

and there upon the walls of this modest lodging; a sword, for example, richly embossed, which belonged by its make to the times of Francis I, the hilt of which alone, encrusted with precious stones, might be worth two hundred pistols, and which, nevertheless, in his moments of greatest distress Athos had never pledged or offered for sale. It had long been an object of ambition for Porthos. Porthos would have given ten years of his life to possess this sword.

One day, when he had an appointment with a duchess, he endeavoured even to borrow it of Athos. Athos, without saying anything, emptied his pockets, got together all his jewels, purses, aiguillettes, and gold chains, and offered them all to Porthos; but as to the sword, he said it was sealed to its place and should never quit it until its master should himself quit his lodgings. In addition to the sword, there was a portrait representing a nobleman of the time of Henry III, dressed with the greatest elegance, and who wore the Order of the Holy Ghost; and this portrait had certain resemblances of lines with Athos, certain family likenesses which indicated that this great noble, a knight of the Order of the King, was his ancestor.

Besides these, a casket of magnificent goldwork, with the same arms as the sword and the portrait, formed a middle ornament to the mantelpiece, and assorted badly with the rest of the furniture. Athos always carried the key of this coffer about him; but he one day opened it before Porthos, and Porthos was convinced that this coffer contained nothing but letters and papers—love letters and family papers, no doubt.

Porthos lived in an apartment, large in size and of very sumptuous appearance, in the Rue du Vieux-Colombier. Every time he passed with a friend before his windows, at one of which Mousqueton was sure to be placed in full livery, Porthos raised his head and his hand, and said, 'That is my abode!' But he was never to be found at home; he never invited anybody to go up with him, and no one could form an idea of what his sumptuous apartment contained in the shape of real riches.

As to Aramis, he dwelt in a little lodging composed of a boudoir, an eating room, and a bedroom, which room, situated, as the others were, on the ground floor, looked out upon a little fresh green garden, shady and impenetrable to the eyes of his neighbours.

With regard to d'Artagnan, we know how he was lodged, and we have already made acquaintance with his lackey, Master Planchet.

D'Artagnan, who was by nature very curious—as people generally are who possess the genius of intrigue—did all he could to make out who Athos, Porthos, and Aramis really were (for under these pseudonyms each of these young men concealed his family name)—Athos in particular, who, a league away, savoured of nobility. He addressed himself then to Porthos to gain information respecting Athos and Aramis, and to Aramis in order to learn something of Porthos.

Unfortunately Porthos knew nothing of the life of his silent companion but what revealed itself. It was said Athos had met with great crosses in love, and that a frightful treachery had forever poisoned the life of this gallant man. What could this treachery be? All the world was ignorant of it.

As to Porthos, except his real name (as was the case with those of his two comrades), his life was very easily known. Vain and indiscreet, it was as easy to see through him as through a crystal. The only thing to mislead the investigator would have been belief in all the good things he said of himself.

With respect to Aramis, though having the air of having nothing secret about him, he was a young fellow made up of mysteries, answering little to questions put to him about others, and having learned from him the report which prevailed concerning the success of the Musketeer with a princess, wished to gain a little insight into the amorous adventures of his interlocutor. 'And you, my dear companion,' said he, 'you speak of the baronesses, countesses, and princesses of others?'

'*Pardieu!* I spoke of them because Porthos talked of them himself, because he had paraded all these fine things before me. But be assured, my dear Monsieur d'Artagnan, that if I had obtained them from any other source, or if they had been confided to me, there exists no confessor more discreet than myself.'

'Oh, I don't doubt that,' replied d'Artagnan; 'but it seems to me that you are tolerably familiar with coats of arms—a certain embroidered handkerchief, for instance, to which I owe the honour of your acquaintance?'

This time Aramis was not angry, but assumed the most modest air and replied in a friendly tone, 'My dear friend, do not forget that I wish to belong to the Church, and that I avoid all mundane opportunities. The handkerchief you saw had not been given to me, but it had been forgotten and left at my house by one of my friends. I was obliged to pick it up in order not to compromise him and the lady he loves. As for myself, I neither have, nor desire to

have, a mistress, following in that respect the very judicious example of Athos, who has none any more than I have.'

'But what the devil! You are not a priest, you are a Musketeer!'

