, he had done so□well, then, it would be different. . . ."

I could not quarrel with such remarks as these, and am glad to be able to invite M. Simon to read a *Causerie* written by Dumas about *The Musketeers*, with a similar object to his famous *Causerie* about *Monte-Cristo*. It is to be found in one of his own journals, in one appropriately named 'D'Artagnan.'

Here it is:□

LES MOUSQUETAIRES.
It was in 1844, as near as I can remember, that there fell into my hands a volume entitled *Les Mémoires de Monsieur d'Artagnan*, by Courtilz de Sandras.

The book was given to me as a sufficiently correct picture of manners of the Seventeenth Century.

In fact, the *Les Mémoires de Monsieur d'Artagnan*, published at La Haye in 1689□that is to say, in the most fatal and reactionary period of Louis XIV.,□ have preserved a certain cavalier air which was not then the mode, and which, indeed, belongs entirely to the first part of the Seventeenth Century.

I read it without remarking anything more than the three names of Athos, Porthos, and Aramis. These

three strange names belonged to three Musketeers, friends of d'Artagnan. But in the whole book, to which we refer those who are interested, nothing is explained respecting the characters of those gentlemen.

One episode only struck me—that of the love affair of d'Artagnan with an English woman called Milady, who tries to have him killed by her lover, one de Wardes. But in the book of this romancer, sitting astride on the times of Louis XIV. and Louis XV., everything is glanced at, nothing is really examined, and the style, a really surprising thing at that period which lay between the days of Mme. de Sévigné and those of the Duke de Saint-Simon, style and composition are alike mediocre.

Nevertheless, the names of Athos, Porthos, and Aramis remained in my memory. The episode of Milady, whom I kept on thinking of, in spite of myself, led me to sketch a first outline, altogether a shapeless one, which I submitted for Maquet's appreciation.

Maquet, without caring much for the subject which, besides, was not then found, set himself to work. I retook the book from his hands, and succeeded in communicating to him a certain enthusiasm for the task.

When the book was finished, I, having a contract with the *Siècle*, sent it to Desnoyers, who at that time superintended the *feuilleton*, with the title *Athos, Porthos, and Aramis*.
Desnoyers read, or did not read, the four volumes deposited by me in his hands. In any case, he did not much care for them. Nevertheless, as the acceptance of my romance by the *Journal* had nothing to do with him, he was notified by the Management to send it to the Printer. It was then that I received from him a letter to the following effect:—

"MY DEAR DUMAS,—Many of our subscribers jib at the title, *Athos, Porthos, and Aramis*. Some of them believe that it is the history of the three Fates which you have undertaken to write, and as, unless you have new sources of information about these three goddesses, the story does not promise to be gay, I propose

the less ambitious but much more popular title
of *Trois Mousquetaires*.

"An answer if you please."
I replied by return of post,
"I am all the more of your opinion to call the romance
the *Trois Mousquetaires*, since, as they are
four, the title will be absurd, which promises for the
book the greatest success."

The romance was called *Les Trois Mousquetaires*.
No one remarked that there were four.

It is strange, no doubt, to have to realise that the famous title *The Three Musketeers* was imposed on Dumas by a man who did not care for the volumes of MS., but we have no choice.□A search of the files of the *Siècle* has elicited the fact that on 29th December 1843 the *feuilleton* section contained the following announcement: "Athos, Porthos, et Aramis, roman historique en 5 parties par M. Alexandre Dumas," and that on 14th March of the following year the romance began to appear under the title, *Les Trois Mousquetaires*.

By the side of Dumas' illuminating *Causerie* I would place some remarks culled from a book which was published in 1848□that is to say, only four years after the publication of *The Three Musketeers*. The work in question is *Galerie des Gens de Lettres au XIX siècle*, by Charles Robin. It contains two long and deeply interesting studies on Dumas and Maquet respectively. The latter abounds with intimate personal details, which must have been supplied by Maquet himself or his family, and it is astonishing that it should have been unknown to M. Simon. Respecting *Les Trois Mousquetaires*, Robin wrote:□

Dumas had sent to Maquet the first volume of the
Mémoires de Monsieur d'Artagnan with these few words:□
"My dear friend, tell me whether you think that two
men of ability can make an interesting book out of
this?" "Certainly," Maquet answered, after having
run through the volume in half an hour; and, without
even opening the remaining volumes, he took his pen
and dashed three or four chapters on the paper. A
good beginning was made, and the peculiar character
of the book indicated. To what purpose servilely
to follow the steps of Courtilz de Sandras? Why not
be original, dramatic, and much more amusing than
the author of the *Mémoires* themselves had managed
to be?

