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Dramatic Publishing

The Three Musketeers

by
ALEXANDRE DUMAS

Adapted for the stage
by
MAX BUSH

Youth Theatre Version



Dramatic Publishing

Woodstock, Illinois • England • Australia • New Zealand

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MAX BUSH

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(THE THREE MUSKETEERS—Youth Theatre Version)

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To Larry and Vivian

This youth theater version of *The Three Musketeers* was commissioned by Lexington Children's Theater and opened at the Lexington Opera House, Lexington, Kentucky, October 1997, with the following cast and crew:

d'Artagnan. HENRY LEE LAYTON
Cardinal Richelieu, Cahusac. CLIFF JENKINS
Rochefort. LERALDO ANZALDUA
Milady, Cardinal's Guard. BARBARA BRANDT
Treville, Cardinal's Guard KEITH D. JONES
Athos. JOEL D. BASS
Porthos. RANDY LEE BAILEY
Aramis, Duke Of Buckingham. CHRIS OCKLER
Bonacieux, Innkeeper, Biscarat JIMMY JAKE FREUND
Constance Bonacieux, Musketeer. JUDI LEWIS
King Louis XIII, Jussac, Stranger DREW FRACHER
Queen Anne, Innkeeper, Mother SHERMAN FRACHER
Queen's Maid, Innkeeper's Daughter. JEN FEIL

PRODUCTION STAFF and CREW

Director VIVIAN SNIPES
Stage Manager LISA BLEVINS
Scenic and Lighting Design ERIC MORRIS
Costume Design ESTHER WARRENDORF
Technical Director TYLER TUNNEY
Original Music EDWARD ZALESKI
Costume Construction. MARILYN COOK, ANNETTE MARIE
ELASSER, JENNIFER HILVERS
Electricians BOB KINSTLE, CARY HAINES
Flyman. MIKE DAVENPORT
Opera House Technical Director CRAIG KING
Program. LISA ZALESKI
Props ROBIN HOBBS, TYLER TUNNEY
Set Construction CHARLIE CALVERT, KEITH JONES,
AARON ZERHUSEN, TYLER TUNNEY

THE THREE MUSKETEERS

YOUTH THEATER VERSION

CHARACTERS

D'ARTAGNAN	18-20
FATHER	40s
MOTHER	40s
MILADY DE WINTER	21-22
ROCHEFORT	early 40s
INNKEEPER	
INNKEEPER'S DAUGHTER	
PORTHOS	25-28, a musketeer
ARAMIS	22-23, a musketeer
ATHOS	30, a musketeer
MUSKETEER	
TREVILLE	captain of the musketeers
DE JUSSAC	cardinal's guard
BISCARAT	cardinal's guard
CAHUSAC	cardinal's guard
BOISRENARD	cardinal's guard
KING	Louis XIII
CARDINAL RICHELIEU	36-37
PRAYING WOMAN	
BONACIEUX	51
CONSTANCE BONACIEUX	early 20s
QUEEN	26-27, Anne of Austria
DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM	35, George Villars
STRANGER	swordsman
2ND INNKEEPER	

QUEEN'S MAID
LORDS, LADIES, GUARDS, MUSKETEERS,
LADIES IN WAITING, SERVANTS

With doubling, it is possible to perform the show with a cast of 10 men, 4 women.

TIME: Spring, 1626.

PLACE: Various locations in France and England.

Running time: Approximately 70-75 minutes.

THE THREE MUSKETEERS

YOUTH THEATER VERSION

AT RISE: *We see a unit set with, center, an above with steps on either side leading down to a below. Left is a platform unit and right the stage is flat.*

The action of the play should run as smoothly as possible, with most scenes beginning as soon after the preceding scene as possible or actually overlapping the previous scene.

SCENE I

(In front of d'Artagnan's home. D'ARTAGNAN enters followed by FATHER and MOTHER. She carries a pouch, as does the FATHER.)

FATHER. d'Artagnan, you ought to be brave for two reasons: first, because you're a Gascon; and second, because you're my son. Never fear quarrels and seek adventures. Do not hesitate to act, or you may lose the chance that Fortune—in her wisdom—offers you.

D'ARTAGNAN. Yes, Father.

FATHER. I've taught you to use a sword. *(Taking off his sword and buckling it on his son.)* Fight duels on all

occasions. Since duels are forbidden, it will take twice as much courage to fight one. Be worthy of your name, which has been worthily borne by your ancestors for over five hundred years. For your own sake and those that belong to you—your relatives and your friends—tolerate no insults from anyone except the cardinal or the king.