'A Musketeer for a time, my friend, as the cardinal says, a Musketeer against my will, but a churchman at heart, believe me. Athos and Porthos dragged me into this to occupy me. I had, at the moment of being ordained, a little difficulty with—But that would not interest you, and I am taking up your valuable time.'

'Not at all; it interests me very much,' cried d'Aragnan; 'and at this moment I have absolutely nothing to do.'

'Yes, but I have my breviary to repeat,' answered Aramis; 'then some verses to compose, which Madame d'Aiguillon begged of me. Then I must go to the Rue St. Honoré in order to purchase some rouge for Madame de Chevreuse. So you see, my dear friend, that if you are not in a hurry, I am very much in a hurry.'

Aramis held out his hand in a cordial manner to his young companion, and took leave of him.

Notwithstanding all the pains he took, d'Aragnan was unable to learn any more concerning his three new-made friends. He formed, therefore, the resolution of believing for the present all that was said of their past, hoping for more certain and extended revelations in the future. In the meanwhile, he looked upon Athos as an Achilles, Porthos as an Ajax, and Aramis as a Joseph.

As to the rest, the life of the four young friends was joyous enough. Athos played, and that as a rule unfortunately. Nevertheless, he never borrowed a sou of his companions, although his purse was ever at their service; and when he had played upon honour, he always awakened his creditor by six o'clock the next morning to pay the debt of the preceding evening.

Porthos had his fits. On the days when he won he was insolent and ostentatious; if he lost, he disappeared completely for several days, after which he reappeared with a pale face and thinner person, but with money in his purse.

As to Aramis, he never played. He was the worst Musketeer and the most unconvivial companion imaginable. He had always something or other to do. Sometimes in the midst of dinner, when everyone, under the attraction of wine and in the warmth of conversation, believed they had two or three hours longer to enjoy themselves at table, Aramis looked at his watch, arose with

he threw back his head and advanced his foot, Athos instantly took the place which was his due and consigned the ostentatious Porthos to the second rank. Porthos consoled himself by filling the antechamber of M. de Tréville and the guardroom of the Louvre with the accounts of his love scrapes, after having passed from professional ladies to military ladies, from the lawyer's dame to the baroness, there was question of nothing less with Porthos than a foreign princess, who was enormously fond of him.

An old proverb says, 'Like master, like man.' Let us pass, then, from the valet of Athos to the valet of Porthos, from Grimaud to Mousqueton.

Mousqueton was a Norman, whose pacific name of Boniface his master had changed into the infinitely more sonorous name of Mousqueton. He had entered the service of Porthos upon condition that he should only be clothed and lodged, though in a handsome manner; but he claimed two hours a day to himself, consecrated to an employment which would provide for his other wants. Porthos agreed to the bargain; the thing suited him wonderfully well. He had doublets cut out of his old clothes and cast-off cloaks for Mousqueton, and thanks to a very intelligent tailor, who made his clothes look as good as new by turning them, and whose wife was suspected of wishing to make Porthos descend from his aristocratic habits, Mousqueton made a very good figure when attending on his master.

As for Aramis, of whom we believe we have sufficiently explained the character—a character which, like that of his companions, we shall be able to follow in its development—his lackey was called Bazin. Thanks to the hopes which his master entertained of someday entering into orders, he was always clothed in black, as became the servant of a churchman. He was a Berrichon, thirty-five or forty years old, mild, peaceable, sleek, employing the leisure his master left him in the perusal of pious works, providing rigorously for two a dinner of few dishes, but excellent. For the rest, he was dumb, blind, and deaf, and of unimpeachable fidelity.

And now that we are acquainted, superficially at least, with the masters and the valets, let us pass on to the dwellings occupied by each of them.

Athos dwelt in the Rue Férou, within two steps of the Luxembourg. His apartment consisted of two small chambers, very nicely fitted up, in a furnished house, the hostess of which, still young and still really handsome, cast tender glances uselessly at him. Some fragments of past splendour appeared here

antechamber upon a coverlet taken from the bed of d'Arragnan, and which d'Arragnan from that time made shift to do without.