Alexandre Dumas was not, however, quite of Maquet's
opinion. He wished that there should be
brought into action in the romance of *The Three Musketeers*

the great historical figures of the time—for instance, Buckingham, Anne of Austria, and many others of minor importance. As for Maquet, he dared to pronounce a contrary opinion; according to him, the action of the romance would gain much and develop much more easily merely with the picturesque element, new characters, and the few well-drawn personages delineated by Sandraz. The success of the book amply justified Dumas.

Nevertheless both opinions combined, both brains and both pens worked together, and this romance of *The Three Musketeers*, which is simply a masterpiece of its kind, amused the whole of Paris, the whole world, during fifteen months.

It would be interesting, would it not, to ascertain whether Maquet was in agreement with Robin's presentment of the details which he had gleaned, for it is always possible that the writer submitted his notice to Dumas and that Dumas added something. So might M. Simon say, though I think he would agree that certainly it would be totally unlike Dumas to have added anything to his own advantage. Still, we would like to be able to show that Maquet approved of the notice. Well, we are able to do so, thanks this time to M. Simon, for it is from his own book that we quote from a letter written by Maquet in 1857 to a journalist who had asked him for biographical information: —

SIR,—The biography which I have the honour to send you will give you a sufficiently precise idea of my younger days and of my works. The author addressed himself to my family in 1847 to obtain his information.It remains to fill the gap which separates 1848 from 1857.

The biography was naturally that written by Robin for his *Galerie* in 1847, and published in 1848. M. Simon cites Maquet's letter without realising at all to what biography Maquet referred. He little dreamt that in so doing he destroyed his own case.

Maquet being satisfied with Robin's statement respecting the matter, there is no longer any need to explain why he (Maquet) failed to challenge the accuracy of Dumas' *Causerie*, which gives substantially the same account. The fantastic narration of M. Simon—where is it? M. Simon pictured Maquet finding the *Mémoires de Monsieur d'Artagnan*, pictured his enthusiasm for the subject, for his heroes, his writing several volumes without rest and taking them to Dumas. Why? M. Simon did not know that it was Dumas who had found the *Mémoires*, Dumas who had supplied the title *Athos, Porthos, and Aramis* to the *Siècle*, Dumas who pressed to fulfil his contract, sent the book to Maquet, Dumas who insisted on the story being a *roman historique*, Dumas who took up the work from Maquet, and completed it with him.

And here is yet another link in the chain of evidence which will interest M. Simon:

Fiorentino, another of Dumas' "ghosts," records that Dumas, being accustomed to fill his twenty sheets a day, finished *Monte-Cristo* in his presence on the fifteenth. But not wishing to depart from his rule, the romancer took more paper and completed the first five sheets of the new story *The Musketeers* before finishing for the day.

Here is indisputable evidence that Dumas who, I concede, had received Maquet's "copy," treated it as a draft only. It is only the MS. of Maquet's "copy" of the end of *The Musketeers* that is forthcoming. That "copy," as M. Simon shows, is but a draft. We have proved that Maquet wrote a few chapters, and not a few volumes, before taking the "copy" to Dumas. That Dumas rewrote it is obvious to any one familiar with the works of Dumas and those of Maquet. I can picture Maquet's justifiable annoyance when, on reading his copy of the *Siècle*, he found that Dumas, in his tenth chapter, forgetful or regardless of the latter portion of his Preface (in which, as has been said, he attributes the authorship of the book to the Comte de la Fère), had written as follows:

> As perhaps our readers may not be familiar with the slang of the rue de Jerusalem, and as during our life as an author, which is fifteen years long, it is the first time that we have had to employ the word in the sense in which we now use it, let us explain what a mousetrap is.

We know that at that time 1844 Dumas' life as an author was fifteen years long, for *Henri III. et sa cour* his first success was performed just fifteen years before *The Musketeers* was written. Moreover, it was a foible of Dumas' to refer to himself in his works, and certainly Maquet would not have the least idea of writing such a sentence.