MOTHER. Here is an ointment that a Bohemian woman taught me to make: it has the miraculous power to cure any wound that hasn't reached the heart. *(She gives him a pouch.)*

FATHER. I have nothing to give you but fifteen ecus, *(He gives D'ARTAGNAN a pouch.)* my yellow horse—

D'ARTAGNAN *(pained)*. Your yellow horse.

FATHER. —and to propose an example for you to follow. Monsieur de Tréville, who was my neighbor, began as you begin; now he is captain of the musketeers. Go to Tréville in Paris with this letter of introduction and take him as your model.

(FATHER kisses him on both his cheeks, steps back. MOTHER, crying, embraces him. They seem to refuse to let go. FATHER gently pulls MOTHER from D'ARTAGNAN. D'ARTAGNAN nods to FATHER and exits.)

SCENE II

(Meung. MILADY and ROCHEFORT stand in front of the Franc Meunier Inn. ROCHEFORT has dark, piercing eyes, a pale complexion and a neatly trimmed moustache. MILADY is pale and blonde, with long, curly hair down to her shoulders. The INNKEEPER's DAUGHTER

sweeps in front of the inn. MILADY and ROCHEFORT speak in hushed tones. INNKEEPER enters carrying a shovel.)

ROCHEFORT. Innkeeper.

INNKEEPER. Yes, Your Excellency?

ROCHEFORT. Have you saddled my horse?

INNKEEPER. Saddled and ready. Will you leave us so soon?

ROCHEFORT. You know I am, as I ordered you to saddle my horse. Make out my bill.

INNKEEPER. Very well.

(He turns to exit, but stops when he sees D'ARTAGNAN entering. MILADY sees him, smiles. ROCHEFORT looks at him, turns, says something inaudible to MILADY and INNKEEPER. They both laugh; ROCHEFORT smiles. D'ARTAGNAN hears this, moves toward ROCHEFORT with one hand on the guard of his sword.)

D'ARTAGNAN. You sir... Yes, you. Tell me what you're laughing at and we will laugh together.

ROCHEFORT. I was not speaking to you, sir.

D'ARTAGNAN. But I am speaking to you.

ROCHEFORT *(looks at him with a faint smile)*. Your horse is, or decidedly was, in its youth, the color of a buttercup. It is a color well known in botany, but, until now, rare in horses.

D'ARTAGNAN. There are people who laugh at the horse who would not dare laugh at the master.

ROCHEFORT. I don't laugh often, sir, as you may see from my face, but I retain the privilege of laughing when I please.

D'ARTAGNAN. And I will not allow anyone to laugh when it doesn't please me!

ROCHEFORT. Indeed, sir? *(After a moment.)* You are perfectly right. *(To INNKEEPER.)* My bill.

(He turns back to MILADY. INNKEEPER moves toward inn. D'ARTAGNAN draws his sword. INNKEEPER stops near his DAUGHTER.)

D'ARTAGNAN. Turn and face me, Master Joker, so I won't have to run you through from behind.

ROCHEFORT. Run me through? My young friend, you must be mad.

(D'ARTAGNAN lunges at him. ROCHEFORT deftly moves out of danger. Then he draws his sword, salutes his opponent and stands on guard. However, the INNKEEPER and his DAUGHTER suddenly attack D'ARTAGNAN with the broom and shovel, driving him back.)

INNKEEPER. Back, sir, we'll have no swordplay in Meung, today.

D'ARTAGNAN. Out of my way! Or I'll run you all through like birds on a spit!

ROCHEFORT. A plague on these Gascons. Put him on his orange horse and send him back to Gascony.

INNKEEPER *(holding him back with the shovel)*. Stay back, sir. I'm saving your life.

D'ARTAGNAN. If this were Paris and not Meung you'd have regretted it immediately.

ROCHEFORT. Then you must be some prince in disguise.

D'ARTAGNAN (*patting his pocket*). We'll see what Monsieur de Tréville thinks about this insult to one of his men.

ROCHEFORT (*suddenly attentive*). Monsieur de Tréville?

D'ARTAGNAN. I see you know the name. Coward! Out of my way!

(He lunges; having enough of this, the INNKEEPER hits D'ARTAGNAN in the stomach with the shovel, then slams him in the head, knocking him out.)

INNKEEPER. You are safe and sound, Your Excellency?

ROCHEFORT. Perfectly safe. Check his pocket.

INNKEEPER (*pulls out a letter*). It's a letter ... addressed to Monsieur de Tréville, captain of the musketeers.

ROCHEFORT. Are you sure? (*Motioning for INNKEEPER to give him letter, which he does. Once he has it he moves to MILADY.*) Could Tréville have sent that Gascon after me?