Athos, on his part, had a valet whom he had trained in his service in a thoroughly peculiar fashion, and who was named Grimaud. He was very taciturn, this worthy signor. Be it understood we are speaking of Athos. During the five or six years that he had lived in the strictest intimacy with his companions, Porthos and Aramis, they could remember having often seen him smile, but had never heard him laugh. His words were brief and expressive, conveying all that was meant, and no more; no embellishments, no embroidery, no arabesques. His conversation was a matter of fact, without a single romance.

Although Athos was scarcely thirty years old, and was of great personal beauty and intelligence of mind, no one knew whether he had ever had a mistress. He never spoke of women. He certainly did not prevent others from speaking of them before him, although it was easy to perceive that this kind of conversation, in which he only mingled by bitter words and misanthropic remarks, was very disagreeable to him. His reserve, his roughness, and his silence made almost an old man of him. He had, then, in order not to disturb his habits, accustomed Grimaud to obey him upon a simple gesture or upon a simple movement of his lips. He never spoke to him, except under the most extraordinary occasions.

Sometimes, Grimaud, who feared his master as he did fire, while entertaining a strong attachment to his person and a great veneration for his talents, believed he perfectly understood what he wanted, flew to execute the order received, and did precisely the contrary. Athos then shrugged his shoulders, and, without putting himself in a passion, thrashed Grimaud. On these days he spoke a little.

Porthos, as we have seen, had a character exactly opposite to that of Athos. He not only talked much, but he talked loudly, little caring, we must render him that justice, whether anybody listened to him or not. He talked for the pleasure of talking and for the pleasure of hearing himself talk. He spoke upon all subjects except the sciences, alleging in this respect the inveterate hatred he had borne to scholars from his childhood. He had not so noble an air as Athos, and the commencement of their intimacy often rendered him unjust toward that gentleman, whom he endeavoured to eclipse by his splendid dress. But with his simple Musketeer's uniform and nothing but the manner in which

a bland smile, and took leave of the company, to go, as he said, to consult a casuist with whom he had an appointment. At other times he would return home to write a treatise, and requested his friends not to disturb him.

At this Athos would smile, with his charming, melancholy smile, which so became his noble countenance, and Porthos would drink, swearing that Aramis would never be anything but a village *cure*.

Planchet, d'Arragnan's valet, supported his good fortune nobly. He received thirty sous per day, and for a month he returned to his lodgings gay as a chaffinch, and affable toward his master. When the wind of adversity began to blow upon the housekeeping of the Rue des Fossoyeurs—that is to say, when the forty pistoles of King Louis XIII were consumed or nearly so—he commenced complaints which Athos thought nauseous, Porthos indecent, and Aramis ridiculous. Athos counselled d'Arragnan to dismiss the fellow; Porthos was of the opinion that he should give him a good thrashing first; and Aramis contended that a master should never attend to anything but the civilities paid to him.

'This is all very easy for you to say,' replied d'Arragnan, 'for you, Athos, who live like a dumb man with Grimaud, who forbid him to speak, and consequently never exchange ill words with him; for you, Porthos, who carry matters in such a magnificent style, and are a god to your valet, Mousqueton; and for you, Aramis, who, always abstracted by your theological studies, inspire your servant, Bazin, a mild, religious man, with a profound respect; but for me, who am without any settled means and without resources—for me, who am neither a Musketeer nor even a Guardsman, what am I to do to inspire either the affection, the terror, or the respect in Planchet?'

'This is serious,' answered the three friends; 'it is a family affair. It is with valets as with wives, they must be placed at once upon the footing in which you wish them to remain. Reflect upon it.'

D'Arragnan did reflect, and resolved to thrash Planchet provisionally; which he did with the conscientiousness that d'Arragnan carried into everything. After having well beaten him, he forbade him to leave his service without his permission. 'For,' added he, 'the future cannot fail to mend; I inevitably look for better times. Your fortune is therefore made if you remain with me, and I am too good a master to allow you to miss such a chance by granting you the dismissal you require.'

This manner of acting roused much respect for d'Arragnan's policy among the Musketeers. Planchet was equally seized with admiration, and said no more about going away.

The life of the four young men had become fraternal. D'Arragnan, who had no settled habits of his own, as he came from his province into the midst of a world quite new to him, fell easily into the habits of his friends.