It is clear from the foregoing that, as in the case of *Monte-Cristo*, the idea and the plan of *The Musketeers* belong to Dumas. Not only did he refuse to alter it, as he and Robin recorded, but we may affirm also that Dumas either wrote the MS. or revised Maquet's drafts. M. Simon's claim that Maquet conceived and conducted the romance, and that Dumas did little more than dot the i's, is inadmissible. Oddly enough, M. Simon considers that by printing a chapter of Maquet's manuscript of the end of the romance a chapter carefully selected by him, he adduces a final "proof." Maquet's draft was a good one, and suitable for the Master to deal with, and, indeed, he let most of it stand. But his deletion of inept passages, his interpolations and alterations, are marvellously effective, such, indeed, as only he could have made. What was merely a situation becomes a reality. Maquet ought, I think, to have done even better work, near the end of the book especially, when it is remembered what lessons his Master had given him throughout seven volumes, not to speak of *Monte- Cristo*, *Sylvandire*, and the *Chevalier d'Harmental*. That the "copy" was better than what Maquet could write when he was without Dumas' inspired encouragement it is easy to understand. In truth, one has only to read Maquet's romance *Beau d'Angennes* (1842) to see what a difference there is between his unaided work and his work as Dumas' "ghost." Then he had no intimacy with the Master, none of those wonderful conversations with him. That Dumas

was immensely assisted by Maquet, I feel sure, for Dumas had most of the failings commonly attributed to men of genius, while Maquet had the valuable qualities of the all-round man of ability.

I am sure that, if Maquet had not assisted Dumas with his real devotion, unflagging toil, and undoubted talent, many of the latter's best romances would not be in existence, for no one man could have written nearly so many unaided. Maquet, though by no means a profound scholar, must often have saved the time of Dumas, whose general knowledge then was weak in comparison. Moreover, the two friends, so opposite in temperament, remedied each other's defects. Dumas was too gay and brilliant, too volatile, too much in the air; Maquet too sentimental and sombre, wanting in humour and in dramatic power, too much on the ground. When Dumas insisted on having his way, we get such characters as Chicot and Gorenflot (the former of whom Maquet failed badly with, when, years later, he transplanted the immortal jester into his romance *La Belle Gabrielle*); when Maquet had the better of the friendly contest of ideas, we get a hero such as the worthy but rather dull Vicomte de Bragelonne. I have a vivid recollection of one of Maquet's heroes□a lovesick young man who spends the night leaning on a balustrade, which in the morning is wet with his tears. Dumas would not have suffered that youth. Maquet's Travels and *Memoirs* would have been as widely different from Dumas' *Memoirs* and Travels as can be imagined, and these works are assuredly most suggestive of the most popular of the Dumas romances. Hence my conviction that Dumas was the genius in the collaboration and Maquet the ghost. This I contend, while duly acknowledging that the ghost was more widely read than the genius. If any one considers that Maquet was the Master, the genius, let him read the books which Maquet wrote after his rupture with Dumas, such as *La Belle Gabrielle*, and others. If any one wishes to know what Dumas could accomplish in the field of historical romance without Maquet, let him read *La Comtesse de Charny*, *Le Page du Duc de Savoie*, *Les Compagnons de Jéhu*, *La San-Felice*, *Les Blancs et les Bleus*, *Acté*, and others. I have much respect for Maquet□a man, in his private character, worthy of great esteem, and had he been the author of *Les Trois Mousquetaires*, I should have been among the first to acknowledge the fact. As it is, I must think that his chief claim to a niche in the temple of fame rests on the fact that Dumas considered him by far the best of his many collaborators, and one of the best of his friends. That he did so is strikingly and pathetically shown in the following passage, which I have pleasure in citing.

Dumas concludes a *Causerie*, written in 1859, with a summary of his new dramatic undertakings by saying:□

> Now I must express regret that, except for *La Dame de Monsoreau*, which was written six or eight years ago, I am not bringing myself before you with my customary collaborator Auguste Maquet.
>
> As a man of talent and good feeling who has been my companion in my travels in Spain and Africa, and who never failed me in my arduous undertaking of the Théâtre Historique, he would never have the idea

of severing our friendship. I ascribe the same to jealous feelings on the part of his family.

I have regretted, I do regret, and I shall always regret our severance by which both our works suffered, by which I lose the most, since I loved him, and he apparently did not love me.

Whether Dumas was right in his conjecture about "the family" I cannot say, but it would have rejoiced him to know that accompanying Maquet's papers was found a note in which this passage occurs: □

I will never try to disparage this great writer (Dumas), my master, and during a long time my friend. I proclaim him one of the most brilliant among the illustrious, and the best perhaps among men of goodwill □*bon voluntatis*□I have said among men.