MILADY. He's young, but a sword thrust is a sword thrust; and a boy such as this would arouse less suspicion.

ROCHEFORT. A small obstacle is sometimes enough to destroy a great plan. (*To INNKEEPER.*) Make out my bill.

INNKEEPER. Yes, sir. (*To his DAUGHTER.*) Take his sword.

(DAUGHTER picks up D'ARTAGNAN's sword, then she exits with INNKEEPER.)

MILADY. His Eminence, then, orders me ...

ROCHEFORT. To return immediately to England and notify him if the Duke of Buckingham leaves London.

(D'ARTAGNAN opens his eyes.)

MILADY. Any other instructions?

ROCHEFORT. They're contained in this box. *(He hands her a small box.)* Do not open until you have crossed the Channel.

MILADY. What will you do, sir?

(D'ARTAGNAN stirs, sits up.)

ROCHEFORT. I'm returning to Paris, Milady.

MILADY. What, without punishing that insolent boy?

D'ARTAGNAN. This insolent boy will punish you...if I can find my sword.

ROCHEFORT. Punish me?

D'ARTAGNAN. You wouldn't dare run away from me, before a woman. *(He looks for his sword.)*

ROCHEFORT. In conscience, I can't kill you. And yet ...

MILADY. Remember that the slightest delay may ruin everything.

(With a nod, they start off in different directions. INNKEEPER enters.)

D'ARTAGNAN. Where is my sword!

INNKEEPER *(calling after ROCHEFORT)*. Your bill!

D'ARTAGNAN. Coward!

(*ROCHEFORT tosses some coins on ground; INNKEEPER goes for them.*)

INNKEEPER. Thank you, Your Excellency! (*Under his breath.*) For forcing me to grovel in the dirt like a pig.

(*MILADY, ROCHEFORT exit. D'ARTAGNAN stands.*)

D'ARTAGNAN. Miserable coward! False gentleman! (*Looking one last time.*) What has happened to my sword? And my letter! Where is my letter?

INNKEEPER. The gentleman has stolen it.

D'ARTAGNAN (*starts after ROCHEFORT*). Thief! Coward! (*He becomes dizzy and falls.*)

SCENE III

(*The streets of Paris. An old APPLE SELLER enters and approaches two CARDINAL's GUARDS. The QUEEN's MAID moves down the street. PORTHOS, ARAMIS and another MUSKETEER enter, move down street. The two GUARDS approach them. There is a tense moment as they stop, then the GUARDS pass on.*)

PORTHOS, ARAMIS and MUSKETEER enter Monsieur de Tréville's anteroom and study and find a loud gathering of MUSKETEERS.)

PORTHOS. Come, then. (*He jumps halfway up the stairs, turns—sword drawn—to two or three other MUSKETEERS, including ARAMIS.*) Each time a man is touched

he moves down one place on the waiting list for an interview with Monsieur de Tréville. The man who touches him, moves up one place.

(The others agree, draw, then attempt to go up the stairs while PORTHOS tries to prevent them. PORTHOS delivers a slight wound. The others laugh.)

PORTHOS (*cont'd*). I am now ahead of you, my friend.

(D'ARTAGNAN enters, watches game. PORTHOS succeeds in defending his perch, until he slightly wounds another, then he slightly wounds ARAMIS. They all laugh wildly.)

PORTHOS (*cont'd*). I'm ahead of you all!

(TREVILLE enters above, calls to below.)

TREVILLE. Monsieur d'Artagnan.

(D'ARTAGNAN moves quickly past MUSKETEERS until he gets to PORTHOS who is on the stairs. PORTHOS hesitates, then steps aside, nods. D'ARTAGNAN goes up into study.)

TREVILLE (*cont'd*). Welcome, young man.

D'ARTAGNAN. Monsieur de Tréville.

(TREVILLE, unable to suppress his frustration a moment longer, gestures to D'ARTAGNAN to wait, then moves to stairs, and shouts, louder with each MUSKETEER's name:)

TREVILLE. Athos! Porthos! Aramis!

(PORTHOS and ARAMIS hurry up the stairs into study, stand together with their attention on TREVILLE, as he paces in front of them.)

TREVILLE *(cont'd)*. Last evening, during the king's card game, the cardinal told how some musketeers, those fierce musketeers—he dwelt on these words with a sarcasm that made me hot—caused a riot in a tavern on the rue Ferou, and how a party of his guards—I thought he was going to laugh in my face—had been forced to arrest them. Arrest musketeers! You were there. *(They look at each other, question each another: You? Me?)* You, Aramis, and you Porthos, and Ath— Where is Athos?