They rose about eight o'clock in the winter, about six in summer, and went to take the countersign and see how things went on at M. de Tréville's. D'Arragnan, although he was not a Musketeer, performed the duty of one with remarkable punctuality. He went on guard because he always kept company with whoever of his friends was on duty. He was well known at the Hôtel of the Musketeers, where everyone considered him a good comrade. M. de Tréville, who had appreciated him at the first glance and who bore him a real affection, never ceased recommending him to the king.

On their side, the three Musketeers were much attached to their young comrade. The friendship which united these four men, and the need they felt of seeing another three or four times a day, whether for duelling, business, or pleasure, caused them to be continually running after one another like shadows; and the Inseparables were constantly to be met with seeking one another, from the Luxembourg to the Place St. Sulpice, or from the Rue du Vieux-Colombier to the Luxembourg.

In the meanwhile the promises of M. de Tréville went on prosperously. One fine morning the king commanded M. de Chevalier Dessessart to admit d'Arragnan as a cadet in his company of Guards. D'Arragnan, with a sigh, donned his uniform, which he would have exchanged for that of a Musketeer at the expense of ten years of his existence. But M. de Tréville promised this favour after a novitiate of two years—a novitiate which might besides be abridged if an opportunity should present itself for d'Arragnan to render the king any signal service, or to distinguish himself by some brilliant action. Upon this promise d'Arragnan withdrew, and the next day he began service.

Then it became the turn of Athos, Porthos, and Aramis to mount guard with d'Arragnan when he was on duty. The company of M. le Chevalier Dessessart thus received four instead of one when it admitted d'Arragnan.

## Chapter VII

### The Interior of the Musketeers



WHEN d'Arragnan was out of the Louvre, and consulted his friends upon the use he had best make of his share of the forty pistoles, Athos advised him to order a good repast at the Pomme-de-Pin, Porthos to engage a lackey, and Aramis to provide himself with a suitable mistress.

The repast was carried into effect that very day, and the lackey waited at table. The repast had been ordered by Athos, and the lackey furnished by Porthos. He was a Picard, whom the glorious Musketeer had picked up on the Bridge Tournelle, making rings and plashing in the water.

Porthos pretended that this occupation was proof of a reflective and contemplative organization, and he had brought him away without any other recommendation. The noble carriage of this gentleman, for whom he believed himself to be engaged, had won Planchet—that was the name of the Picard. He felt a slight disappointment, however, when he saw that this place was already taken by a compeer named Mousqueton, and when Porthos signified to him that the state of his household, though great, would not support two servants, and that he must enter into the service of d'Arragnan. Nevertheless, when he waited at the dinner given by his master, and saw him take out a handful of gold to pay for it, he believed his fortune made, and returned thanks to heaven for having thrown him into the service of such a Croesus. He preserved this opinion even after the feast, with the remnants of which he repaired his own long abstinence; but when in the evening he made his master's bed, the chimeras of Planchet faded away. The bed was the only one in the apartment, which consisted of an antechamber and a bedroom. Planchet slept in the

‘Oh, yes; I am,’ added the king, taking a handful of gold from La Chesnaye, and putting it into the hand of d’Artagnan. ‘Here,’ said he, ‘is a proof of my satisfaction.’

At this epoch, the ideas of pride which are in fashion in our days did not prevail. A gentleman received, from hand to hand, money from the king, and was not the least in the world humiliated. D’Artagnan put his forty pistoles into his pocket without any scruple—on the contrary, thanking his Majesty greatly.

‘There,’ said the king, looking at a clock, ‘there, now, as it is half past eight, you may retire; for as I told you, I expect someone at nine. Thanks for your devotedness, gentlemen. I may continue to rely upon it, may I not?’

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

‘Well, well, but keep whole; that will be better, and you will be more useful to me. Tréville,’ added the king, in a low voice, as the others were retiring, ‘as you have no room in the Musketeers, and as we have besides decided that a novitiate is necessary before entering that corps, place this young man in the company of the Guards of Monsieur Dessessart, your brother-in-law. Ah, *pardieu*, Tréville! I enjoy beforehand the face the cardinal will make. He will be furious; but I don’t care. I am doing what is right.’

The king waved his hand to Tréville, who left him and rejoined the Musketeers, whom he found sharing the forty pistoles with d’Artagnan.

