

D'ARTAGNAN

But you are not a common man! ~~You are a musketeer, and as such you are held to a higher standard. Your morals should be exemplary! Just look to Aramis... he would never behave in such a base manner. Why, I've heard from his own mouth his desire to take Holy Orders and he is always reading Scripture...~~

START

PORTHOS

You mean he hasn't told you why he was thrown out of the seminary? He hasn't told you about that beautiful temptress Marie de Chevreuse?

(Furious, ARAMIS whips out his sword and threaten PORTHOS with it.)

ARAMIS

Be careful, friend. The last man who insulted that lady sleeps in the cemetery.

PORTHOS

I meant no insult, Aramis.

(Beat. ARAMIS sheaths his sword.)

D'ARTAGNAN

Who is Marie de Chevreuse?

(No response.)

I thought you were intended for the priesthood, Aramis.

ARAMIS

I was. And I was ready to take my final vows... then I met Marie. I was her Latin tutor. We fell in love. Then one day her suitor saw us together. He was furious. He called her all sorts of insulting names. To defend her honor, I challenged him to a duel...

D'ARTAGNAN

Did you kill him?

(ARAMIS nods.)

ARAMIS

The seminary was rocked by the scandal. The Abbott told me that those who lived by the sword must die by the sword then sentenced me to serve five years as a King's Musketeer. I have one month left of my commission.

D'ARTAGNAN

And the lady?

ARAMIS

The Church is my mistress now.

END

ATHOS

She is a better mistress than most.

PORTHOS

How would you know, Athos? By your own admission, you have never had a mistress.

D'ARTAGNAN

What?! You have never been in love, Athos? Not even once?

ATHOS

No.

D'ARTAGNAN

How can that be?

ATHOS

Love is a lottery in which the prize is death. I choose to live.

D'ARTAGNAN

I don't believe that.

ATHOS

Then I shall tell you a tale. A cautionary tale of love gone wrong – but it must be understood that the events I am about to relate did not happen to me, but to a friend...

PORTHOS

Oh, a *friend*...

(PORTHOS winks at D'ARTAGNAN.)

ATHOS

This friend was a nobleman from my native province. The Comte de la Fere. At twenty-five, this count fell in love...

(Special comes up on MYSTERY WOMAN. We cannot see her face. ATHOS stares at her during the following, but never crosses into the memory.)

Fell in love with a breathtakingly beautiful girl of sixteen – a girl with a passionate nature and the mind of a poet. She was intoxicating...