Maquet knew better than did any one Dumas' compelling reason for needing a collaborator□it was pressure of time.

The Three Musketeers, like *Don Quixote*, will, I fancy, some day be annotated. Before this is done, it is well to settle the question of its authorship. Such is the purpose of this paper.

Source: R. S. Garnett, "The Genius and the Ghost, or, 'Athos, Porthos, and Aramis'," in *Blackwood's Magazine*, Vol. 226, No. 1365, July 1929, pp. 129-42.

Adaptations

Over sixty films and spin-offs have been made based on the novel. The most notable were filmed in 1933, directed by Colbert Clark and Armand Schaefer and starring John Wayne; in 1948, directed by George Sidney and starring Lana Turner and Gene Kelly; in 1973, directed by Richard Lester and starring Raquel Welch and Oliver Reed; and in 1993, directed by Stephen Herek and starring Charlie Sheen and Kiefer Sutherland.

Topics for Further Study

Research the code of chivalry and the ideals it upholds. How do the Musketeers advocate this code? Find several events in which their actions may be chivalrous but on another level are amoral or inhumane.

The Musketeers' loyalty to each other, and their enthusiastic killing of enemies, is similar in some ways to how modern gangs operate. Read about modern gangs and write about the similarities and differences between them and the Musketeers.

How accurately did Dumas portray Cardinal Richelieu? Read about the Cardinal's life and compare his real life to the life portrayed in *The Three Musketeers*.

Dumas presents the siege of La Rochelle as an amusing picnic for the Musketeers. What was war really like in the seventeenth century?

Compare and Contrast

1600s: Medicine is in its infancy and still consists mostly of the use of herbs and other traditional medicines, many of which are more harmful than no treatment at all. No one knows that germs and viruses exist, and antibiotics, vaccines, and painkillers are unknown. People who are injured in duels, wars, or other combats often die from infections.

1800s: Although doctors still use bleeding, purging, and some dangerous substances that have no therapeutic value, they have discovered morphine, digitalis, and other drugs, as well as the importance of cleanliness in preventing disease.

Today: Medicine has rapidly advanced, with new treatments being invented every year. The most striking advance is the recent decoding of the entire human genome, which may allow treatment of previously incurable diseases.

1600s: King Louis XIII and Cardinal Richelieu consolidate royal power, decrease the power of the nobles, and begin suppression of Protestants.

1800s: King Louis Philippe promotes a rapprochement with England (although this ended in 1846). His unpopularity eventually leads to the French Revolution of 1848, after which he abdicates.

Today: France is a democracy, with religious freedom for all, and both France and England are members of the European Union.

1600s: Flintlock firearms are developed in the early 1600s, but swords are still important in combat.

1800s: Percussion cap firearms, more reliable than flintlocks, are invented in the early 1800s, and guns become more common weapons than swords. However, swords are still used in handtohand fighting.

Today: With the development and widespread use of very accurate guns, swords are obsolete except for ceremonial uses.

What Do I Read Next?

Dumas's *The Man in the Iron Mask* (1848- 1850) tells the tale of a mysterious political prisoner in the late 1600s.

Dumas's *Twenty Years After* (1845) is a sequel to *The Three Musketeers* and continues the story of d'Artagnan, Athos, Porthos, and Aramis.

In Dumas's *The Count of Monte Cristo* (1844- 1845), Edmond Dantes is falsely accused of treason and arrested on his wedding day. He escapes to seek revenge.

Victor Hugo's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (1831), set in fifteenth-century Paris, tells the story of a deformed bell-ringer who falls in love with a beautiful woman.

Gaston Leroux's *The Phantom of the Opera* (1910) is the tale of a disfigured man who falls in love with a beautiful singer.

Further Study

Cooper, Barbara T., "Alexandre Dumas, père," in *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, Vol. 119: *Nineteenth-Century French Fiction Writers: Romanticism and Realism, 1800-1860*, edited by Catharine Savage Brosman, Gale Research, 1992, pp. 98-119.

This biography provides a list of selected works by the author and a detailed list of sources for further reading.

Hemmings, F. W. J., "Alexandre Dumas Père," in *European Writers: The Romantic Century*, Vol. 6, edited by Jacques Barzun and George Stade, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1985, pp. 719-43.