The cardinal, as his Majesty had said, was really furious, so furious that during eight days he absented himself from the king’s gaming table. This did not prevent the king from being as complacent to him as possible whenever he met him, or from asking in the kindest tone, ‘Well, Monsieur Cardinal, how fares it with that poor Jussac and that poor Bernajoux of yours?’

## Chapter VIII

### Concerning a Court Intrigue



IN the meantime, the forty pistoles of King Louis XIII, like all other things of this world, after having had a beginning had an end, and after this end our four companions began to be somewhat embarrassed. At first, Athos supported the association for a time with his own means.

Porthos succeeded him; and thanks to one of those disappearances to which he was accustomed, he was able to provide for the wants of all for a fortnight. At last it became Aramis’s turn, who performed it with a good grace and who succeeded—as he said, by selling some theological books—in procuring a few pistoles.

Then, as they had been accustomed to do, they had recourse to M. de Tréville, who made some advances on their pay; but these advances could not go far with three Musketeers who were already much in arrears and a Guardsman who as yet had no pay at all.

At length when they found they were likely to be really in want, they got together, as a last effort, eight or ten pistoles, with which Porthos went to the gaming table. Unfortunately he was in a bad vein; he lost all, together with twenty-five pistoles for which he had given his word.

Then the inconvenience became distress. The hungry friends, followed by their lackeys, were seen haunting the quays and Guard rooms, picking up among their friends abroad all the dinners they could meet with; for according to the advice of Aramis, it was prudent to sow repasts right and left in prosperity, in order to reap a few in time of need.

Athos was invited four times, and each time took his friends and their lackeys with him. Porthos had six occasions, and contrived in the same manner that his friends should partake of them; Aramis had eight of them. He was a man, as must have been already perceived, who made but little noise, and yet was much sought after.

As to d'Artagnan, who as yet knew nobody in the capital, he only found one chocolate breakfast at the house of a priest of his own province, and one dinner at the house of a cornet of the Guards. He took his army to the priest's, where they devoured as much provision as would have lasted him for two months, and to the cornet's, who performed wonders; but as Planchet said, 'People do not eat at once for all time, even when they eat a good deal.'

D'Artagnan thus felt himself humiliated in having only procured one meal and a half for his companions—as the breakfast at the priest's could only be counted as half a repast—in return for the feasts which Athos, Porthos, and Aramis had procured him. He fancied himself a burden to the society, forgetting in his perfectly juvenile good faith that he had fed this society for a month; and he set his mind actively to work. He reflected that this coalition of four young, brave, enterprising, and active men ought to have some other object than swaggering walks, fencing lessons, and practical jokes, more or less witty.

In fact, four men such as they were—four men devoted to one another, from their purses to their lives; four men always supporting one another, never yielding, executing singly or together the resolutions formed in common; four arms threatening the four cardinal points, or turning toward a single point—must inevitably, either subterraneously, in open day, by mining, in the trench, by cunning, or by force, open themselves a way toward the object they wished to attain, however well it might be defended, or however distant it may seem. The only thing that astonished d'Artagnan was that his friends had never thought of this.

He was thinking by himself, and even seriously racking his brain to find a direction for this single force four times multiplied, with which he did not doubt, as with the lever for which Archimedes sought, they should succeed in moving the world, when someone tapped gently at his door. D'Artagnan awakened Planchet and ordered him to open it.

D'Artagnan, who understood that it was to him this compliment was addressed, approached, assuming a most deprecating air.

'Why, you told me he was a young man? This is a boy, Tréville, a mere boy! Do you mean to say that it was he who bestowed that severe thrust at Jussac?'

'And those two equally fine thrusts at Bernajoux.'

'Truly?'

'Without reckoning,' said Athos, 'that if he had not rescued me from the hands of Cahusac, I should not now have the honour of making my very humble reverence to your Majesty.'

'Why he is a very devil, this Béarnais! *Ventre-saint-gris*, Monsieur de Tréville, as the king my father would have said. But at this sort of work, many doublets must be slashed and many swords broken. Now, Gascons are always poor, are they not?'

'Sire, I can assert that they have hitherto discovered no gold mines in their mountains; though the Lord owes them this miracle in recompense for the manner in which they supported the pretensions of the king your father.'