ARAMIS. Sick, sir; very sick.

TREVILLE. And what kind of sickness does he have?

PORTHOS. We fear it may be smallpox, sir.

TREVILLE. At his age? He's probably wounded... *(He checks to see if this is true; the MUSKETEERS lower their heads.)* Maybe even killed... *(They raise their heads; he is not killed.)* I won't have the cardinal's guards laughing at you!

PORTHOS *(who has finally heard enough)*. They surprised us! Before we had time to draw our swords, they killed two of us and gravely wounded Athos. Twice he tried to stand—for you know Athos—but he fell both times. We did not surrender! They dragged us away by force. We escaped! And as for Athos, they believed he was dead, so they left him.

ARAMIS. I killed one of them with his own sword.

TREVILLE. I didn't know that. I see the cardinal was exaggerating.

(A pale ATHOS enters.)

PORTHOS & ARAMIS. Athos!

ATHOS. You sent for me, sir. What are my orders?

TREVILLE. I was about to say that I forbid my musketeers to risk their lives needlessly, for brave men are valuable to the king. *(They shake hands. ATHOS begins to faint.)* Bring him to a surgeon—mine, the king's! *(PORTHOS and ARAMIS help him out, and they exit.)* Pardon me, my fellow Gascon, but a captain is like a father. I respected your father very much. What can I do for his son?

D'ARTAGNAN. It was my intention to ask you for the uniform of a musketeer, but now I understand what an enormous favor I would be asking.

TREVILLE. His Majesty has decided, regretfully, that no one can become a musketeer without first serving in several campaigns, or by performing certain brilliant actions, or by serving two years in a regiment less favored than ours.

D'ARTAGNAN. Two years! I see now how much I miss my father's letter of introduction.

TREVILLE. I'm surprised you should undertake such a long journey without one.

D'ARTAGNAN. It was stolen by a supposed nobleman, at an inn in Meung.

TREVILLE. Strange.

(ROCHEFORT crosses below. D'ARTAGNAN sees him out a window. He moves to get a clear look. PORTHOS and MUSKETEER enter below.)

D'ARTAGNAN. He won't escape me this time! *(He moves to stairs.)*

TREVILLE. Who?

D'ARTAGNAN. My thief! *(He runs downstairs.)*

TREVILLE *(as he exits, to himself)*. The boy is a madman.

(Just as D'ARTAGNAN reaches the bottom of the stairs, ATHOS enters and D'ARTAGNAN collides with him, hitting ATHOS in his wounded shoulder. PORTHOS and MUSKETEER stand away.)

D'ARTAGNAN. Excuse me, but I'm in a hurry.

ATHOS *(seizing D'ARTAGNAN)*. You're in a hurry? So you run into me, say "Excuse me" and you think that's sufficient.

D'ARTAGNAN. I didn't do it intentionally. I said "Excuse me" and I think that is enough.

ATHOS. You're not polite, sir. *(Letting him go.)*

D'ARTAGNAN. If I weren't running after someone...

ATHOS. Monsieur Man-in-a-Hurry, you can find me without running.

D'ARTAGNAN. Where?

ATHOS. Near the Carmes-Deschaux monastery.

D'ARTAGNAN. When?

ATHOS. Noon.

D'ARTAGNAN. I'll be there.

(ATHOS exits. D'ARTAGNAN starts off again. ARAMIS enters with two cardinal's guards, de JUSSAC and CAHUSAC, talking quietly. They stop. Unseen by the guards, ARAMIS drops a richly embroidered handkerchief, then puts his foot on it. D'ARTAGNAN tries running between PORTHOS and the MUSKETEER and runs into PORTHOS, becoming entangled in PORTHOS' cloak.)

PORTHOS. Do you always forget your eyes when you run?
D'ARTAGNAN. Pardon me.

(He tries to go around PORTHOS; PORTHOS steps in front of him.)

PORTHOS. If you continue to run into musketeers in this fashion, you will be thrashed.
D'ARTAGNAN. Thrashed?

(He starts off, PORTHOS grabs him and hauls him back.)

PORTHOS. Hold, sir.
D'ARTAGNAN. Not now. *(Moving around PORTHOS.)*
PORTHOS. At one o'clock then, behind the Luxembourg?
D'ARTAGNAN. At one o'clock, then.

(PORTHOS and MUSKETEER exit. D'ARTAGNAN frantically searches for ROCHEFORT. D'ARTAGNAN moves to ARAMIS, bends down, pulls the handkerchief out from ARAMIS' foot, offers it to him.)