This biographical chapter emphasizes Dumas's development as a playwright and his subsequent career as a novelist.

□, *Alexandre Dumas: The King of Romance*, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1979.

This biography traces Dumas's life, from his African heritage to his death as a famous writer.

Ross, Michael, *Alexandre Dumas*, David and Charles, 1981.

This biography traces the writer's life and career.

Whitlock, James, "Alexandre Dumas, père," in *Cyclopedia of World Authors*, rev. 3d ed., edited by Frank Magill. Salem Press, 1997, pp. 582-84.

This brief biographical entry provides a complete list of all of Dumas's works.

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Grenier, Cynthia, "Dumas, the Prodigious: A Profile of Alexandre Dumas," in *World and I*, June 1998, p. 284.

Lucas-Dubreton, J., *The Fourth Musketeer: The Life of Alexandre Dumas*, Coward McCain, 1928, pp. 126-49.

Maurois, Andre, *The Titans: A Three-Generation Biography of the Dumas*, translated by Gerard Hopkins, Harper and Brothers, 1957, pp. 171-87.

Shaw, Barnett, "Dumas, Alexandre," in *Great Foreign- Language Writers*, edited by James Vinson and Daniel Kirkpatrick, St. Martin's Press, 1984, pp. 165-72.

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Project Editor
David Galens

Editorial
Sara Constantakis, Elizabeth A. Cranston, Kristen A. Dorsch, Anne Marie Hacht, Madeline S. Harris, Arlene Johnson, Michelle Kazensky, Ira Mark Milne, Polly Rapp, Pam Revitzer, Mary Ruby, Kathy Sauer, Jennifer Smith, Daniel Toronto, Carol Ullmann

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Randy Bassett, Dean Dauphinais, Robert Duncan, Leitha Etheridge-Sims, Mary Grimes, Lezlie Light, Jeffrey Matlock, Dan Newell, Dave Oblender, Christine O'Bryan, Kelly A. Quin, Luke Rademacher, Robyn V. Young

Product Design
Michelle DiMercurio, Pamela A. E. Galbreath, Michael Logusz

Manufacturing
Stacy Melson

For more information, contact
The Gale Group, Inc
27500 Drake Rd.
Farmington Hills, MI 48334-3535
Or you can visit our Internet site at
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Introduction

Purpose of the Book

The purpose of Novels for Students (NfS) is to provide readers with a guide to understanding, enjoying, and studying novels by giving them easy access to information about the work. Part of Gale's□For Students□ Literature line, NfS is specifically designed to meet the curricular needs of high school and undergraduate college students and their teachers, as well as the interests of general readers and researchers considering specific novels. While each volume contains entries on □classic□ novels

frequently studied in classrooms, there are also entries containing hard-to-find information on contemporary novels, including works by multicultural, international, and women novelists.

The information covered in each entry includes an introduction to the novel and the novel's author; a plot summary, to help readers unravel and understand the events in a novel; descriptions of important characters, including explanation of a given character's role in the novel as well as discussion about that character's relationship to other characters in the novel; analysis of important themes in the novel; and an explanation of important literary techniques and movements as they are demonstrated in the novel.

In addition to this material, which helps the readers analyze the novel itself, students are also provided with important information on the literary and historical background informing each work. This includes a historical context essay, a box comparing the time or place the novel was written to modern Western culture, a critical overview essay, and excerpts from critical essays on the novel. A unique feature of NfS is a specially commissioned critical essay on each novel, targeted toward the student reader.

To further aid the student in studying and enjoying each novel, information on media adaptations is provided, as well as reading suggestions for works of fiction and nonfiction on similar themes and topics. Classroom aids include ideas for research papers and lists of critical sources that provide additional material on the novel.

Selection Criteria

The titles for each volume of NfS were selected by surveying numerous sources on teaching literature and analyzing course curricula for various school districts. Some of the sources surveyed included: literature anthologies; Reading Lists for College-Bound Students: The Books Most Recommended by America's Top Colleges; textbooks on teaching the novel; a College Board survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; a National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; the NCTE's Teaching Literature in High School: The Novel;and the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) list of best books for young adults of the past twenty-five years. Input was also solicited from our advisory board, as well as educators from various areas. From these discussions, it was determined that each volume should have a mix of □classic□ novels (those works commonly taught in literature classes) and contemporary novels for which information is often hard to find. Because of the interest in expanding the canon of literature, an emphasis was also placed on including works by international, multicultural, and women authors. Our advisory board members□educational professionals□ helped pare down the list for each volume. If a work was not selected for the present volume, it was often noted as a possibility for a future volume. As always, the editor welcomes suggestions for titles to be included in future volumes.