'Which is to say that the Gascons made a king of me, myself, seeing that I am my father's son, is it not, Tréville? Well, happily, I don't say nay to it. La Chesnaye, go and see if by rummaging all my pockets you can find forty pistoles; and if you can find them, bring them to me. And now let us see, young man, with your hand upon your conscience, how did all this come to pass?'

D'Artagnan related the adventure of the preceding day in all its details; how, not having been able to sleep for the joy he felt in the expectation of seeing his Majesty, he had gone to his three friends three hours before the hour of audience; how they had gone together to the tennis court, and how, upon the fear he had manifested lest he receive a ball in the face, he had been jeered at by Bernajoux, who had nearly paid for his jeer with his life, and M. de la Trémouille, who had nothing to do with the matter, with the loss of his hôtel.

'This is all very well,' murmured the king, 'yes, this is just the account the duke gave me of the affair. Poor cardinal! Seven men in two days, and those of his very best! But that's quite enough, gentlemen; please to understand, that's enough. You have taken your revenge for the Rue Férou, and even exceeded it; you ought to be satisfied.'

'If your Majesty is so,' said Tréville, 'we are.'

'That's well said,' cried the king, who had heard all these compliments through the open door; 'only tell him, Tréville, since he wishes to be considered your friend, that I also wish to be one of his, but he neglects me; that it is nearly three years since I have seen him, and that I never do see him unless I send for him. Tell him all this for me, for these are things which a king cannot say for himself.'

'Thanks, sire, thanks,' said the duke; 'but your Majesty may be assured that it is not those—I do not speak of Monsieur de Tréville—whom your Majesty sees at all hours of the day that are most devoted to you.'

'Ah! You have heard what I said? So much the better, Duke, so much the better,' said the king, advancing toward the door. 'Ah! It is you, Tréville. Where are your Musketeers? I told you the day before yesterday to bring them with you; why have you not done so?'

'They are below, sire, and with your permission La Chesnaye will bid them come up.'

'Yes, yes, let them come up immediately. It is nearly eight o'clock, and at nine I expect a visit. Go, Monsieur Duke, and return often. Come in, Tréville.'

The Duke saluted and retired. At the moment he opened the door, the three Musketeers and d'Arragnan, conducted by La Chesnaye, appeared at the top of the staircase.

'Come in, my braves,' said the king; 'come in; I am going to scold you.'

The Musketeers advanced, bowing, d'Arragnan following closely behind them.

'What the devil!' continued the king; 'Seven of his Eminence's Guards placed *bors de combat* by you four in two days! That's too many, gentlemen, too many! If you go on so, his Eminence will be forced to renew his company in three weeks, and I to put the edicts in force in all their rigour. One now and then I don't say much about; but seven in two days, I repeat, it is too many, it is far too many!'

'Therefore, sire, your Majesty sees that they are come, quite contrite and repentant, to offer you their excuses.'

'Quite contrite and repentant! Hem!' said the king. 'I place no confidence in their hypocritical faces. In particular, there is one yonder of a Gascon look. Come hither, monsieur.'

From this phrase, D'Arragnan awakened Planchet, 'the reader must not suppose it was night, or that day was hardly come. No, it had just struck four. Planchet, two hours before, had asked his master for some dinner, and he had answered him with the proverb, 'He who sleeps, dines.' And Planchet dined by sleeping.

A man was introduced of simple mien, who had the appearance of a tradesman. Planchet, by way of dessert, would have liked to hear the conversation; but the citizen declared to d'Arragnan that, what he had to say being important and confidential, he desired to be left alone with him.

D'Arragnan dismissed Planchet, and requested his visitor to be seated. There was a moment of silence, during which the two men looked at each other as if to make a preliminary acquaintance, after which d'Arragnan bowed, as a sign that he listened.

'I have heard Monsieur d'Arragnan spoken of as a very brave young man,' said the citizen; 'and this reputation which he justly enjoys had decided me to confide a secret to him.'

'Speak, monsieur, speak,' said d'Arragnan, who instinctively scented something advantageous.

The citizen made a fresh pause and continued, 'I have a wife who is seamstress to the queen, monsieur, and who is not deficient in either virtue or beauty. I was induced to marry her about three years ago, although she had but very little dowry, because Monsieur Laporte, the queen's cloak bearer, is her godfather, and befriends her.'

'Well, monsieur?' asked d'Arragnan.

'Well!' resumed the citizen, 'well, monsieur, my wife was abducted yesterday morning, as she was coming out of her workshop.'

'And by whom was your wife abducted?'

'I know nothing surely, monsieur, but I suspect someone.'

'And who is the person whom you suspect?'

'A man who has pursued her a long time.'

'The devil!'

'But allow me to tell you, monsieur,' continued the citizen, 'that I am convinced that there is less love than politics in all this.'

'Less love than politics,' replied d'Arragnan, with a reflective air; 'and what do you suspect?'



'I do not know whether I ought to tell you what I suspect.'

'Monsieur, I beg you to observe that I ask you absolutely nothing. It is you who have come to me. It is you who have told me that you had a secret to confide in me. Act, then, as you think proper; there is still time to withdraw.'

'No, monsieur, no; you appear to be an honest young man, and I will have confidence in you. I believe, then, that it is not on account of any intrigues of her own that my wife has been arrested, but because of those of a lady much greater than herself.'

'Ah, ah! Can it be on account of the amours of Madame de Bois-Tracy?' said d'Arragnan, wishing to have the air, in the eyes of the citizen, of being posted as to court affairs.

'Higher, monsieur, higher.'

'Of Madame d'Aiguillon?'

'Still higher.'

'Of Madame de Chevreuse?'

'Higher, much higher.'

'Of the—' D'Arragnan checked himself.

'Yes, monsieur,' replied the terrified citizen, in a tone so low that he was scarcely audible.

'And with whom?'

'With whom can it be, if not the Duke of—'

'The Duke of—'

'Yes, monsieur,' replied the citizen, giving a still fainter intonation to his voice.

'But how do you know all this?'

'How do I know it?'

'Yes, how do you know it? No half-confidence, or—you understand!'

'I know it from my wife, monsieur—from my wife herself.'

'Who learns it from whom?'

'From Monsieur Laporte. Did I not tell you that she was the goddaughter of Monsieur Laporte, the confidential man of the queen? Well, Monsieur Laporte placed her near her Majesty in order that our poor queen might at least have someone in whom she could place confidence, abandoned as she is by the king, watched as she is by the cardinal, betrayed as she is by everybody.'

'Ah, ah! It begins to develop itself,' said d'Arragnan.

'If my Musketeers are guilty, sire, the guilty shall be placed in your Majesty's hands, who will dispose of them at your good pleasure. Does your Majesty require anything further? Speak, I am ready to obey.'

'No, monsieur, no; I am not called Louis the Just without reason. Tomorrow, then, monsieur—tomorrow.'

'Till then, God preserve your Majesty!'

However ill the king might sleep, M. de Tréville slept still worse. He had ordered his three Musketeers and their companion to be with him at half-past six in the morning. He took them with him, without encouraging them or promising them anything, and without concealing from them that their luck, and even his own, depended upon the cast of the dice.

Arrived at the foot of the back stairs, he desired them to wait. If the king was still irritated against them, they would depart without being seen; if the king consented to see them, they would only have to be called.

On arriving at the king's private antechamber, M. de Tréville found La Chesnaye, who informed him that they had not been able to find M. de la Trémouille on the preceding evening at his hôtel, that he returned too late to present himself at the Louvre, that he had only that moment arrived and that he was at that very hour with the king.

This circumstance pleased M. de Tréville much, as he thus became certain that no foreign suggestion could insinuate itself between M. de la Trémouille's testimony and himself.

In fact, ten minutes had scarcely passed away when the door of the king's closet opened, and M. de Tréville saw M. de la Trémouille come out. The duke came straight up to him, and said: 'Monsieur de Tréville, his Majesty has just sent for me in order to inquire respecting the circumstances which took place yesterday at my hôtel. I have told him the truth, that is to say, that the fault lay with my people, and that I was ready to offer you my excuses. Since I have the good fortune to meet you, I beg you to receive them, and to hold me always as one of your friends.'

'Monsieur the Duke,' said M. de Tréville, 'I was so confident of your loyalty that I required no other defender before his Majesty than yourself. I find that I have not been mistaken, and I thank you that there is still one man in France of whom may be said, without disappointment, what I have said of you.'