How Each Entry Is Organized

Each entry, or chapter, in NfS focuses on one novel. Each entry heading lists the full name of the novel, the author's name, and the date of the novel's publication. The following elements are contained in each entry:

- Introduction: a brief overview of the novel which provides information about its first appearance, its literary standing, any controversies surrounding the work, and major conflicts or themes within the work.
- Author Biography: this section includes basic facts about the author's life, and focuses on events and times in the author's life that inspired the novel in question.
- Plot Summary: a factual description of the major events in the novel. Lengthy summaries are broken down with subheads.
- Characters: an alphabetical listing of major characters in the novel. Each character name is followed by a brief to an extensive description of the character's role in the novel, as well as discussion of the character's actions, relationships, and possible motivation. Characters are listed alphabetically by last name. If a character is unnamed□for instance, the narrator in Invisible Man-the character is listed as □The Narrator□ and alphabetized as □Narrator.□ If a character's first name is the only one given, the name will appear alphabetically by that name. □ Variant names are also included for each character. Thus, the full name □Jean Louise Finch□ would head the listing for the narrator of To Kill a Mockingbird, but listed in a separate cross-reference would be the nickname □Scout Finch.□
- Themes: a thorough overview of how the major topics, themes, and issues are addressed within the novel. Each theme discussed appears in a separate subhead, and is easily accessed through the boldface entries in the Subject/Theme Index.
- Style: this section addresses important style elements of the novel, such as setting, point of view, and narration; important literary devices used, such as imagery, foreshadowing, symbolism; and, if applicable, genres to which the work might have belonged, such as Gothicism or Romanticism. Literary terms are explained within the entry, but can also be found in the Glossary.
- Historical Context: This section outlines the social, political, and cultural climate in which the author lived and the novel was created. This section may include descriptions of related historical events, pertinent aspects of daily life in the culture, and the artistic and literary sensibilities of the time in which the work was written. If the novel is a historical work, information regarding the time in which the novel is set is also included. Each section is broken down with helpful subheads.
- Critical Overview: this section provides background on the critical reputation of the novel, including bannings or any other public controversies surrounding the work. For older works, this section includes a history of how the novel was first received and how perceptions of it may have changed over the years; for more recent novels, direct quotes from early reviews may also be included.
- Criticism: an essay commissioned by NfS which specifically deals with the novel and is written specifically for the student audience, as well as excerpts from previously published criticism on the work (if available).

- Sources: an alphabetical list of critical material quoted in the entry, with full bibliographical information.
- Further Reading: an alphabetical list of other critical sources which may prove useful for the student. Includes full bibliographical information and a brief annotation.

In addition, each entry contains the following highlighted sections, set apart from the main text as sidebars:

- Media Adaptations: a list of important film and television adaptations of the novel, including source information. The list also includes stage adaptations, audio recordings, musical adaptations, etc.
- Topics for Further Study: a list of potential study questions or research topics dealing with the novel. This section includes questions related to other disciplines the student may be studying, such as American history, world history, science, math, government, business, geography, economics, psychology, etc.
- Compare and Contrast Box: an □at-a-glance□ comparison of the cultural and historical differences between the author's time and culture and late twentieth century/early twenty-first century Western culture. This box includes pertinent parallels between the major scientific, political, and cultural movements of the time or place the novel was written, the time or place the novel was set (if a historical work), and modern Western culture. Works written after 1990 may not have this box.
- What Do I Read Next?: a list of works that might complement the featured novel or serve as a contrast to it. This includes works by the same author and others, works of fiction and nonfiction, and works from various genres, cultures, and eras.

Other Features

NfS includes □The Informed Dialogue: Interacting with Literature,□ a foreword by Anne Devereaux Jordan, Senior Editor for Teaching and Learning Literature (TALL), and a founder of the Children's Literature Association. This essay provides an enlightening look at how readers interact with literature and how Novels for Students can help teachers show students how to enrich their own reading experiences.

A Cumulative Author/Title Index lists the authors and titles covered in each volume of the NfS series.

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Editor, Novels for Students
Gale Group
27500 Drake Road
Farmington Hills, MI 48331-3535